

The Isolated Anomaly:
Representations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the Anglosphere Media, 1892-1914

By

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I declare that this dissertation is all my own work.

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Abstract

This dissertation adopts a comprehensive approach, combining a dual perspective that delves into the intricate relationship between foreign policy and domestic politics. It focuses on a careful analysis of six selected newspapers from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, namely the *Evening Standard*, *Manchester Guardian*, and *The Times* for England, and the *Dublin Daily Express*, *The Northern Whig* and *Freeman Journal* for Ireland. These newspapers were specifically chosen for their political position in shaping the public discourse around Austria-Hungary during the examination period between 1892 and 1914.

The primary objective of this dissertation is to dissect the intricate dynamics that defined the depictions of the Dual Monarchy within these newspapers. Through a thorough analysis of their editorial content, it aims to construct a narrative that emphasizes the varying perspectives on Austria-Hungary, highlighting both disparities and commonalities. This research delves into the motivating factors and external influences behind these shifts, providing insights into the complex interrelationship between foreign policy evolutions and domestic political considerations.

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Introduction:

The ascendancy of Sinn Féin, led by Arthur Griffith, and the publication of his political work, *The Resurrection of Hungary: A Parallel for Ireland* in 1904, constituted a pivotal juncture in the Home Rule Movement.¹ Drawing inspiration from Hungary's successful pursuit of self-governance within the Austrian Empire, which resulted in the establishment of Austria-Hungary, Griffith advocated for the Kingdom of Ireland to reclaim its autonomy as a self-governing entity. This entailed reversing the Act of Union of 1801 and reinstating the disbanded Irish parliament, mirroring the organizational structure of the Kingdom of Hungary. Griffith asserted that Irish nationalists should employ a similar strategy of obstructionism within the parliamentary system, drawing parallels with the tactics employed by Hungarian nationalists to achieve their goals. Hungary served as a significant case study for Griffith, highlighting the viability of such an objective by aligning similar grievances, such as the Germanisation of the Magyars and economic stagnation and exploitation, with those

¹ Laszlo Peter & Martyn Rady, *British-Hungarian Relations Since 1848*, (London: University College London, 2004), pp. 93-102

of the Irish.² Recent academic discourse lends support to Griffith's argument, emphasizing Hungary's influence on the course of the Irish Home Rule movement.³

This dissertation endeavours to explore the representation of Austria-Hungary and its implications amongst the Irish and English press between the years 1892 and 1914. This specific period has been relatively underexplored in the existing body of Irish political and media history literature related to Austria-Hungary. Additionally, the dissertation will provide a contextual backdrop for the various elements under scrutiny within the broader framework of both local and continental developments for Ireland. Changes in Ireland's internal landscape exerted significant influence over the portrayal and framing of Austria-Hungary in the diverse Nationalist and Unionist press of Ireland, subsequently impacting the successes and challenges faced by the Home Rule Movement.

The dissertation begins by focusing on the United Kingdom General Election of 1892, chosen as the starting point due to the return of the Liberals to power and the subsequent introduction of the Second Home Rule Bill in 1893. This selection is grounded in the political significance of this event, especially for the Irish Nationalists, who wouldn't have another opportunity for a Home Rule Bill for the next two decades. Despite the disruption caused by the O'Shea-Parnell Divorce case, which led to William Gladstone, the Prime Minister, distancing himself from Parnell, the Irish Nationalists persisted in supporting Parnell's

² Arthur Griffith, *The Resurrection of Hungary: A Parallel for Ireland*, (Dublin: Whelan & Son, 1918), pp. 16-67.

³ Zsuzsanna Zarka, *Images and Perceptions of Hungary and Austria-Hungary in Ireland, 1815-1875*, (Maynooth, PhD: National University of Ireland, 2012) & Lili Zach, *Irish Perceptions of National Identity in Austria-Hungary, and its Small Successor States, 1914-1945* (Galway, PhD: National University of Ireland, 2015).

approach to addressing Irish grievances through the Home Rule policy, drawing inspiration from Austria-Hungary, Sweden-Norway, and Finnish-Russian autonomy.⁴

The decision to concentrate on the press as the primary source for scrutinizing depictions of Austria-Hungary within the Anglosphere arose from the newspaper's capacity to shape and be shaped by public opinion. This is particularly evident in the transformations observed in the newspaper industry during the 19th century, marked by the removal of the newspaper stamp duty in 1855 and the unintentional creation of a market for the early commercial press through the Foster Education Act of 1870. The combination of increased literacy rates and a significant reduction in the cost of individual newspapers facilitated the swift expansion and proliferation of daily newspapers, particularly in comparison to regional weekly publications, which had limited circulation beyond London.⁵ The total number of daily newspapers nearly doubled from 91 in 1872 to 159 by 1892. Moreover, the count of evening newspapers nationwide quadrupled during the same period, surging from 22 to 85, primarily fuelled by the emergence of halfpenny papers in the 1880s.⁶

While the press was undergoing commercialization and experiencing a notable increase in circulation, evaluating its statistical data in terms of influencing and shaping perceptions of Austria-Hungary is unattainable. This is due to the absence of public opinion surveys until the 1930s.⁷ Nevertheless, the press was transitioning into what we understand today as the commercial press, although substantial or deliberate content adjustments to cater to

⁴ 'Mr J. Chamberlain – Home Rule and Ulster', *The Guardian*, 30th April 1892, 'Austria-Hungary –Correspondent', *London Evening Standard Daily Express*, 30th April 1892, 'A project Impossible of Execution', *The Guardian*, 15th February 1893, 'General Sir George Chesney on the Bill', *Northern Whig*, 7th August 1893.

⁵ Lucy Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) pp. 29-31 & Alan Lee, *The Origins of the Popular Press in England, 1855-1914*, (London: Croom Helm, 1976) pp. 181-182.

⁶ Brown, *Victorian News*, pp. 32-34.

⁷ Eric Shanklemanm "Measuring the readership", *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series*, Vol. 4, No. 3, (1955), pp. 183-4.

broader audiences was rare. In many respects, the press in the Anglosphere, regardless of its Liberal or Tory affiliations, wrote for an imagined ideal audience that it was expected to capture.⁸ This is where the press's influence in assessing perceptions of Austria-Hungary among the Anglosphere falls short, pushing for an exploration of how and why the Dual Monarchy is portrayed in a specific manner instead, particularly in relation to domestic or continental developments.

The dissertation selects six newspapers with varying political perspectives to investigate the factors that influence their specific depiction of the Dual Monarchy. This analysis will encompass an examination of the content and framing of these newspapers in the context of both local and continental political developments. In order to effectively manage the extensive amount of material available for scrutiny, certain constraints have been set. Not every event, reform, or announcement related to Austria-Hungary, even if it was covered, was incorporated into the dissertation. Instead, the research was centred on three significant events that received coverage in both Ireland and England: The Hungarian (1903), Bosnian (1908), and July Crisis (1914). The concluding chapter is dedicated to the portrayal of Emperor Franz Joseph, aligning with the press practice of separating the monarch from Austria-Hungary.

In this context, the ongoing process of digitising newspapers and the advancement of online archives, particularly through the incorporation of keyword search functionalities, play a pivotal role in identifying areas of investigation that might otherwise be disregarded as too intricate to trace. Caroline Bresseley and Shurlee Swain leverage the capabilities of online newspaper archives, particularly the use of keywords, in their respective research

⁸ Danuta Reah, *The Language of Newspapers*, (New York: Routledge, 1998), pp. 35-6.

endeavors. Swain employs this approach in her study of infant abandonment in Australia, utilizing digital archives with keyword functionalities to extract information that might be obscured in court records but is often preserved in local newspaper reports. Bressey, in her research, similarly exploits the advantages of keyword search capabilities within digital archives, allowing her to uncover concealed aspects of Britain's intricate history that may have been overlooked or underexplored in traditional research methods.⁹ This accomplishment was made feasible by focusing on a select group of individuals and their narratives within the newspaper press, a task that might otherwise have been challenging when relying solely on administrative archives.¹⁰

In alignment with the dissertation's objectives of offering a comprehensive analysis of how the six selected newspapers reflected the portrayal of Austria-Hungary within the Anglosphere, it is important to acknowledge the predominance of *The Times* among historians as the primary source for interpreting media representations in the Anglosphere.¹¹ However, this dominance does not adequately reflect the 19th-century expansion of the print media, particularly in the United Kingdom, where weekly newspapers like the *Manchester Guardian* began to compete with the daily London circulation.¹² Moreover, historical works of a similar nature from the beginning of the century, demonstrate this dominance persists and nevertheless show how keyword searches are not a solution but rather an enhancement in the research process.¹³ This is primarily because

⁹ Shurlee Swain, "Left on a Doorstep: The Role of Infant Abandonment in Preserving and Exposing Family Secrets in Australia 1834–1954", *Journal of Family History*, Vol.47, No.3, (2022) pp.250-1.

¹⁰ Coraline Bressey, "Surfacing black and brown bodies in the digital archive: domestic workers in late nineteenth-century Australia", *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol.70, (2020) pp. 3-4.

¹¹ Andrew Hobbs, "The Deleterious Dominance of The Times in Nineteenth-Century Scholarship", *Journal of Victorian Culture*, Vol. 18, No. 4, (2013), pp. 487-9.

¹² Hobbs, 'The Deleterious Dominance, pp. 474-5.

¹³ Sonja Irving, *A Comparative Study of the perceptions of Austria-Hungary and Serbia in British newspapers during the July Crisis of 1914*, (2008) pp. 42-45.

digital archives tend to provide all available material and then filter it based on the researcher's specific requirements, ultimately returning the historian to the manual curation of information.

In the context outlined, this dissertation seeks to address several key inquiries. Primarily, it aims to scrutinize alterations in the coverage of Austria-Hungary within the six specified newspapers during the period 1892-1914. Specifically, it investigates the transformation of Austria-Hungary from being perceived as a friendly state or occasional natural ally for Great Britain against the Russian threat in the Balkans to becoming an ally of the German Empire. The German Empire is depicted as a perceived threat to British Empire interests due to its naval arms and rapid industrial growth.¹⁴ In contrast, the Dual Monarchy did not initially face such negative portrayals in the narratives presented by Anglophone newspapers, particularly outside of continental crises such as the Bosnian Crisis; instead Austria-Hungary was often portrayed positively. Consequently, the dissertation aims to answer the question of how the newspaper coverage evolved. Did it undergo a sudden shift in tone, or was there a gradual transformation over the two-decade period under examination?

With this goal in mind, the dissertation will conduct additional analyses on a national scale, concentrating on divergences in the portrayals of Austria-Hungary within the three newspapers, separately scrutinizing Ireland, and England. It will particularly examine the parallels or distinctions among the Irish Nationalist and Unionist Press regarding Austria-Hungary and its relationship with the British Empire.¹⁵ In the context of England, the focus

¹⁴ Surrey Farnham, *The Naval Route to the Abyss: The Anglo-German naval race 1895-1914*, (London: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2016), pp. 104-8.

¹⁵ Donal Lowry, 'Nationalist and Unionist responses to the British Empire in the Age of the South African War 1899-1902', *Newspapers and Empire in Ireland and Britain: Reporting the British Empire 1857-1921*, (Dublin, Fourt Courts, 2004), pp. 159-60.

will be on the political inclinations evident in the newspapers' representations of foreign powers, notably the ascent of conservative press challenging liberal dominance at the close of the century.¹⁶ The dissertation will specifically examine how Austria-Hungary was depicted during the three crises. It will endeavour to investigate the newspapers' editorial choices and portrayals of crucial events within the context of domestic or continental developments that likely influenced the newspapers' content.

Lastly, the dissertation will explore the intricate dynamics of the relationship between Emperor Francis Joseph and his Empire-Kingdom, specifically examining how an absolute monarch served as the living embodiment of Austria-Hungary.¹⁷ Throughout the analyses, the dissertation will meticulously untangle the persona of the Emperor from that of the Empire, with a focused emphasis on Irish and English depictions of Francis Joseph within the same confined timeframe of 1892 to 1914. The objective is to illuminate how Emperor Francis Joseph, recognized as the most venerable among European monarchs and known for championing the status quo and European peace, unexpectedly found himself at the epicentre of the bloodiest conflict to date due to his ultimatum to Serbia?¹⁸ Concurrently, while investigating the shift in the presentation of the Dual Monarchy within the Anglosphere, the dissertation will strive to address queries regarding how the Emperor's reputation was depicted and utilized in the Anglosphere press.

¹⁶ Alan Lee, *The Origins of the Popular press in England 1855-1914*, (London, Rowman & Littlefield, 1976), pp. 132-35.

¹⁷ John Schindler, *Fall of the Double Eagle: The Battle for Galicia and the Demise of Austria-Hungary*, (Lincoln: Potomac Books, 2015), pp. 30-33.

¹⁸ 'The Austrian Emperor's Jubilee', *The Guardian*, 3rd December 1908, 'Thanks of British Fleet-Telegram to Austian Emperor', *The Guardian*, 21st May 1914, 'Mr Asquith's motion of Condolence', *London Evening Standard*, 1st July 1914.

Historiography:

The historiography of Austria-Hungary is as complex and varied as the late Empire, characterized by its multi-ethnic and multilingual composition. The major difficulty in understanding Austria-Hungary—whether regarding foreign relations, domestic governance, or its eventual collapse—is because it did not have a single successor state. Consequently, much of the historical writing on Austria-Hungary comes from external perspectives, primarily German and Anglosphere scholarship. This emphasis is partly due to the fact that Austria-Hungary's many minorities were significantly influenced by the nationalist fervour of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As such, these historians aimed to create a historical myth for their respective nations during the interwar period, often through distancing themselves from the Dual Monarchy's legacy.

As a result, early Anglosphere analyses of Austria-Hungary after its disintegration focused on the rise of nationalism as the central factor in the Empire's collapse. Emphasis was placed on Romanian and Italian irredentism as well as Pan-Slavism promoted by the Russian Empire.¹⁹ The persistence of nationalism into the 21st century as a significant political force revived this argument, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, which occurred under similar nationalist separatism.²⁰ Similarly, economic historical perspectives followed this nationalistic trend, examining the rapid industrialisation and urbanisation of the Dual Monarchy. These studies argued that industrial centres fostered a type of economic nationalism, wherein collaboration among the Empire's diverse nationalities aimed at

¹⁹ Oscar Jaszi, *Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), pp. 384-411.

²⁰ Richard Rudolph & David Good, *Nationalism and Empire: The Habsburg Monarchy and the Soviet Union*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992), pp. 65-76 & Pieter Judson, *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2016), pp. 442-452 & Robert Evans, Dušan Kováč and Edita Ivaničková (eds), *Great Britain and Central Europe 1867–1914*, (Bratislava: VEDA, 2002), pp. 77-86

advancing their economic prosperity, consequently expanded to their political influence.²¹

Only during the Great War is it believed these sentiments contributed to the ultimate pursuit of localised self-interest in total political independence.²²

Although the economic and social aspects of nationalism are not the primary focus of this examination, they are deeply rooted in the historiography of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.²³ When analysing the historiography of the foreign relationship between Great Britain and Austria, nationalist narratives frequently emerge, often cited as the main cause of conflict. Two major 21st-century arguments build on the idea that war was inevitable: first, the Balkan League, under Russian influence, promoted Balkan nationalism to dismantle multi-ethnic states.²⁴ Second, the Yugoslav idea forced Serbia and Austria-Hungary into conflict over Southern Slav dominance.²⁵ The Austrian army's defeat in Galicia in 1914 solidified its alignment with Germany. Furthermore, the green Emperor Karl's failed peace efforts formalized this through an economic union and the subordination of Austro-Hungarian forces under German command.²⁶ Therefore, it is not surprising that the

²¹ Kai Struve, 'Peasant Emancipation and National Integration, Agrarian Circles, Village Reading Rooms and Cooperatives in Galicia, *Cooperatives in Ethnic Conflicts, Eastern Europe in the 19th and Early 20th Century*, (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschaftsverlag, 2006), pp. 229-232 & Max-Stephan Schulze & Nikolaus Wolf, "Economic nationalism, and Economic integration: The Austro-Hungarian Empire in the late nineteenth century", *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 65, No. 2, (2012), pp. 658-667.

²² John Van der Kiste, *The End of the Habsburgs: The Decline and Fall of the Austrian Monarchy*, (Stroud: Fonthill Media, 2019), pp. 209-217 & Maryn Rady, *The Habsburgs: The Rise and Fall of a World Power*, (Cleveland: Allen Lane, 2020), pp. 322-24.

²³ Alan John Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1948), pp. 228-232

²⁴ Alexander Watson, *Ring of Steel: Germany and Austria-Hungary at War, 1914-1918*, (London: Penguin Books Limited, 2014), pp.14 -28 & Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe went to War in 1914*, (London: Penguin Books, 2013), pp. 404-410.

²⁵ Davis Laurence Lafore, *The Long Fuse: An Interpretation of the origins of World War I*, (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, 1997), pp. 204-210 & Janko Pleterski, 'The Southern Slav Question 1908-1918', *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary*, ed. by Mark Cornwall, (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1990), pp. 78-81.

²⁶ John van der Kiste, *Emperor Francis Joseph: Life, Death and the Fall of the Hapsburg Empire*, (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2005), pp. 220-221 & J. Schindler, *Fall of the Double Eagle*, pp. 286-287 & Martyn Rady, *The Habsburg Empire: A very Short Introduction*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 103-104.

relationship between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, both during and after the war, is viewed through the lens of the German Empire.

Nevertheless, the historiography around Austria-Hungary is not unanimous in depicting its inevitable collapse or a grand European conflict, especially when considering the diplomatic history of the long 19th century. As early as the conclusion of the Great War, diplomatic historians argued that the Central Powers' alliance was but a convenience.²⁷ Germany, in particular, became disillusioned with Austria, finding them of little military assistance. During the Hungarian Crisis of 1903-1906, there were open discussions about pursuing rapprochement with Russia and dividing the provinces of the collapsing empire after Francis Joseph's death.²⁸ The Austrians for their part, until the Bosnian Crisis in 1908, maintained close relations with Britain, keeping the option to shift their allegiances to the Entente Powers. This stance provided Austria with leverage over Berlin, securing support in diplomatic and military affairs abroad.²⁹ Fundamentally, the diplomatic history since the dissolution of the Dual Monarchy reveals a more complex and nuanced picture than the bleak prospects often portrayed for the Empire. It expresses that the Dual Monarchy played a significant role in the broader and intricate game of European diplomacy up until the ultimatum was sent to Serbia and should not be dismissed as a subordinate power.

The broad scope of Austria-Hungary's role and relationship with Great Britain was thoroughly explored during the peak of the Cold War. Early scholarship on the foreign relations between the two states relied heavily on the writings of Henry Wickham Steed,

²⁷ Roland Usher, 'Austro-German Relations since 1866', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 23, No.2, (1918), pp. 577-595.

²⁸ Margaret MacMillan, *The War that ended Peace: How Europe Abandoned Peace for the First World War*, (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2013), pp. 557-62.

²⁹ Alan Sked, *The Decline and Fall of the Habsburg Empire 1815-1918*, (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 254-255.

The Times correspondent in Vienna, and Robert Seton-Watson, a journalist for *The Spectator* who frequently resided in Hungary.³⁰ However, even the influence of Steed and Watson must be understood within the contexts and perspectives of the foreign offices of both nations. For example, outside of the semi-official Viennese newspaper, *Fremdenblatt*, most Austrian press was generally viewed negatively. This was evident in the frequent protests from the British Foreign Office regarding the portrayal of Edward VII and other monarchs as reflections of foreign relations. Although these practices are outdated by modern standards, Steed was considered the last major press influence on Anglo-Austrian relations. He was seen as a sympathetic voice for Austria-Hungary until 1908, after which he joined the condemnation of what was perceived as a German conspiracy over the Sanjak Railway and Bulgarian independence.³¹

From the other side, the major early arguments in the British press presentations of Austria-Hungary stem from the personal journeys and political outlooks of Steed and Watson. Steed, as previously mentioned, became disillusioned with Austria following the Bosnian Crisis. After Steed's shift in position, Watson emerged as the leading British voice concerning Austria-Hungary. Similarly disillusioned, but with the Hungarians, Watson advocated for the minorities oppressed by them. His work exemplified the intellectual view of Austria-Hungary as a crucial bulwark against pan-Slavism and Russian imperialism. The power politics of Europe heavily favoured the Dual Monarchy, seen as essential and unlikely to be dismantled after Francis Joseph's death.³² However, like Steed, the initial calls for cooperation and the

³⁰ Francis Bridge, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary: A Diplomatic History*, (Wiltshire: Redwood Press, 1972), pp. 29-34 & Harry Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary: A Study in the Formation of Public Opinion*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1962) pp. 11-35 & Wilfried Fest, *Peace or Partition: The Habsburg Monarchy and British Policy 1914-18*, (London: George Prior Publishers, 1978), pp. 12-30

³¹ Bridge, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 32-33.

³² Hanak, *Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 24-28

need for Austria-Hungary to reform into a federation were soon replaced by arguments for her replacement to make room for the new nation states under self-determination.

Recent scholarly reinterpretations of public opinion and the diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary have undergone significant revision. It is now widely accepted that the British Foreign Office exerted minimal influence over the British press, and conversely, the press had limited direct impact on governmental policy.³³ At the time of the Sarajevo Assassination, British elites largely perceived Serbia as a pariah state, particularly following the cold-blooded murder of King Aleksander in 1903. Sir Edward Grey's adept diplomacy had successfully maintained peace in the Balkans following the wars of independence, resulting in a period of especially favourable Anglo-Austrian relations.³⁴ Austro-Hungarian politicians similarly held positive views of the British, who refrained from supporting Russian expansionist ambitions in the Balkans. Additionally, during the reign of George V, the British Foreign Office had to manage the cordial relations between the two monarchies, strengthened by George V's familial ties with the Austrian ambassador and Edward VII's affinity for Bohemian hunting with Franz Ferdinand.³⁵ Central to this revised argument is a nuanced inquiry into the extent to which public opinion was reflected in the press and how the relations between the British and Austrian monarchies influenced the broader diplomatic relationship between the two states. This dissertation aims to address these questions through an examination of the changing depictions of Austria-Hungary and

³³ Jeszenszky, Geza, *Lost Prestige: Hungary's Changing Image in Britain 1894-1918*, (Gloucestershire: Helena History Press, 2020), pp. 63-66

³⁴ Mark Cornwall (ed.), *Sarajevo 1914: Sparking the First World War*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), pp. 184-88

³⁵ Bridge, *Sarajevo*, pp. 188-90

Emperor Franz Joseph between 1892 and 1914, seeking to pinpoint how a state once lauded as a natural ally in the Balkans came to be perceived as a puppet of Berlin.

Chapter One: Austria-Hungary and Home Rule in the Irish Press (1892-1914)

The opening chapter will focus on the discourse surrounding Irish Home Rule spanning from 1892 to 1914, giving particular attention to the examination of three chosen newspapers: the Unionist *Northern Whig*, *Dublin Daily Express*, and Nationalist *Freeman Journal*. The analysis will specifically explore how these newspapers depicted Austria-Hungary and the underlying reasons for their perspectives within the context of the Home Rule Movement debate in Ireland, whether advocating for or against dualism in Great Britain. In pursuit of this objective, the analysis will zero in on the declared Hungarian, Bosnian, and July Crises, elucidating how these events were presented differently in the Unionist and Nationalist Irish press during the period from 1892 to 1914.

The Second Home Rule Bill and Austria-Hungary

In 1892, the collapse of Lord Salisbury's government paved the way for William Gladstone and the Liberal Party to assume power. Despite facing significant opposition and holding a narrow majority, Gladstone pursued the Second Home Rule Bill, motivated by a profound personal commitment to address the injustices of the Irish Potato Famine.³⁶ This commitment in Gladstone was influenced by Charles Parnell, the leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party. However, Parnell's death marked a turning point in Irish politics, ushering in a more radical form of Irish nationalism.³⁷ Evident in the establishment of organizations such as the Gaelic League, Irish Literature Theatre, and Sinn Fein. These entities actively promoted Irish culture, the use of Gaelic over English, and advocated for

³⁶ Alvin Jackson, *Home Rule: An Irish History 1800-2000*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 79-81

³⁷ David Fitzpatrick, 'Ireland Since 1870', *The Illustrated History of Ireland*, ed. by Robert Fitzroy Foster (Frome: Butler & Tenner Ltd, 1989), pp. 224-226.

Irish separatism.³⁸ Concurrently, the identity of Ulstermen solidified around the Protestant north, opposing the perceived threat of Home Rule. As a result, Ulster Unionists supported parliamentary debate, expecting that a parliamentary defeat would bring an end to the Home Rule debate, and concessions on land reform would act as a barrier to Home Rule. However, the reforms proved to be so basic that the effort ultimately proved to be futile.³⁹

In the period spanning from 1886 to 1924, the *Freeman Journal* held a prominent position as the primary voice advocating nationalist causes, particularly championing Parnell's vision for Home Rule in Ireland until 1891. Therefore, it may come as a surprise that during the crucial period of 1892-3, there is minimal reporting on Home Rule in the newspaper. However, considering the historical backdrop of the O'Shea-Parnell Divorce case, which divided the Irish Parliamentary Party into anti-Parnellite and pro-Parnellite factions, the apparent lack of coverage becomes more understandable. The clarity emerges when one acknowledges that Thomas Sexton, a notable member of the anti-Parnellite faction, assumed the chairmanship of the *Freeman* company in early 1893 to 1912⁴⁰. Consequently, the newspaper, which had formerly championed Parnell, found itself in complete discord with its previous stance and the Irish Parliamentary Party. Predictably, the nationalists, grappling with internal divisions, produced only a single major piece addressing the cause of Home Rule within the Parliamentary debate context of dualism for Great Britain.

Nevertheless, the newspaper article sustained a viewpoint rooted in the Austro-Hungarian framework, opting to highlight a different viewpoint on the fate of the Dual Monarchy. It

³⁸ Thomas Hachey, *Britain, and Irish separatism, from the Fenians to the Free State 1867-1922*, (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publication, 1977), pp. 39-44 & A. Jackson, *Home Rule*, pp. 85-7.

³⁹ Ronan Fanning, *Fatal Path: British government and Irish revolution 1910-1922*, (London: Faber and Faber, 2013), pp. 12-15 & Joseph Lee, *The Modernisation of Irish society 1848-1918*, (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 2008), pp. 125-128.

⁴⁰ Henry Boylan, *A Dictionary of Irish Biography*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1999), p. 393.

concentrated on the significant economic achievements of the Hungarians through their self-governance, contrasting this with the coverage from unionist sources which focused on the political upheaval in the Bohemian Diet regarding the proposed Czech language law. The article on 6 January 1892 argued that:

“Austro-Hungary is one of the few countries blessed even in the past year by an expanding revenue. Its position is largely due to the care taken by Hungarian finances of the native Government...[which] went to work and in ten years announced 291 million, or twice the first estimate revenue. Another decade later 362 million, and in the year just ended the revenue amounted to 465 million. In other words, a quarter of a century later of native patriotic government quadrupled the resources of Hungary”⁴¹

Despite being confined to a single article due to internal conflicts among the Parnell factions, the newspaper opted to articulate its viewpoint on the Home Rule issue through the lens of the Austro-Hungarian framework. This choice may have been influenced by the unionist newspapers, which, over a span of two years, shaped the discourse on Home Rule within the context of the Austro-Hungarian model. Consequently, the *Freeman Journal* found itself compelled to adjust its stance or risk exclusion from the ongoing discussion.

Moreover, as the era of parliamentarism concluded with Parnell's demise and the ascent of the new nationalism, the newspaper signalled a noteworthy shift in narrative. It manifested it in the form of expressing discontent with British dominance over Irish affairs in the framework of Kingdom of Hungary, a comparable predominantly agricultural state. Most

⁴¹ 'Nail Biting', *Freeman's Journal*, 6th January 1892.

visibly, when the newspaper suggested that such a state could potentially achieve greater financial prosperity under its own governance emphasising the point that:

“Those astounding results, during such a short space of time. Are mainly due to the enterprise and insight of the Hungarian Government. Which leaves nothing undone to attract capital, encourage trade, foster industry...[and] that these efforts have been reinforced by the marked tendency of Austrian legislation to hamper commerce, discourage enterprise and drive capital out of the country”⁴²

The more radical stance adopted following Parnell's death, which draws a connection between the challenges faced by the native Hungarian Government under Austrian influence, is likely beyond the scope of this dissertation. The Arrears of Rent Act of 1882 and the subsequent Land Law Act of 1887 were both initiatives advocated by Gladstone in collaboration with Parnell. These measures aimed to alleviate the land-related tensions in Ireland by enabling Irish tenants to purchase their own farmland. Consequently, the deliberate emphasis on economic stagnation and land exploitation by the *Freeman* can be interpreted as a tactical response, reigniting debates to counter the prolonged dominance of the unionist press in the political discourse over the preceding two years.

Exploring unionist journalism, the *Northern Whig*, much like its more moderate counterpart, the *Dublin Daily Express*, played a significant role in shaping the political discourse on dualism, with Austria-Hungary serving as a prominent example of the pitfalls associated with such a political system. Joseph Robert Fisher, the editor of the *Northern Whig* from 1891 to 1913, held a noteworthy position as the assistant editor of the *London Evening Standard*, an English

⁴² ‘Nail Biting’, *Freeman’s Journal*, 6th January 1892.

newspaper analysed in this dissertation. His staunch unionist beliefs, evident in both papers, particularly during the Second and Third Home Rule debates, sometimes manifested in language that could be perceived as tribalistic, potentially exacerbating social divisions between the two Irish communities. It is crucial to highlight that Fischer was among the five individuals responsible for determining and designing the Northern Ireland border based on the Government of Ireland Act 1920. Consequently, Fischer's fervent unionist convictions in the 1890s played a pivotal role in shaping the newspaper's presentations of content.

As previously noted, the unionist press had been consistently releasing publications for approximately two years, focusing on the Austria-Hungary debate and using it as a cautionary tale against any efforts towards dualism within the United Kingdom. The *Northern Whig*, in particular, sought to draw a distinction between Austria-Hungary's example and that of the United Kingdom and Ireland, emphasizing their incompatibility. Prior to Gladstone's emergence, the *Northern Whig* sharply criticized the outdated nature of the Dual Monarchy, as highlighted in the article on the 19th of February 1892, pointing out:

“Indeed the whole of Austria might be called debatable ground, for it was an empire made up of so many different nationalities that be remembered when on a golden note the statement of its value was expressed in thirteen languages...the Empire was held together principally by feelings of personal loyalty and attachment to the most deservedly popular Sovereign in Europe, Emperor Francis Joseph”⁴³

Although the *Northern Whig* portrayed Emperor Francis as rightfully esteemed among the European monarchies, having earned the devotion and loyalty of his people, the crucial point

⁴³ ‘The Debatable Ground of Europe—Lecture by Arnold-Forster’, *Northern Whig*, 19th February 1892.

being subtly conveyed is the acknowledgment of the thirteen distinct languages in his golden note from the throne. Austria-Hungary, unlike nation-states such as Germany, Italy, or France, did not possess a homogeneous and unified society. Instead, it resembled the Ottoman or Russian Empires, structured around the absolute power of the monarch. Once again, framing Austria-Hungary in this manner was a strategic choice aligned with the broader objective of the *Northern Whig*—forcing the debate through the Austro-Hungarian framework whilst undermining that same framework as completely incompatible in Ireland.

Maintaining its consistent stance of advocating for the Austro-Hungarian framework as the central point of discussion regarding Home Rule, *The Northern Whig* similarly put forth the legal foundation for dismissing any concessions to the nationalist aspirations of Home Rule. This rejection was grounded in the agreements established during the Congress of Vienna in 1815 before the Spring of Nations, a period marked by continental uprisings for nationalistic causes, predominantly seeking constitutional limitations on absolute monarchies. The paper unequivocally articulates its perspective on the 16th of May 1892 by stating:

“The wildest Unionist has never doubted for a moment the right of Ireland, if elevated by the weakness of Britain into a separate State with a Parliament of its own, to coerce Ulster if it can... the right denied by Liberal Europe to the Habsburgs in the case of Hungary, and the claim of the Hapsburgs to govern Hungary was at least as good as the claim of the southern provinces of Ireland to govern Ulster”⁴⁴

The choice to emphasize the historical example of Austria-Hungary likely stems from the precarious position of Salisbury's government, which posed a threat to the unionist stance by

⁴⁴ 'The Unionist Incitements to Ulster', *Northern Whig*, 16th May 1892.

providing an opportunity for Gladstone to assume power. By referencing the Habsburg loss of absolute authority over the Kingdom of Hungary, the *Northern Whig* strengthens the unionist position as established in parliamentary practice. Once again, allowing the *Northern Whig* to fortify its position both on a legal basis and by associating the nationalist cause with the perceived rebellious figures of the Spring of Nations. Consequently, this undermines the nationalist political standing in the long run if the debate were to persist.

This nuanced implication cannot be overlooked when examining the remainder of the article, which succinctly asserts that while a concession to the nationalist Irish might find political acceptance in the Protestant north, it would still be perceived as unable to prevent a counteractive response that could border on rebellion. As the article states:

“It is very bitter for Protestant Saxons to be placed under Catholic Kelts, and to be reduced at a blow from what was more or less a position of ascendancy to one of subordination. There may not be civil war, because the line taken by human affairs is always incalculable; but to say there is no reason to expect it is nothing less than foolish”⁴⁵

Upon reflection of the *Northern Whig's* references to the revolutions of 1848, the Habsburg's relinquishment of Hungary, and the persistent revival of historical animosity towards Papists and Celts, it appears that Fischer's influence is discernible. The objective seems to align with the notion that the *Northern Whig* is serving as the spokesperson for the more militant Protestant individuals, particularly those associated with the later Ulster Volunteer Force. It employs the Austria-Hungary example and the precedent established in the Dual Monarchy as a rationale to vehemently resist any alteration to the administration of Ireland, even if it

⁴⁵ 'The Unionist Incitements to Ulster', *Northern Whig*, 16th May 1892.

necessitates the use of force. An alternative perspective should be acknowledged, considering the evolving and radicalizing nature of the two identities in Ireland. In the aftermath of Parnell's death, the references to violence and rebellious resistance by the Protestants early on might indicate the gravity with which they viewed the matter. Utilizing hyperbolic rhetoric, they sought to emphasize their commitment to the cause, ultimately aiming to secure a political party—in this case, the Conservatives—to champion their interests and safeguard their constitutional position of ascendancy.

Such tribalistic language was not confined to a single article but rather reflected a broader trend.⁴⁶ Following Gladstone's ascent with the support of the Irish Parliamentary Party from July 1892, the *Northern Whig* escalated its rhetoric even further. Leveraging the Bohemian Diet Crisis within Austria-Hungary as its weapon of choice, the newspaper sought to undermine Gladstone's position, although discussions of a Second Home Rule Bill would not commence until the following spring. This appears to be part of the *Northern Whig's* overarching strategy to steer the dialogue in Ireland by initiating conversations before they reached the public domain. This strategy is likely connected to Fischer's role as the assistant editor of the *London Evening Standard*, giving him insight into the political climate and discussions at the heart of the United Kingdom compared to the rest of Irish press. Nevertheless, the *Northern Whig* continues on 29 November 1892:

“The questions is this—sixty per cent of the Bohemian people demands ‘Home Rule’, such as Hungary enjoys, and insists on make its Slavonic tongue the language of the country. But forty per cent of the population is made up of wealthy and cultured Germans, who have

⁴⁶ ‘Home Rule for Bohemia’, *Northern Whig*, 29th November 1892, ‘General Sir George Chesney on the Bill’, *Northern Whig*, 7th August 1893 & ‘Parliamentary Debate’, *Northern Whig*, 6th September 1893.

contributed more than their opponents to make Bohemia what it is, and they will not hear of an independence which would lead them to oppression...the concession of Bohemian 'Home Rule' would provoke armed resistance on the part of German Bohemians, and likewise the complete severance of the ties that still bind Hungary and Austria together"⁴⁷

Plainly, the *Northern Whig's* decision to emphasize the Bohemian Diet Crisis is rooted in the emergence of the new Irish nationalism, closely connected to the advocacy of Gaelic over English and a rejection of British identity, evident in the revival of Celtic sports. The deliberate use of Bohemian Germans is employed strategically to highlight the perceived isolated and outnumbered status of Ulster unionists, who draw parallels between themselves contributing to Ireland, much like the Germans in Bohemia (Czechia), in a disproportionate manner. This aligns with the continuous rhetoric of the paper since the start of 1892, although noticeably less subtle in conveying the staunch resistance to any potential legislation to undermine their position. This intensified approach likely responds to growing concerns about the potential introduction of a Second Home Rule Bill in parliament, reminiscent of the circumstances in Bohemia, where such legislation came close to fruition, thwarted only by the filibustering efforts of the Germans.

Examining the *Dublin Daily Express* reveals a prevalent trend among unionist papers, employing Austria-Hungary as a means to undermine the Home Rule Movement. However, a significant divergence arises in how these two papers pursue the same goal. The *Express* chooses to emphasize parliamentary speeches related to the Home Rule debate, using examples from Austria-Hungary or Sweden-Norway, particularly those referenced by Gladstone in support of Home Rule. Simultaneously, it underscores why, from the

⁴⁷ 'Home Rule for Bohemia', *Northern Whig*, 29th November 1892.

Conservative standpoint articulated by figures like Joseph Chamberlain or Lord Salisbury, these examples would inevitably lead to failure. In a manner reminiscent of the *Northern Whig*, the *Dublin Daily Express* highlights the idea that the practice of dualism in Austria-Hungary is entirely incongruent with the situations in Ireland and the United Kingdom. The *Express* cites Salisbury's utilization of Count Von Beust, arguably the architect behind the Compromise of 1867, to challenge Gladstone, as recorded on the 14th of July 1892:

“As regards Hungary, Austria has security in her isolation, as she is surrounded by Slav States, which would make her existence as a separate kingdom impossible. If Ireland, which is separated geographically from England obtained Home Rule, it would be necessary to maintain an enormous naval and military force to prevent her through foreign machinations becoming a source the greatest danger to the sister country”⁴⁸

The rationale behind the news article can be attributed to the timing, occurring in the midst of the General Election in the United Kingdom that July. Consequently, the paper seized the opportunity during the Parliamentary debates to present its recital. However, delving beyond the recitation of the parliamentary debate within the Home Rule factions, the decision by the *Dublin Daily Express* to summarize Gladstone's stance and instead focus on Salisbury's response alludes to the paper's intentions. These intentions can be traced back to its unionist origins and the objective of undermining the legitimacy of Home Rule, particularly within its Irish readership. This becomes particularly apparent in the clear and consistent adoption of the unionist perspective, employing Austria-Hungary as a notable example and highlighting its primary architect to dismiss arguments presented by nationalists and advocates of the Liberal Party. In this scenario, the counterclaim suggests that Austria-Hungary could serve as

⁴⁸ 'Home Rule', *Dublin Daily Express*, 14th July 1892.

a parallel example for the future of the United Kingdom if dualism were to be embraced, even by its own architect.

In a similar vein with the heightening of emotions as Gladstone in the following year would begin to push for the Second Home Rule Bill. The *Express* on the 2nd of February 1893 published Chamberlain's retorque to Gladstone's position:

“Mr. Gladstone in a speech as remarkable for what it left unsaid as for what it said...did indeed get in, for the hundredth time, his hackneyed parallel between Ireland and Hungary and he charged Lord Salisbury with having used it when he was coquetting with the party. It is we should hope, unnecessary to say that Lord Salisbury never said anything of the sort. [Salisbury] pointed out that the duality of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was forced upon that Empire by its history, and was the source of difficulty in regard to the foreign policy...a difficulty only overcome by the personal qualities and personal authority of the Emperor”⁴⁹

Once again, akin to its *Northern Whig* counterpart, the *Dublin Daily Express* reaffirms the discourse through the Austro-Hungarian perspective while simultaneously undermining the credibility of that very standpoint. In the *Express's* approach, however, the focus is directed towards failures of dualism at a time of pivotal developments within the United Kingdom. Furthermore, mirroring the previous approach, the framing of the debate involves a concise presentation of the Liberal position, with a sharper and more detailed emphasis on attacking Home Rule, this time articulated by Lord Salisbury himself. Fundamentally, these editorial decisions shed light on how Austria-Hungary is strategically wielded against Gladstone, who had proposed shared commonalities between the two states. The persistent focus on

⁴⁹ 'Parliamentary Debate', *Dublin Daily Express*, 2nd February 1893.

underscoring this point seems to be a calculated strategic decision by the paper to steer the debate toward the Dual Monarchy perspective. The aim is to highlight the intellectual shortcomings of such a position, thereby eroding its political legitimacy in parliament and, ideally, among the readership in Ireland.

Another discernible trend during the period of 1892-1893 in the *Dublin Daily Express* is the continual emphasis on the myriad issues associated with nationalism, particularly its agitation, within Austria-Hungary, aiming to undermine the stability and administration of the state.⁵⁰ A noteworthy instance occurred on the 22nd of February 1892, when radical nationalist members of parliament in Hungary refused to open parliament for debate:

“Madurasy, second in point of seniority [in the Reichsrat] and also a member of the extreme left, forthwith declared that he would only lead the members to the Castle, provided that the Hungarian tricolour instead of the black and yellow flag, the ensign of the Imperial house of Austria should be hoisted”⁵¹

This specific case unveils a more profound layer in comparison to other instances within the paper's continuous criticism of how nationalism contributed to the destabilization of Austria-Hungary while simultaneously bolstering local minority groups in the Empire. The explicit rejection by the state's political body to proceed with political affairs based on flags and emblems underscores Austria-Hungary's escalating dysfunctionality, evident as early as the 1890s. Over the course of two years, the newspaper consistently highlights the nationalistic challenges faced in Austria-Hungary by the empowered Hungarians, as well as the arguably

⁵⁰ ‘National Sentiment in Hungary’, *Dublin Daily Express*, 22nd February 1892, ‘Defeat of the Austrian Government’, *Dublin Daily Express*, 3rd December 1892, ‘Hofer’s Statue in the Tyrol’, *Dublin Daily Express*, 30th September 1893, ‘Hungary Threatened with Poland’s Fate’, *Dublin Daily Express*, 17th October 1893.

⁵¹ ‘National Sentiment in Hungary’, *Dublin Daily Express*, 22nd February 1892.

marginalized Italians and Czechs. These serve as subtle indications by the paper, suggesting potential concerns among Ulster Protestants about their own future if Irish Catholics were granted Home Rule—a apprehension that was prominently emphasized in the more militant rhetoric of the *Northern Whig* and the oppression of the elevated Saxon by British military enforcement.

In a broader sense, the simultaneous rise of Gladstone and the introduction of the Second Home Rule Bill provide valuable insights into the course of the Home Rule debate. These events also illuminate the ongoing influence of Austria-Hungary, comparable to its Sweden-Norway counterpart, in shaping the narratives presented by both nationalist and unionist press outlets, whether in favour of or against Home Rule. The reputation of the Empire and its Dualist system of governance, as opposed to the veneration of Emperor Francis Joseph, was already undergoing scrutiny. The unionist press took the lead in framing the debate within the context of Austria-Hungary, shaping the narrative from the outset. In contrast, the nationalist press, much like their political counterparts, engaged in internal conflicts weakened their message, compelling them to adopt existing narratives.

The Hungarian Constitutional Crisis impact on the Irish Home Rule Movement and Press

Queen Victoria's visit to Ireland in 1900 commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Act of Union and aimed to mitigate the escalating radical nationalism in the country. The aftermath witnessed a blend of loyal demonstrations and open protests.⁵² Concurrently, the Parnellite split among Irish Nationalists was amended between 1898 and 1902, culminating in a united

⁵² David Ross, *Ireland: History of a Nation*, (Glasgow, Waverly Books Limited, 2002) pp. 17-18, Neil Hegarty, *Story of Ireland: In Search of a New National Memory*, (Bungay: Clays Ltd, 2011), pp. 248-9, A. Alan O'Day, *Irish Home Rule 1867-1921*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 189-190.

front against unionist dominance within a decade. Undaunted by these developments, George Wyndham, Chief Secretary for Ireland, perceived an opportunity to weaken Nationalist support by facilitating small tenants in purchasing land from landlords. Consequently, the Irish Land Act of 1903 was introduced, offering compensation to bridge the gap between Irish tenants and landowners, employing a strategy of killing Home Rule with kindness.⁵³ This again exemplified Unionist proactive tactics in steering the Home Rule discourse, specifically by undermining the nationalist political base through land reform.

Turning to Austria-Hungary, in the decades preceding the Great War, the state showcased its dysfunctionality through a continuous string of domestic crises. By the end of the 1890s, the Czechs had lost their advocacy for the use of the Czech language alongside German in the administration of the Bohemian Diet. However, in 1898, a military request to increase recruit quotas triggered the Hungarian Constitutional Crisis.⁵⁴ The advanced age of Francis Joseph and the anticipation of Franz Ferdinand as the heir-apparent, rumoured to support trialism—a state for the Southern Slavs in Austria-Hungary—led the Hungarians to fear that Austria would undermine their privileged position in the future. Consequently, with the economic strength of Transleithania on the rise, the Near East (Balkans) question dormant for years, and the Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese war, the Hungarians were motivated to assertively strengthen their own position.⁵⁵

The crisis peaked during the Hungarian Parliamentary election of 1905, when the long-dominant Liberal Party lost its majority to a coalition of Hungarian nationalists, liberal

⁵³ Foster, *Modern Ireland*, pp. 434-6, Jackson, *Home Rule*, pp. 93-96 & Eunan O' Halpin, *The Decline of the Union: British Government in Ireland 1892-1920*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1987), pp. 25-31.

⁵⁴ Gunther Rothenberg, "Toward a National Hungarian Army: The Military Compromise of 1868 and Its Consequences" in *Slavic Review*, Vol. 31, No. 4, (1972), *JSTOR*, pp. 814-15.

⁵⁵ Norman Stone, "Constitutional Crises in Hungary 1903-1906" in *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 45, No. 104, (1967), pp. 166-67.

dissidents, and clericals. This coalition demanded that Hungarian be adopted as the language of command in all Hungarian military regiments. Emperor Francis Joseph found this outcome completely unacceptable, leading him to dissolve parliament and appoint József Kristoffy as Interior Minister. To bring the coalition to the negotiation table, Kristoffy threatened to implement universal suffrage as part of the government's program.⁵⁶ The state teetered on the brink of civil war, prompting the General Staff to draft plans for a comprehensive military occupation of Hungary. However, military intervention was never ordered due to the cautionary impacts of the Russian Revolution of 1905 and the dissolution of the Norway-Sweden Union.⁵⁷ Eventually, Emperor Francis Joseph's critical decision to abandon the proposal for universal suffrage brought the nationalist coalition back to negotiations, restoring a semblance of the status quo. Nonetheless, the long-term consequences of the coalition's actions severely discredited the Hungarian parliament. By the time Tisza returned in 1913, he faced almost no opposition in parliament.⁵⁸

Certainly, foreign powers, and even the Irish press, were unaware of these facts. This lack of information offers a distinctive viewpoint on the rationale behind the Irish press's portrayal of the evolving Hungarian Constitutional Crisis. Consistent with this pattern, the unionist press, represented by the *Dublin Daily Express* in this instance, assumed command of the narrative. On New Year's Eve in 1898, the paper asserted the following:

The constitutional treaty between Austria and Hungary, expired to-day, and not having been renewed, a curious extra legem state supervenes. The name state of extra legem actually

⁵⁶ Sugar, Peter, 'Underrated Event: The Hungarian Constitutional Crisis of 1905-6', *East European Quarterly*, Vol. 15, No. 3, (1981), *ProQuest*, pp. 294-5.

⁵⁷ Rothenberg, *Toward*, p. 815-16.

⁵⁸ Peter, *Underrated Event*, pp. 292-3

exists in Austria, where there is no Ausgleich, no Budget, no Extension Bills. The only difference in Austria is that the conditions of affairs is formally patched up by the notorious emergency clause 14, though this is illegally applied⁵⁹

Fundamentally, the article exposes the dysfunctional state of Austria-Hungary. Beyond that, it signifies a perpetuation of established trends since the beginning of the decade. The *Freeman*, throughout this period, maintained at discord with its political faction until 1912, allowing the unionist press to persist in shaping the narrative surrounding Austria-Hungary. A crucial observation emerges: the positive appraisals of Hungarian governance in recent years, as endorsed by Irish nationalists, completely collapsed. The Hungarians strategically used their economic success as a political tool to secure greater rights from Vienna, thereby undermining the credibility of dualism for Ireland. This indirect but clear implication raised the question: what would prevent the Irish from employing a similar strategy?

Demonstrating a collective front, the *Northern Whig* conveys parallel catastrophic portrayals of Austria-Hungary. In its report from January 7th, 1899, the paper asserts:

It would seem as if the attempt to rule by Parliamentary Government a nation composed of so many heterogeneous—nay absolutely hostile—elements was doomed to utter failure, and yet a return to other methods might smash the mosaic structure of the Dual Monarchy into atoms, when the only frail bond which not holds it together breaks asunder, with the life of the venerable Emperor-King Francis Joseph, whom all the races under his rule, though bitterly hating one another, agree in loving⁶⁰

⁵⁹ 'Curious Situation in Austria-Hungary', *Dublin Daily Express*, 31st December 1898.

⁶⁰ 'Our Continental Letter', *Northern Whig*, 7th January 1899.

Evidently, as part of the unionist politicians' strategy to undermine Home Rule in debates by using the Austro-Hungarian framework, there is a consistent tendency among the unionist press to repeatedly highlight the dysfunctional state of Austria-Hungary. It's important to note, however, that the *Northern Whig* distinguishes the revered position of Emperor Francis Joseph from the flawed political administration of Austria-Hungary. This choice to individualize is likely influenced by his personal acclaim and nationalist efforts to equate the Emperor with Austria-Hungary itself. By acknowledging the significant role played by Francis Joseph in maintaining the unity of the Dual Monarchy, the *Northern Whig* can still critique dualism without implicating its constitutional monarch. This approach undermines nationalist attempts to equate the institutions of Austria-Hungary, as advocated for Ireland, with the reputation of Francis Joseph.

Conversely, examining the nationalist press reveals a necessity for the distinct separation, as evidenced by the extensive and significant effort made by the *Freeman* on December 3rd, 1898. During Emperor Francis Joseph's Jubilee, the paper went to great lengths to link the Emperor's actions with the fortunes of Austria-Hungary since 1867:

Nothing is more creditable in the career of Francis Joseph than the intelligence and patriotism with which he met the Hungarian demands in 1867. It was a moment when a very small upheaval indeed might have shattered the Monarchy. Yet, owing largely to common sense and conciliatory spirit of Francis Joseph, it proved a happy turning point in the history of the Empire. Hungary, with her new national liberties, has grown more loyal year by year, and to-day is the most devoted portion of the Dual Monarchy to Francis Joseph's House and person. The Austro-Hungarian Empire is a curious and almost unique problem in

statesmanship which one man has solved by the simple fact of being a good and honest ruler, who has won the affections and enthusiastic devotion of his subjects⁶¹

The month early article sheds light on nationalist decision-making, particularly emphasizing the shift in focus after the crises began. The newspaper refrained from citing Austria-Hungary as a successful example of dualism for nearly five years. Instead, the narrative changed to highlight Austria-Hungary's historical connection with Great Britain, aiming to evoke sympathy and appeal for support in the inevitable partition of the Dual Monarchy between Germany and Russia.⁶² This crucial decision illustrates how the nationalist press accepted Austria-Hungary as the framework for debating Home Rule in Ireland. The lack of emphasis on the success of dualism and the redirection of the narrative towards Austria-Hungary's past affiliation with Great Britain indicate a concession of ground by the nationalist press. It acknowledges that the Hungarian crisis, similar to the Bohemian one, reflects poorly on dualism. Accordingly, the dialogue amongst the nationalist press shifts to align Great Britain and Austria-Hungary in a joint struggle against Russian aims, creating arguments highlighting the shared interests between the two nations.

The effort to find common ground between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary can be seen as a continuation of nationalist attempts to draw parallels between Emperor Francis Joseph and the institutions of Austria-Hungary. However, a crucial aspect of this argument lies in the framing within the discourse surrounding the esteemed emperor, stating that "Hungary, with her new national liberties, has grown more loyal year by year, and today is the most devoted portion of the Dual Monarchy". Clearly, the nationalist press intentionally crafted its

⁶¹ 'Francis Joseph's Jubilee', *Freeman's Journal*, 3rd December 1898.

⁶² 'The Vacant Judgeship', *Freeman's Journal*, 17th January, 1900 & 'The Coming Partition of Austria', *Freeman's Journal*, 5th July 1901.

argument based on the Austria-Hungary framework for Ireland. However, the surprising turn of events significantly undermined their position. This is due to the fact that, with a few exceptions, the Irish predominantly relied on correspondents from England within the unionist press, while the *Freeman* primarily depended on the Reuters agency. Consequently, they were unaware at the time of Hungarian intentions for filibustering for concessions and apprehension about the potential loss of their privileged position. The lack of awareness resulted in the *Freeman* relying on the Hungarians as the primary example of dualist success, thereby strengthening the position of the Austro-Hungarian framework, all the while undermining their own stance.

During the same period when sympathetic nationalist coverage was prevalent, the unionist press consistently sought to undermine the functionality of Austria-Hungary. The primary critique centered around domestic unrest fuelled by nationalist sentiments, aiming to discredit the dualist system.⁶³ Despite aligning with previous efforts to link the success and failures of the Dual Monarchy to Emperor Francis Joseph, the unionist press, exemplified by the *Northern Whig*, acknowledged Francis Joseph's strenuous endeavours to uphold the constitution. This involved leveraging threats of abdication and direct appeals to a diverse array of politicians for compromise. Similarly, the *Dublin Daily Express*, while recognizing Emperor Francis Joseph's efforts to quell domestic turmoil, placed greater emphasis on the Hungarian cause.⁶⁴ This emphasis likely mirrored the astonishment of the Irish newspaper press that the Magyars, having equal political power through the Ausgleich, would challenge

⁶³ 'The Situation in Austria—The Bohemian Question', *Northern Whig*, 18th January 1899 & 'The Situation in Austria', *Northern Whig*, 23rd November 1899 & 'Events in the Far East', *Northern Whig*, 1st March 1901

⁶⁴ 'Gradual separation of Austria and Hungary', *Dublin Daily Express*, 25th May 1899 & 'Elections in Austria-Hungary', *Dublin Daily Express*, 7th January 1901 & 'Closing of the Hungarian Diet', *Dublin Daily Express* 10th September 1901.

the Germans once again. Although it was more a cautionary portrayal, it suggested that Irish nationalists could also disrupt and halt the political system if given the chance.

Acknowledging the continual and recurring presentation of Austria-Hungary amongst the unionist press as a moral lesson against any form of dualism in Ireland. The *Northern Whig* took on the practice of the *Dublin Daily Express* using a prominent figure in this case Lord Roseberry, Liberal leader and Prime Minister, to discredit the nationalist cause:

Premising that the Bills of 1886 and 1893 were dead and buried, [Roseberry] insisted on the importance of the changes which have passed over the aspect of the question. Austria-Hungary and Norway-Sweden were indeed Mr. Gladstone's favourite examples of successful dualism...but every year has served to show the futility of the illustration. Even the nexus of the Ausgleich has been severed in Austria-Hungary, the constitutes of which may be said to be held together only by the slender thread of the Emperor's life. If Lord Roseberry's words mean anything they mean that so far as he is concerned, he is done with Home Rule in the only form in which Irish Nationalists would accept it⁶⁵

Essentially, almost a decade after the second Home Rule Bill, the unionist press, spanning from the Bohemian Diet to the Hungarian Constitutional Crises, has consistently framed the Home Rule debate within the context of Austria-Hungary. Furthermore, it steadfastly criticized the internal challenges confronting the Dual Monarchy, attributing them to nationalist issues that culminated in opposition from the Hungarians themselves—considered by nationalists as the most loyal and capable nationality—against the emperor and government. Consequently, when Lord Roseberry, in theory the closest ally of the nationalists, rejected Home Rule, the

⁶⁵ 'Lord Roseberry's Speech', *Northern Whig*, 15th February 1902.

unionist press portrayed it as emblematic of the "changes which have passed over the aspect of the question," echoing Lord Rosebery's own words. According to the unionist press, the matter, as viewed from their perspective, was effectively dead and buried, likening Austria-Hungary and the Union of Sweden-Norway to obsolete entities which the latter underwent dissolution in 1905.

Deviating from the prevailing trend, the *Daily Express* stood out by emphasizing how the surge of nationalism had led to the swift proliferation of Home Rule movements throughout the continent. The newspaper also shed light on how these movements were eroding the longstanding alliances among the great powers that had historically maintained the concert of Europe and, consequently, the peace. In a departure from its usual stance, the *Daily Express* presented a rare unionist perspective on Austria-Hungary, illustrating the Austrian response to Polish demands as liberal in spirit. This portrayal sought to contrast Austria-Hungary favourably with its more authoritarian neighbours, particularly Prussia, and subtly hinted at Russia's repressive actions through its secretive dealings.

The revival of national feeling all over the Continent—in Germany, Austria, Turkey, Finland, and elsewhere—which has been seen in the last ten years has spread into Poland. Austria meets the agitation in a liberal spirit, and whilst Russia takes good care that any steps which she may take shall not be revealed, Prussia had not been able to conceal the high-handed measures. Though the events which might follow, were Austria to espouse the cause of the Poles, might be unpleasant for both Austria-Hungary and Germany⁶⁶

⁶⁶ 'Polish Home Rule', *Dublin Daily Express* 18th December 1901.

The more favourable depiction of Austria-Hungary in the article, as opposed to its *Northern Whig* counterpart, might signify a subtle shift in Great Britain's foreign policy. With a sense of security within the union and the growing discrediting of Home Rule, even among Liberal leaders like Lord Rosebery, the unionist paper appears to be adopting a strategic approach. By choosing to present the Dual Monarchy in a sympathetic light, it could be employing a tactic akin to that of Francis Joseph, offering a minor concession to the nationalists. Moreover, aligning with nationalist sentiments against Russia could be seen as consistent with the Great Game (1830-1907) dynamics between Great Britain and the Russian Empire in Central Asia. The strained foreign relations between Britain and Russia might be an acknowledgment on the unionist side that Austro-Hungarian interests in maintaining the Balkan status quo align with British interests. This alignment becomes especially notable in the context of the growing distance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, suggesting a nuanced understanding of geopolitical shifts by the unionist press.⁶⁷

Marking the end of 1902, George Wyndham, Chief Secretary for Ireland, approved of the establishment of Land Conference in December. The conference would form the basis of what would become the Irish Land Act of 1903 allowing Irish tenants to purchase their own land with Parliament making up the difference. Hence, the end of the *Freeman's* silence marked with the start of 1903 is hardly coincidental. Specifically, the resurgence of paralleling the actions of Francis Joseph with the system of dualism for Austria-Hungary:

⁶⁷ 'The Condition of Russia', *Northern Whig*, 2nd May 1902, 'Britain, Germany and Austria— Sir H. Rumbold's Views', *Northern Whig*, 30th October 1902, 'Our Continental Letter', *Northern Whig*, 4th February 1903, & 'Austria's Political Position', *Dublin Daily Express*, 23rd May 1901, 'Reviews', *Dublin Daily Express* 9th November 1901, 'Political Crisis in Hungary', *Dublin Daily Express*, 12th August 1903.

Diplomatic rumour was insistent in the assertion that Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria-Hungary, was about to abdicate...Francis Joseph's treat was a manoeuvre to bring the chief Ministers of Austria and Hungary to terms. It has succeeded in so far that the two Cabinets have agreed to prolong the Ausgleich. The difficulties on the score of languages and the constant irritating pressure of all sorts of racial peculiarities, jealousies, and ambitions, the problems of justly fixing the inter-State financial relations and the regulation of customs and tariffs have bidden fair at moments to rend the Empire asunder

The casual political prophet declares that a break-up of the whole system is certain upon the death of Francis Joseph—Hungary to set up for herself, Prague to be the capital of an independent Bohemia, the German provinces to become part and parcel of the Kaiser Wilhelm's territory, Bosnia-Herzegovina to relapse into a distressed province of Turkey. The Emperor himself, the old man has made his throne a final court of appeal, which Czech, German, Magyar, all of them, willingly refer all their differences, sure that he will examine thoroughly and judge with the strictest of justice⁶⁸

This condensed form of the article holds a central position in the publication, marking the resurgence of the nationalist cause after a decade of silence, especially given the upheaval caused by the Hungarian crises, which proved detrimental to the nationalist position. The return of this cause is not only opportune but also a necessity, prompted by several crucial factors. Firstly, the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) had successfully reunited after the Parnellite split by 1903, providing a united front. The *Freeman* is presenting an agenda aligned with the principles of Austria-Hungary once more, noting that the paper, until the end, was not in union

⁶⁸ 'An Empire Saver', *Freeman's Journal*, 20th January 1903.

with the party. Secondly, as indicated in the historical contextual piece, Wyndham, much like the unionist press, was undeterred by the IPP's reunion.

Instead, by initiating the Land Conference, the unionist intent was to undermine the Irish nationalist voting base by addressing their major grievance – lack of self-owned land. This move aimed to uproot the IPP's political support base, a response to the shifting landscape that threatened their influence. Therefore, the opening of the 1903 article not only serves as an agenda for the IPP, drawing inspiration from Austria-Hungary's dualism, but it also responds to the diminishing political support for the IPP by emphasizing the changing dynamics and need for a strategic response at the unionists killing Home Rule by kindness.

Moreover, the article unveils a resurgence of Irish nationalists embracing the framework of Austria-Hungary. Significantly, there was a fundamental shift in the portrayal of Austria-Hungary within the article. Unlike in the past, where the shortcomings of the nationality problem were downplayed or denied, this article acknowledges them. However, it introduces a novel perspective to the Anglosphere readership, focusing on the concessions made by unionists. Despite facing significant challenges related to enduring pressures from various racial peculiarities, Austria-Hungary is portrayed as overcoming these difficulties. Emperor Francis Joseph's relentless efforts are hyperbolically highlighted as instrumental in maintaining the integrity of the diverse state. This departure marks a significant shift from the narrative dominance of the unionist press over the past decade, during which Austria-Hungary was consistently depicted as a cautionary tale against dualism. Instead, the nationalists seized

the opportunity presented by unionist concessions, made from a position of strength, to revitalize their argument—a strategy they would adopt for years to come.⁶⁹

The Bosnian Crisis Through the Irish Press

Much like the Hungarian election of 1905/6, the General Election in Great Britain had a profound impact on the state's trajectory for years to come. Firstly, the outright majority secured by the Liberals, led by Henry Campbell-Bannerman, rendered the IPP politically irrelevant, as noted by Asquith in 1910 when the need for votes led to him prompting a revival of the old alliance by raising the Third Home Rule Bill.⁷⁰ Secondly, the Liberals implemented extensive welfare reforms such as the Old Age Pensions Act (1908) and the National Health Insurance Act (1911).⁷¹ While deemed necessary to address working-class struggles, these reforms placed additional strain on the budget. As the costs of the new welfare state, debt from the Second Boer War, and the escalating naval arms race with Germany mounted, Bannerman was compelled to make the concessions.⁷²

Examining Ireland, the Irish Land Act of 1903 achieved its intended effect by diminishing Nationalist influence, as most Irish agriculturalists found contentment with their small farm plots. Specifically, visible when the call for further land agitation, leading to the Ranch Wars (1906-9), emerged, it exposed divisions successfully created by the strategy of killing Home Rule with kindness. Some, particularly in Connacht, favoured the agitation, while others

⁶⁹ 'Lessons from Hungary', *Freeman's Journal*, 7th July 1903, 'The Situation in Hungary', *Freeman's Journal*, 14th November 1903, 'Austro-Hungarian Difficulty', *Freeman's Journal*, 19th September 1905, 'The Crisis in Austro-Hungary', *Freeman's Journal*, 6th February 1905, 'Count von Luedow', *Freeman's Journal*, 7th July 1905, 'The Emperor's Ultimatum', *Freeman's Journal*, 25th September 1905.

⁷⁰ Harold McCready, "Home Rule and the Liberal Party, 1899-1906" in *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 52, (1963), pp. 316-17.

⁷¹ George Dangerfield, *The Damnable Question: A study in Anglo-Irish relations*, (London: Quartet, 1979), pp. 47-49

⁷² Jackson, *Home Rule*, pp. 95-7.

were openly hostile to it.⁷³ But, the underlying cause for the movement stemmed from the failure of the Irish Council Bill in 1907, prompting a return to old agitation tactics, unbeknownst to the Irish nationalists, which were not the driving force behind their success. Nonetheless, Westminster's significant achievement in addressing Irish grievances, initially undermining the political support of the Irish Parliamentary Party IPP, had an unforeseen consequence. The resolution of Irish social and economic grievances simplified the Irish Question to a direct demand for self-governance as political equals.⁷⁴

The Home Rule debate appeared settled; the IPP had severed ties with the Liberals after the Second Boer War, and the 1906 victory for the Liberals seemed merely a continuation of Irish nationalist decline over two decades. The Irish press, aligning with the nationalists, continued highlighting Emperor Francis Joseph's efforts to quell Hungarian strife for years.⁷⁵ In contrast, the unionist press focused on dualism's failures, emphasizing the nationality struggle hindering Austria-Hungary's political governance.⁷⁶ Regardless of political affiliation, the Irish press consistently covered the Hungarian Crises before it was overshadowed by the Bosnian Crisis. This attention wasn't surprising, given that it served as the framework for discussing Irish dualism for over a decade. Additionally, when considering the historical

⁷³ O'Day, *Irish Home Rule*, pp. 219-220.

⁷⁴ Boyce, *The Irish Question*, pp. 42-44.

⁷⁵ 'Lessons from Hungary', *Freeman's Journal*, 7th July 1903, 'The Situation in Hungary', *Freeman's Journal*, 14th November 1903, 'Austro-Hungarian Difficulty', *Freeman's Journal*, 19th September 1905, 'The Crisis in Austro-Hungary', *Freeman's Journal*, 6th February 1905, 'Count von Luedow', *Freeman's Journal*, 7th July 1905, 'The Emperor's Ultimatum', *Freeman's Journal*, 25th September 1905

⁷⁶ 'The Military Question', *Dublin Daily Express*, 7th September 1903, 'The Hungarian Deadlock', *Dublin Daily Express*, 14th September 1903, 'New Ministry', *Dublin Daily Express*, 7th October 1903, 'Rosebery's Speech', *Dublin Daily Express*, 20th March 1905, 'Austria-Hungary', *Dublin Daily Express*, 18th April 1905, 'Austria-Hungary', *Dublin Daily Express*, 16th September 1905, 'No Prospect of a Settlement', *Dublin Daily Express*, 25th September 1905, 'Black Clouds', *Dublin Daily Express*, 30th September 1905, 'Interview with Count Andrassy', *Dublin Daily Express*, 2nd November 1905, 'Settlement of the Hungarian Question', *Dublin Daily Express*, 7th April 1906, 'Hungarian Approval', *Dublin Daily Express*, 15th May 1906, 'Curse of Dualism', *Dublin Daily Express*, 30th May 1906, 'Hungary's New Struggle', *Dublin Daily Express*, 20th September 1906, 'Hungarian Nationalities', *Dublin Daily Express*, 3rd December 1906, 'Hapsburg Radicalism', *Dublin Daily Express*, 12th January 1907, 'End of the Long-Standing Feud', *Dublin Daily Express*, 7th October 1907.

context, the Austrian plans for the occupation and military governance were reflected upon.

The hyperbolic language and fixation amongst the Irish press surrounding the saving or ominous demise of Austria-Hungary, unbeknownst to the Irish press, mirrored the sentiments within Austria-Hungary itself—a state seemingly on the brink of civil war.

Therefore, the eruption of the Bosnian Crises did not result in unanimous condemnation among the Irish, as one might expect. Instead, the ongoing fifteen-year debate was once again co-opted, positioning the unionist and nationalist press in favour of and against the state of Austria-Hungary. The *Freeman*, mirroring nationalist sentiments, published a headline on October 5, 1908, titled *Serious Check for Great Britain and Russia*. The title conveyed the perceived opportunity that nationalists believed had presented itself. The state, often declared as failing and cited as an epitome of the pitfalls of dualism, had diplomatically outmanoeuvred the concert of Europe. In defence of its actions, it wrote:

France will be less affected than Austria wants to pass through the opening made by Bulgaria in the Treaty of Berlin...that the Emperor Francis Joseph's love for peace and his moderation are well known—the journal is for this reason of opinion that the Emperor's letter is a step in the direction of peace. By his letter the Emperor puts France and the other Powers in the presence of a *fait accompli*. In a word, it is reopening the Eastern question, so fruitful in conflict and dangers, Europe cannot unite too closely to localise the smouldering fire⁷⁷

The portrayal of Austria-Hungary's actions, suggesting that it left the other great powers in a *fait accompli* position following Emperor Francis Joseph's letters to foreign sovereigns or foreign offices, might seem unusual without context. However, when observed in the

⁷⁷ 'Serious Check for Great Britain and Russia', *The Freeman's Journal*, 5th October 1908.

circumstances since 1893, certain aspects of the presentations in the nationalist paper start to reveal a coherent pattern. The decision to utilize the revered Emperor Francis Joseph as a means to downplay the gravity of the international crises aligns seamlessly with the paper's approach in the preceding years. After all Emperor Francis Joseph had been consistently used as an exemplar of Austria-Hungary's ability to overcome challenges. Furthermore, framing the situation as *fait accompli*, implying that actions were already taken and irreversible by all accounts, would typically provoke diplomatic outrage. However, it fits entirely with the paper's consistent presentation of Austria-Hungary up to this point. Without knowledge of the conspiracy between Austria and Russia, the presented opportunism to reaffirm its great power status would have been accepted and portrayed at face value.

Reinforcing its position, assumedly to the backlash of siding with Austria-Hungary, the newspaper continued with its line of argument for a few days. Writing on the 6th of October:

Bulgarian Independence came yesterday at Tirnovo...the declaration is a bad blow for the new regime at Constantinople. True, it changes nothing in the actual situation, anymore that the promised annexation of Bosnia. [Furthermore] if Turkey has had its theoretical rights abolished by the stroke of a foreign pen, then England and France find themselves scarcely less humiliated by the course of the events⁷⁸

Advancing its argument in favour of Austria-Hungary humiliating the Entente Powers and importantly Great Britain, the paper continues on the 7th of October stating that:

⁷⁸ 'The Eastern Crisis', *The Freeman's Journal*, 6th October 1908.

Several papers speak of the Tirnovo Proclamation as a defeat of the great diplomatist, King Edward, and insinuate that Great Britain would be ready to take her revenge if she were not afraid of doing the Young Turkish regime a bad turn in advising a declaration of war⁷⁹

Despite appearing counterproductive in straining relations between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain, especially after fostering arguments based on shared interests in the Balkans during the early years of the Hungarian Crisis, the nationalist paper's stance likely reflects a stronger influence from domestic political developments. The loss of Home Rule champions in the Liberals due to the Second Boer War, the narrative dominance of the unionist press, and the sidelining of nationalist influence amid strong majorities in Westminster may have contributed to the sense that the Home Rule debate was indeed over during the time of the land agitations. Without the knowledge that 1910 would completely overturn their fortunes and lacking hindsight regarding the disastrous consequences of the policy of killing Home Rule with kindness, the *Freeman's* decision to present the Dual Monarchy as victorious and shaming Great Britain appears to be a practical one. It can be seen as the paper's attempt to foster Anglophobic sentiment to gain political capital among content Irish farmers who had, in recent years, been won over by concessions.

Assessing the extent to which Austrophilia had permeated the Irish nationalist press proves challenging to distil into a coherent evaluation. Nevertheless, during the German-Austrian delay in convening a Conference of Europe to discuss proposed changes to the Treaty of Berlin, a noteworthy article was published on the 19th of October, stating:

⁷⁹ 'Attitude of Austria', *The Freeman's Journal*, 7th October 1908.

Little Serbia has been filling the world of as of late with the noise of its protests and its threats. Serbia against Austria-Hungary, what could it seem but like the yapping of a fiery-tempered puppy against a great beast that could gore and devour it in the lifting of a paw and the opening of a maw. Serbia may very well extract from Austria, with the support of the Powers, some of those concessions and in matters of trade which are really necessary to her well-being...Austria herself would tend to gain by making friendly concessions that would calm the long-existing animosity...Serbia would probably cease to be so overwhelmingly pro-Russian when it finds that Russia will do nothing for her⁸⁰

Clearly, two weeks following the initiation of the Bosnian Crisis, the newspaper maintains a steadfast stance, asserting Austria-Hungary's ability to act as it wishes and openly diminishing Serbia to that of a barking puppy. Nevertheless, a subtle shift in the narrative emerges, suggesting that there is much to be gained by accommodating Serbia's calls for compensation. This shift likely stems from the foreign circumstances of the continent. Despite the nationalist press originally aligning with Austria-Hungary in the spirit of the Irish debate, the revelation of the conspiracy between Austro-Hungarian and Russian foreign ministers, Alois Aehrenthal and Alexander Izvolsky, became widely known in the continental press and swiftly reached its English counterpart. Fearing potential diplomatic isolation for Austria-Hungary and recognizing the direct threat to their initial positions on Austria's success, the nationalist press strategically adjusted their presentation to safeguard their stance, mindful of past failures related to Bohemia, Hungary, and Bosnia.

The unionist papers, retaining access to correspondents from English publications, naturally assumed a leading role in reporting on the Bosnian Crisis. This continued pattern of shaping

⁸⁰ 'Servian Ambitions', *The Freeman's Journal*, 19^h October 1908.

the narrative around Austria-Hungary persisted, prompting the nationalist press to make further adjustments. Almost a month prior, on the 29th of September, the *Dublin Daily Express* had referenced a correspondent from the London-based *Pall Mall Gazette*, stating:

Everywhere, save in strictly Teutonic surroundings, did I hear the attitude of Austria-Hungary the subject of the severest condemnation. This moment was held to have been chosen for Bulgaria by the wire pullers of Vienna. A strong Turkey would have postponed this idea for many a long day: till certainly a very handsome quid pro quo could have been demanded for Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgarian aspiration. [Austria] trusts that Bulgarian gratitude will express itself by a tendency to look towards Vienna instead of St. Petersburg in the future. Indeed, I may say that last few months have witnessed a duel between Russian and Austria for Bulgarian affection⁸¹

English correspondents, to its full advantage, resulting in the earliest reporting on the unfolding events within Austria-Hungary. However, it would be more accurate to state that the unionist papers maintained their dominant position in steering the discourse, influencing the tone and framing of Austria-Hungary's presentation. It is unsurprising that, by trusting English correspondents, the unionist papers aligned themselves with the sentiments of their English counterparts. In this instance, the English were collectively critical, aligning with the continent and placing the unionist position in the majority, condemning the proclaimed belligerent. The strategy of opposing Austria-Hungary as a dangerous anachronism proved successful due to fortuitous circumstances. The nationalist press found itself compelled to cede ground and conform to the perceived popular stance.

⁸¹ 'Will Russia aid Turkey', *Dublin Daily Express*, 29th September 1908.

Seizing this opportunity, the *Dublin Express* held firm, asserting that the Dual Monarchy's foreign diplomacy was subordinate to Berlin.⁸² Arguably, this played a substantial role in shaping the nationalist discourse around Austria-Hungary, promoting the idea of compromise and avoiding Germany's fate as a pariah state. As for the reasons behind the unionist press's concerted effort to link the fate of Austria-Hungary with Germany, two driving motivations emerge. Firstly, the unionist press adopted a tactic akin to the nationalists, connecting the sentiment of one subject with another. In this case, portraying Austria-Hungary as a subordinate state of Germany indirectly posed a threat to Great Britain by escalating its naval armament and fuelling the naval arms race further. Secondly, through the actions of Austria-Hungary, the unionist press, having successfully framed the Home Rule debate through the lens of the Dual Monarchy, could now reinforce their position. They portrayed Austria-Hungary not just as a failed experiment in dualism on administrative grounds but also as a new pariah state, violating international treaties and undermining the newly established constitutional order in Turkey.

The *Northern Whig* continued its unionist practice of criticizing the annexation, highlighting the strain it imposed on the relationship between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary. Considering the historically cordial relationship between King Edward and Emperor Francis Joseph, the paper consistently appealed to this connection. At times, it even stressed this relationship above the diplomatic ties between the two states while attempting to grapple with the new reality of Austria-Hungary realigning itself with the German Empire. On the 6th of October, the paper proclaimed:

⁸² 'Austria and the Triple Alliance', *Freeman's Journal*, 13th February 1908, 'German Ambassador on Current Affairs', *Northern Whig*, 26th February 1908, 'The Pearl of the Adriatic', *Dublin Daily Express*, 30th May 1908, 'Hypocrisy and Treachery', *Dublin Daily Express*, 6th October 1908, 'Germany to Support Austria', *Dublin Daily Express*, 9th October 1908, 1908, 'Austrian Cabinet Resigns', *Dublin Daily Express*, 10th November 1908.

His Majesty's Government cannot admit the right of any Power to alter an international treaty without the consent of other parties to it, and they will therefore refuse to sanction any infraction of the Berlin Treaty. The news of the Bulgarian and Austrian action has been received in London with marked disfavour, Russia is prepared to co-operate with the Powers to prevent a warlike outbreak in the East of Europe⁸³

The emphasis on the sovereign relationship, particularly the recent visit of King Edward to Ischl, as a symbol of friendship between the two monarchs, took precedence over the diplomatic links between the two states, persisting in the following day:

The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador interviewed said the Emperor did not tell King Edward at Ischl of Austria's intentions because the annexation of Bosnia was only decided on by the Cabinet on September 24...Count von Khevenhueller-Metch, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, interviewed yesterday by a representative of the *Journal des Debats*, said it was untrue to say that Austria had egged on Bulgaria to proclaim her independence⁸⁴

The *Northern Whig* mirrors what the *Dublin Daily Express* conveyed through its complete avoidance of the topic. Both papers, in the past, had separated Emperor Francis Joseph from Austria-Hungary. The decision to go to such lengths was influenced by the complicated dynamic between the two states. Although their sovereigns maintained a cordial relationship, the two states being friendly, they were separated by a divergence of opinion over Wilhelm II and his German Empire. Nevertheless, the *Northern Whig* places significant emphasis on this relationship and addresses it directly when presenting what might have

⁸³ 'The British View, *Northern Whig*, 6th October 1908.

⁸⁴ 'Austria and Bulgaria did Not Act in Concert', *Northern Whig*, 8th October 1908.

seemed like a betrayal by Austria-Hungary, the state, as reported by the Dublin Express.⁸⁵

The reputation of Emperor Francis Joseph was not even mentioned by the Dublin Express. In this instance, the *Northern Whig* distinguishes itself among the unionist press by deviating from the prevailing trend and portraying Emperor Francis Joseph as an extension of Austria-Hungary.⁸⁶ This marks a notable departure for the unionist paper, recognizing the Emperor's personal grief as a crucial factor in the future decision-making during the July Crises.

The Sarajevo Assassinations in the Irish Press

The Liberals grappled with the financial repercussions of the expanded welfare state, prompting a call for tax reform to address the new deficit. Under Herbert Asquith's leadership, the Liberal Party proposed the People's Budget in 1909, aiming to increase taxes on the wealthy. Initially rejected by the House of Lords, it wasn't until the 1910 General Election that the House of Lords relinquished its veto against the coalition of Liberals and IPP. Despite this, the delay in tax reform significantly impacted Asquith, prompting a second election in December of the same year. The objective of which was to secure a mandate for the Parliament Act of 1911, eliminating the House of Lords' veto power. The last defence by unionists against Home Rule legislation was demolished. In exchange for their support, Asquith in agreement with Redmond introduced the Third Home Rule Bill in 1912.⁸⁷ Despite facing rejection three times in the House of Lords, the new Parliamentary Bill eventually secured approval in 1914. Austria-Hungary, which had served as the exemplary success of dualism since Gladstone's time and shaped the Home Rule debate in Ireland for two decades, ironically became the final obstacle.

⁸⁵ 'Hypocrisy and Treachery, *Dublin Daily Express*, 6th October 1908.

⁸⁶ 'Emperor Francis Joseph's Part', *Northern Whig*, 1st December 1908.

⁸⁷ Foster, *Modern Ireland*, pp. 462-3, R. Fanning, *Fatal Path*, pp. 30-31.

The Bosnian Crisis had unintended consequences for Austria-Hungary. The humiliated Russians fostered the Balkan League, leading to the downfall of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkan Wars (1912-13). This isolation left the Dual Monarchy paranoid about its leadership, with calls for dismemberment intensifying suspicions of Russian intentions. Faced with the threat of internal disintegration, the Austro-Hungarian leadership chose to confront Serbia and Russia, believing they still held the perceived advantage.⁸⁸ The state's commitment to war after 1912 is evident in the Hungarians' actions, approving a 123% increase in the military budget and meeting new recruit quotas for the minimal concession of reducing active duty from three to two years.⁸⁹ Unfortunately, these changes were too late to win the Great War. Nevertheless, the assassination of Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo on June 28th 1914, the heir-apparent of Austria-Hungary, provided the casus belli needed for the military class. Consequently, with the blank check from Germany, the Dual Monarchy bound its fate to what, with hindsight, could be called political suicide. Nonetheless, the Irish press had a completely different take from the time of the Sarajevo assassination.

The Sarajevo murders of Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie, while a personal tragedy for Emperor Francis Joseph due to the loss of his nephew and heir-apparent to Austria-Hungary, were not entirely negative. The tragedy became linked to the grieving Emperor, who had already salvaged his reputation among the English press by distancing himself from the Bosnian affair. This closeness with Emperor Francis Joseph grieving alongside his subjects allowed for a diplomatic revival for the Dual Monarchy, which had faced pariah status after the Bosnian Crisis. Furthermore, it was a significant benefit for the Hungarians, as Franz Ferdinand's sympathetic outlook on the Slavs of the empire had initially triggered their

⁸⁸ Watson, *Ring of Steel*, pp. 25-28.

⁸⁹ Schindler, *Fall of the Double Eagle*, pp. 37-40.

obstruction efforts. This fact was highlighted by the unionist press, with the *Dublin Express* stating:

Once more the assassin's hand has struck a cruel and deadly blow at the most illustrious of the reigning families of Europe. A moment when the descent of such a stroke must seem almost like a death-warrant to the permanence of the Dual Monarchy. It is certain that if the national aspirations of Austria's Slavonic subjects had anything to say to the matter, the crime was as stupid as it was wicked.

The large Slavonic element in the population of Austria-Hungary had much more to gain than to lose by the prospect of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand's increasing influence in the Austro-Hungarian State. The heir-presumptive was credited with the definite intention of working to transform the Dual Monarchy into a Triple Monarchy; conferring the predominantly Slavonic parts of the Empire the same degree of federal independence that is now possessed by Hungary⁹⁰

While the article expresses sympathy for Emperor Francis Joseph's extensive losses due to suicide and murder, there is a profound sense of confusion and contempt for what the Irish press perceives as counterproductive Slavic ambitions. In retrospect, this reflects the divergence of Irish nationalism and pan-Slavic visions regarding the Southern Slav question. The *Dublin Express*, having portrayed Austria-Hungary as a failed example of dualism in the eyes of the unionist press, unsurprisingly sees the assassination as a death warrant for the empire. Nevertheless, it presents the event with sensitivity, condemning the Serbian crime as stupid and wicked—a stark contrast to the constantly antagonistic reporting during the

⁹⁰ 'The Murdered Archduke', *Dublin Daily Express*, 29th June 1914.

Bosnian Crisis. Another noteworthy aspect of the significant change in the unionist paper is that the *Dublin Express* reported Sir Edward Grey's speech glorifying and, in many ways, reinstating the Austria-Hungary Monarchy as a friend and partner for the future. A small snippet states:

Heroic head of a mighty State, rich in splendid traditions, and associated with us in this country in some of the most moving and treasured chapters of our common history. He and his people had always been our friends and in the name of the Commons, and of the nation, in presence of this last and most inscrutable affliction, they respectfully tendered to him and to the great family of nations of which he was the venerable and the venerated head their heartfelt and most affection sympathy⁹¹

At the core of it, the decision to present the speech in full goes to great lengths to reveal the new portrayal of Austria-Hungary among the unionist press in a positive light. Particularly, the focus on the long-term relationship between the two states and the traditions or institutions that the unionists had condemned for two decades. The reasoning behind this decision could be the continued pragmatic approach of the newspaper to align with the times. As part of the English correspondents, the unionist papers would more than likely fall in line with the rest of the English press, choosing to present Austria-Hungary in a realigned and positive light. After all, the young reformist but unprepared heir Karl I provided a new future for Austria-Hungary. Therefore, the unionist sharp adjustment to a sympathetic and praiseworthy narrative is in line with the new realities of the Dual Monarchy, which was not threatened by the divisive personality of Ferdinand.

⁹¹ 'The Austrian Tragedy', *Dublin Daily Express*, 1st July 1914.

Similar displays of confusion about the assassination by a radical Bosnian-Serb at the prospect of trialism were commented on in the *Northern Whig*, also on the 30th of June:

There was one man in Europe capable, and apparently, willing to solve the Southern Slav problem to the satisfaction of the Slavs under the Hapsburg Crown and to the honour of the monarchy. That man was his Imperial Highness the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, and he now lies dead with his Slav wife, murdered by the race he was wishful to free

The majority of Southern Slavs are strongly in favour of remaining subjects of the house which their forefathers elected to reign over them in the twelfth century. They are loyal and would be satisfied with the formation of a Slav State within the Monarchy which would be possessed of equal rights with Austria and Hungary. This is called Trialism, and this is the policy which Franz Ferdinand upheld⁹²

Once more, reflecting on the drastic shift from criticizing and belittling dualism to the defence of tribalism proposed by Ferdinand speaks to the significant change in the position and presentation of Austria-Hungary. It is challenging to attribute this shift solely to a sympathetic outlook on the loss of the heir-apparent, especially given the track record of the unionist press. Instead, the remainder of the article provides insight into the broader unionist and, by extension, English outlook on the state of affairs. Continuing, the article proclaims that:

Since the Balkan war Servia has been putting out every effort to poison the Croats, Bosnians and Dalmatians against their ancient rulers, and to draw them close to their kindred in the

⁹² 'Franz Ferdinand and the Southern Slavs', *Northern Whig*, 30th June 1914.

Balkans and behind Serbia is Russia, who is obliged, in order to preserve her position in the Slavonic world, to interest herself in the Southern Slav question

The old dread that the death of the present Emperor would mean the breaking up of the Habsburg Empire was dying out. The assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand will set the best of the southern Slavs in opposition to the Pan-Serbism of Serbia, who has again, thought this time indirectly, proved by her cruelty her total inability to direct the affairs of a Southern Slav Empire upon civilised lines⁹³

Similarly to the Bosnian Crisis, the subtle differences in focus among the unionist press reveal the broader reasoning behind the presentation of Austria-Hungary. The *Northern Whig*, in this case, presents the Serbians with contempt, fuelling pan-Slavic terrorism and further discrediting their credibility as the future leader of a Slavic Empire. Instead, they are portrayed as puppets of St. Petersburg, encouraging Serbia to provoke Austria-Hungary in the name of defending its position in the Slavonic world. Arguably, it is this fundamental perception of Russia and its role in fostering pan-Slavic ideals and terrorism among Eastern and Southern Slavs that is recognizable in the shift in narrative among the unionist press. The adjustment made with the settling of the Home Rule debate aligns future presentations of Austria-Hungary with the English press, which was seeking a form of rapprochement with Austria-Hungary as the natural ally in checking the Russian advancement in Thrace.

A fittingly conclusionary presentation of the papers under investigation, the Irish nationalist paper arguably takes a more neutral stance on the situation, declaring that:

⁹³ 'Franz Ferdinand and the Southern Slavs', *Northern Whig*, 30th June 1914.

Only time can show whether the difficulties which it was assumed would render the reign of the archduke Francis a stormy one will prove too much for his nephew, a young man who has had no experience of State business and no training for the high office. Will the Dual Monarch go to pieces? That is now the favourite speculation of the gossips.

They have been saying much the same thing for many years past, as the threatened conflict of nationalities, religious, commercial and other interests, spelling the dissolution of the Empire, has yet not taken place, but, on the other hand, the Empire has become stronger and more prosperous under the sway of an old man, it is proper to take these direful prophecies with a little reserve⁹⁴

In many ways, the presentation of Austria-Hungary as defying the odds in the past and only time being able to tell its future is fitting for the paper. After all, the Dual Monarchy had overcome a string of crises that defined its final two decades of existence, all of which were presented as the end and failure of the dualism system. Nevertheless, the conclusion of the Home Rule debate presents the new nationalist outlook to Austria-Hungary as just another state. Its colourless but palatable reporting on the continent's outrage to the assassination is reflective of the future of Austria-Hungary among the nationalists. While the unionists began aligning their reporting with that of the English press about the friendship and long-standing shared interests of the two kingdoms, the nationalists, *Freeman*, now in line with the party, moved on to the next challenge, which was the Ulster question.

⁹⁴ 'The Assassinations', *Freeman's Journal*, 30th June 1914.

Conclusion

The Irish Press's perspectives on Austria-Hungary underwent notable fluctuations during the Bohemian, Hungarian, Bosnian, and later July Crises. Initially instrumental in the Second Home Rule Bill debates for or against dualism in Ireland, it later became a focal point in the discussions on Home Rule under unionist influence. The zenith of Austria-Hungary's influence was observed during the Hungarian Constitutional Crises from 1898 to 1905. However, the most significant impact on its presentation occurred during the later Bosnian and Sarajevo assassination crises. Bosnia compelled unionists to compromise on the role of Emperor Francis Joseph, while nationalists had to acknowledge Austria-Hungary's substantial influence on their political success, shaped by domestic perceptions of the empire.

A development often overlooked amidst the subtle shifts in the press, unfolded after the Sarajevo assassinations. The nationalist and unionist press underwent a near-complete inversion in their presentations of Austria-Hungary. This transformation was significantly influenced by the nationalists' successful attainment of Home Rule and the Russian strategy of fostering proxy power blocs and conflicts to dismantle competitors, leading the English and, consequently, unionist press to favour reviving the friendship between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, finding dualism more conducive to European peace.

Chapter Two: Austria-Hungary, The Triple Alliance, and Great Britain

The chapter focuses on the English Press and their interpretations and presentations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire between 1892 and 1914. Unlike its Irish counterpart, the English Press were not dominated by a significant political issue such as Home Rule. As a result, the chapter will aim to strike a balance between the domestic developments in Great Britain and that of the foreign continental transformations. The chapter's main focus for analysis will be relations between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, in addition to its Emperor who, like its Irish coequals, had an overwhelmingly positive coverage. Identically, to the Irish Press to provide constituency, the chapter will examine the Second Home Rule Bill, the Hungarian Crisis, the Bosnian Crisis and the Sarajevo assassinations.

Home Rule and the English Press

The Second Home Rule bill came on the back of the 1892 General Election, where the British public, disillusioned with the Tory social reforms, had abandoned them, allowing for the return of Gladstone and his Liberals. As already stated, the election was not a clean sweep and based on the national voter turnout for the Liberal Party: 48% of the English vote, 54% of Scotland, with the best performance in Wales with 63%. It was clear to the Opposition that the future House of Lords would reject the Second Home Rule Bill that Gladstone ruled by the conditional support of the IPP alone and not by any mandate. A likely reason for Gladstone's support of the Bill was the securing of the loyalty of the IPP as well, in principle, the right of Ireland to self-government in the House of Commons.⁹⁵ The Opposition to the Bill also emerged from the political psyche of the time. As argued by Ronald Hyam, by the

⁹⁵ O'Day, *Irish Home Rule*, pp. 154-156.

1890s, amongst the military and political class of Great Britain, the policy because of the Empire began to become entirely defensive, if not defeatist. The cause of such a pessimistic outlook came from British fears that Great Britain as an empire had become grossly over-extended and unstable.⁹⁶ As such, no signs of weakness or concession could be made to avoid a potential domino effect of separatism spreading across the borders of the Empire.

As to Ireland herself, George Dangerfield summarises how, before Parnell's death, the Westminster politicians, no matter their political affiliation, understood that Parnell would pursue Home Rule through parliament and then revolution. This central assumption dictated much of the Unionist's pursuit of keeping the dialogue open in the hopes of discrediting Home Rule. Nevertheless, in case that failed, killing it with kindness was the next option, as it was perceived as an agrarian issue that could be amended by granting Irish tenants land ownership. The Ashbourne Act (1885) began the right of small Irish tenants to purchase their land from their landlords by Government funding.⁹⁷ However, as noted by Paul Bew, following the establishment of the Gaelic League in 1893 and its failure to gain traction in promotion of Gaelic use even amongst the patriotic young men demographic. The tone of the debate of restoring Irish identity shifted to that of separatism from the rest of Great Britain.⁹⁸ In a reflection of the anachronism of the position of the Secretary of Ireland amongst English politicians, the extensive success of anglicisation of Ireland seems to capture why Ireland was viewed as one with Great Britain.

The English press, though predominantly reporting on the formation of the two power blocs between the Franco-Russo Entente in 1894 and the renewal of the Triple Alliance in 1892,

⁹⁶ Hyam, *Britain's Imperial*, pp. 118-9.

⁹⁷ Dangerfield, *The Damnable Question*, pp 23-25.

⁹⁸ Bew, *Politics of Enmity*, pp. 361-62.

needed to recognize the domestic crises brewing in the Home Rule Movement. Austria-Hungary, like Ireland, was closely connected to the Second Home Rule Bill debate in 1892-3. The *London Evening Standard*, by its correspondent on February 16th 1893, emphasises how integral the Dual Monarchy was to the Home Rule Movement. Declaring that “members of the Liberal Party went to Croatia to study the Home Rule system” as the basis of the Irish Home Rule Bill.⁹⁹ The *Standard* commentator further continued that the Austro-Hungarian statesmen they had interviewed, though remaining anonymous, had a bitter rebuke for Gladstone:

The Irish members will simply traffic with their votes on Imperial measures further concessions for Ireland being the price...this is no empty prediction, for we in Austria have had a painful experience of the biogo di traffico, as our Reichsrat used to be called. We wish to see England spared the sufferings we have had to endure in our body politic, owing to a majority on every crucial question having to be purchased from the Separatists by fresh concessions to their respective Provinces¹⁰⁰

The declaration should be mentioned as a continuation of the Unionist habit, as seen with the *Whigs* using foreign commentators who would be treated as first-hand experts to denounce the Home Rule Movement. Furthermore, the continued use of anonymous commentators and correspondents allowed the Unionist Press on both sides of the Irish Sea to create an image of uniformity in the face of the Home Rule Movement. It was likely, as argued by Hyam, a defensive response to the perceived weakness of the British Empire,

⁹⁹ ‘The Home Rule Bill– Our Correspondent’, *London Evening Standard*, 16th February 1893.

¹⁰⁰ ‘The Home Rule Bill– Our Correspondent’, *London Evening Standard*, 16th February 1893.

which was faced with calls for further autonomy or outright separatism, as would be seen in the Second Boer War (1899-1902).

Though the point of examination is an extract from the much broader article, it is a first-hand presentation of Austria-Hungary to the English public of the domestic difficulties faced by Austro-Hungarian statesmen under Home Rule.¹⁰¹ The choice to bring up the Italian mockery of the Reichsrat as a *biogo di traffic* (Traffic Bogue) is also strange but symbolic of the extent to which Austria-Hungary, even amongst its allies, was known for its parliament being filled with filibustering and divided and typically clashing national interests. It is not difficult to see, however, that the decision to raise the argument based around Austria-Hungary as a failed blueprint for Home Rule by its statesman was framed in a manner to undermine Gladstone's as well as Irish Nationalist voices who used her as well as Sweden-Norway and Finno-Russian autonomous arrangements as examples of successful Home Rule working abroad. Moreover, reflecting the Irish historiography, the source is presentative of the continuation of the Unionist's fears that granting Ireland Home Rule would result in Irish obstructionism in Westminster. Which, as argued by Hyam, was feared to threaten, and undermine the British Empire if ever granted further concessions.

However, the most scathing attack was by *The Times* the previous day, linking to the complete abandonment of the Ulster Unionists and how it was on the verge of political bartering of power and compromise. Mr Gladstone's Bill was framed as "satisfying the wishes of Ireland at the expense of the unity of the British Empire". More so with the Bill

¹⁰¹ 'Irish Home Rule and Hungary', *London Evening Standard Daily Express*, 29th January 1892, 'Austria-Hungary—Correspondent', *London Evening Standard Daily Express*, 30th April 1892, 'The Roumanians in Hungary', *London Evening Standard Daily Express*, 28th May 1892, 'A project Impossible of Execution', *The Guardian*, 15th February 1893.

lacking any “pretension to originality for it is a copy of the compromise between Hungary and Croatia”.¹⁰² Compared to the rest of the Press, the visible indignation of *The Times* is likely reflecting the Liberal Unionist voices who would eventually oust Gladstone and split from the party over the Home Rule Bill. The fears for the unity of the Empire, as seen, had captured the British political consciousness by the 1890’s. The English Press’s decision to frame Austria-Hungary as a reflection of this likely possibility is in line with the common perception of the Dual Monarchy’s bound future for dissolution with the death of Emperor Francis Joseph. The English press also summarises the Unionist position and their extensive and ardent Opposition to the Second Home Rule Bill. It was that of doing nothing more but satisfying Ireland at the expense of the British Empire. It is, in short, a polite way of calling Gladstone’s actions on the verge of treason to place a province of the British Empire above its metropolitan heartland and its interests.

The article continues the Unionist Press argument that Westminster, like the Reichsrat in Austria-Hungary, would be held hostage outright declaring that the Bill “hands over the legislation and Parliament of England to 80 Irishmen, who will hold the balance [thus] subordinating every vote on Imperial questions to Irish interests”. Therefore, transforming Westminster into the Austrian Reichsrat, where it will be an auction house with the “British Government compelled to buy its majority by favouring the Irish at the expense of the Empire”.¹⁰³ The framing of the sacrifice of the Empire for Irish interests is critical here, linking to Austria-Hungary. The central struggle linking the Austro-Hungarian foreign and domestic policy is the balance of wishes between Vienna and Budapest. The English press used this known power struggle between the two kingdoms to stress how an Irish

¹⁰² ‘The Home Rule Bill’, *The Times*, 15th February 1893.

¹⁰³ ‘The Home Rule Bill’, *The Times*, 15th February 1893.

Parliament with hardly a quarter of the population of the rest of the United Kingdom would be dictating domestic and indirect foreign policy. Unreasonable at best and outright self-sabotage at worst, it is unsurprising to witness the English press backlash at even the suggestion of such self-voluntary subordination. It is especially recalling the hardline defensive attitude taken by British politicians at the time following the first Boer War in 1880 and how concessions to the Irish could escalate rapidly to the disintegration of the Empire as a whole.

The *Manchester Guardian*, which usually had the most sympathetic outlook to the changes abroad based around Austria-Hungary, presents the unanimous outrage at implementing a Home Rule Bill based on similar grounds to that of Austria-Hungary. Reporting on April 30 1892, before the ascent of Gladstone to power, the paper recites the arguments made by Joseph Chamberlain against Home Rule. In particular, Chamberlain declared that:

We have warned Mr. Gladstone from the first and upon information which was worthy of more consideration than our fellow subjects in Ulster—the strongest race in Ireland, the most determined, the men who have made whatever prosperity exists in that country, would never submit to the domination of a parliamentary majority whose elected at dictates of the Roman Catholic Priests¹⁰⁴

The immediate takeaway can be made to the English Press using the Ulsterman superiority even more aggressively than the Irish Unionist Press. In particular, how, as Chamberlain puts it, “our fellow subjects in Ulster—the strongest race in Ireland...the men who made whatever prosperity exists in that country” is recounted then condemned. The key word here being

¹⁰⁴ ‘Mr J. Chamberlain – Home Rule and Ulster’, *The Guardian*, 30th April 1892.

“our”, it is the immediate distinction of the Ulstermen, being native Ulster-Scots, Anglican and of Anglo-Saxon decent as compared to the Irish who are of Catholic Celtic descent elected by “dictates of the Roman Catholic Priests”. The clear message was that the Irish were somehow a foreign group inside Great Britain who threatened Ulster’s position in the Union and, therefore, should be rejected from that principle alone.

Looking further to the *Guardian’s* recounting of the position of Austria-Hungary in the debate based around Ulster, they once more link back to Chamberlain’s declarations:

I want to impress upon you now this: in none of those cases, either of the colonies or of foreign countries, has there ever been a grant of Home Rule at a time when there was in that country a minority, very considerable in numbers, very powerful in intelligence and character, concentrated as to locality, a minority absolutely, determinedly, persistently hostile to any change in condition¹⁰⁵

The focus is that in Austria-Hungary and Sweden-Norway, the actions referring to Home Rule being granted had never had a minority in “very considerable in numbers, very powerful in intelligence and character, concentrated as to locality”. It is again returning to the Anglican Anglo-Saxon's self-declared superiority. Nevertheless, of more importance, Gladstone’s common arguments in Austria-Hungary and Sweden-Norway were rejected as not presentive of Ulster's nature. Arguing that a minority of sufficient character had never been when implying these states. It is worth noting the highly hostile attitude taken by the *Whig* against the circumstances that would fit the Czechs but being rejected because they are an uncivilized race being Slavic.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, it is implied rather than outright

¹⁰⁵ ‘Mr J. Chamberlain – Home Rule and Ulster’, *The Guardian*, 30th April 1892.

¹⁰⁶ Gregory, *Confrontation*, pp. 9-12.

declared, as seen in the Irish Unionist Press, that the Dual Monarchy as a tool by the English press for the Second Home Rule Bill was also used to reject the Bill. Though in a much sharper tone based on the dysfunctionality of the Dual Monarchy as a state and its mixed ethnic character that does not live up to the time of British politicians.

The Hungarian Crisis and the Splendid Isolation

Before delving into the narratives around the Dual Monarchy during the Hungarian Crises, it is important to establish the versatile position of the English press during the 1890s. The press generally portrayed the Triple Alliance, including Austria-Hungary, in a positive light throughout most of the decade.¹⁰⁷ Admittedly, the debate around Home Rule used the Dual Monarchy as a cautionary tale, emphasizing the dysfunctionality of attempting dualism in Ireland. However, Gladstone's decision to seize Egypt in 1882, officially to fix Cairo's finances but perceived by France as a move to control the Suez Canal, isolated Britain from the Concert of Europe. This left Britain reliant on Berlin and Vienna for diplomatic support. Therefore, although outside the scope of this investigation, the press presented the Dual alliance in a positive light to maintain their support between the Egyptian scandal and Salisbury's return in 1895. For the Austrians, they wished for Britain to counteract the growing influence of the Russian Empire in the Near East. Leveraging the rising economic interests of Great Britain in the Balkans to this end, with 10% of all British trade being

¹⁰⁷ 'Germany and Italy—Correspondent', *London Evening Standard Daily Express*, 20th May 1893, 'The Enemies of the Triple Alliance', *London Evening Standard Daily Express*, 18th June, 1892, 'The Triple Alliance— Debate in the Italian Parliament', *The Guardian*, 20th February 1893, 'The Peace of Europe—Important Speech by Count Kalnoky', *The Guardian*, 5th June 1893, 'England and Austria', *London Evening Standard*, 15th May 1893.

conducted with the Southern European states, and by 1890, around 16% of exports and 20% of all imports passing through the Suez Canal since its opening in 1869.¹⁰⁸

Unfortunately for the Austro-Hungarians, the restoration of Tewfik Pasha as the Khedive of Egypt under Ottoman vassalage but effectively a British client state shifted the dynamics of the Near East. This change was solidified with the rise of Salisbury, who realigned Great Britain's foreign policy in the Near East. The new policy aimed to delay any foreign propositions in Ottoman affairs and, if that failed, to promote social reforms to maintain Sultan Abdul Hamid II in power.¹⁰⁹ Salisbury placed his faith in Evelyn Baring, the British Consul-General of Egypt, who transformed Egypt's finances, eliminating the need for further loans from the *Caisse*, France's state bank.¹¹⁰ This minimized French leverage in Egypt, secured British control, and decreased the necessity for German and Austrian diplomatic support. Consequently, Great Britain rapidly expanded its Mediterranean fleet, more than doubling its size between 1885 and 1902 for soft-power projection.¹¹¹ Eventually, this steady shift in British foreign policy led to the Entente Cordiale in 1904, which ended the colonial rivalries between France and Great Britain. It is reasonable to assume that the lack of English press reporting on the Triple Alliance and the Entente after 1895 was part of Salisbury's ambiguous diplomatic strategy, aimed at avoiding diplomatic tensions and potential foreign press scandals.

Contributing to the British realignment was the complete failure of German diplomacy, which ensured growing animosity between Britain and the Triple Alliance. Hatzfeldt, the

¹⁰⁸ Barlett, *Defence and Diplomacy*, pp. 87-89.

¹⁰⁹ Hayes, *The Twentieth*, pp. 64-5 & F. R. Bridge, *Sarajevo*, pp. 189-92.

¹¹⁰ Hayes, *The Twentieth*, pp. 41-42.

¹¹¹ John Darwin, *The Empire Project*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 77-78

German ambassador to Britain, slanted British aims to Kaiser Wilhelm II in an attempt to improve Anglo-German relations.¹¹² Kaiser Wilhelm II, seeking to maintain the long-standing German-Austrian diplomatic support, proposed an alliance between the Triple Alliance and Great Britain in exchange for Borneo, Samoa, and the Caroline Islands. The British found the price too high and began to suspect that this was merely an attempt by Germany to coerce Nicholas II into concessions in Eastern Europe.¹¹³ Ignoring the broader diplomatic realignment, Hatzfeldt's efforts only soured relations and led to a naval arms race, especially after the German Empire adopted the Weltpolitik policy in 1897. Accordingly, establishing the new foreign dynamics in Europe for the English press entering the 20th century. Primarily, narratives emphasising the importance of sustaining the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires to maintain the balance of power in Europe and to curb Russian ambitions in the Balkans, which could potentially trigger a wider European war.

Turning to the English press, the London Evening Standard, in an article written before the Entente Cordiale when France and England were still at odds, provides a direct presentation of the Austro-Hungarian position by the correspondent on the ground to the British public. This arguably illustrates the continued belief in the shared view of solidarity in maintaining the status quo in the Near East between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain:

“There can be no question of Macedonia being divided...a division of the Balkan peninsula may have been under discussion being a long-cherished desire of Russia, constantly refused hitherto by Austria, out of a well-founded fear that the principle once conceded, and the

¹¹² Hayes, *The Twentieth*, pp. 65-6.

¹¹³ Charmley, *Splendid Isolation*, pp. 262-4.

division into spheres of influence once decided upon, the lion's share would always fall to
Russia”

“The maintenance of peace in general, ring in Austrian and in Russian ears but when it comes to deciding upon a plan of action it is always evident that Russia has already prejudiced the decision by some act or another—in the present case by the encouragement to Bulgarian hopes [of Independence] through the Shipka festivities and Count Ignatieff's speeches”¹¹⁴

The article highlights the deep-seated tensions and strategic calculations between Austro-Hungarian and Russian relations regarding the Balkan peninsula. The framing is crucial, with Austria-Hungary's refusal to divide the region due to fears of Russian dominance presented as being undermined by Russia's manipulative tactics, such as Ignatieff's encouragement of Bulgarian aspirations for independence. With the unresolved Great Game in 1907, Russia is depicted with the expected mistrust for its intrigues, while Austria, despite its alignment with Germany, is portrayed as a bulwark of stability and peace. Reflecting on the diplomatic manoeuvring of Great Britain under Gladstone and Salisbury, it is unsurprising that the English paper supports Britain's interest in maintaining the status quo in Europe by backing Austria-Hungary's efforts to counter Russian expansionist ambitions in the Near East. It is important to note that the paper is presenting the views of the Austro-Hungarians through their correspondent. As such, despite the declining mistrust of Russia, the Austrians leaned into the angle to present themselves more favourably.

¹¹⁴ ‘Attitude of Hungary’, *London Evening Standard*, 2nd January 1903.

It would be unreasonable, however, to argue that Austria-Hungary's position during the Hungarian Crisis was becoming obsolete. When given a direct voice in the English press, Austria-Hungary did not cling to a distant past in their foreign relations. Instead, they leveraged the extensive coverage by the English press for their own ends.¹¹⁵ What led to such extensive coverage of the Hungarian Crisis? The growing economic and political entanglements of Great Britain in Egypt and by extent the Near East. While the English press was not directly influenced by the Foreign Office, it still advocated for British interests. Consequently, the focus on Austria-Hungary was part of a broader trend that also included extensive coverage of the Ottomans, aligning with British foreign policy. This policy aimed to maintain the status quo while implementing limited social reforms to ease rising nationalist tensions in the Balkans. The coverage echoed the narratives about the failures of dualism and its long-term effects on the stability of the two multi-national empires for the British readership:

“A list of his demands embraces everything possible, from two-year service instead of three, and the officering of Hungarian regiments exclusively by those who speak Hungarian—in effect, Hungarians only—to such territorial divisions in Hungary as would not allow of the formation of districts with a non-Hungarian majority, and the addition of the surplus reserve in Hungary to the Common Army”

“These demands, even from a Hungarian national point of view, would only be intelligible on the supposition that Hungary is seeking to prepare only for the separation of her army from

¹¹⁵ ‘The Austrian Reichsrath’, *London Evening Standard*, 18th March 1903, ‘Count Tisa’s Address to the Reichsrath’, *London Evening Standard*, 14th April 1903, ‘Parties in Hungary’, *London Evening Standard*, 28th April 1903, ‘The Hungarian Cabinet Crisis’, *London Evening Standard*, 26th June 1903, ‘The Crisis of the Hungarian Cabinet’, *The Guardian*, 26th June 1903, ‘The Military Question—Position of Ministers’, *London Evening Standard*, 2nd July 1903, ‘Remarkable Declaration by the Emperor’, *The Guardian*, 18th September 1903.

that of Austria, just as the work of the last thirty years has been a preparation for economic separation”¹¹⁶

The article presents an alternative portrayal of Austria-Hungary in the English press during the Hungarian Crisis, emphasising the gradual shift in favour of the Ottoman Empire. Austria struggled to contain the Hungarian ambitions for economic independence and military autonomy, which increasingly made Hungarian independence appear inevitable and diminished Austria's influence in Europe. While the narrative also addressed the failures of dualism, possibly as a response to Irish nationalism, it more significantly justified Britain's reorientation in the Balkans. Despite extensive coverage of the Dual Monarchy, the focus remained on its internal struggles and uncertain future. The article underscored Austria-Hungary's unreliability as a partner in the Near East and rationalized Britain's diplomatic pivot from the Central Powers to the Entente. In light of Austro-Hungarian efforts to align with Britain through mutual distrust of Russia, despite Russia's declining concern following the nearing end of the Great Game, the English press effectively captured the diplomatic tensions in Europe and clarified Britain's ambiguous stance on the Near East.

The prevailing narratives of Dual Monarchy's decline during the Hungarian Crisis were echoed in the *Manchester Guardian*, which covered the domestic issues plaguing the empire:

“We are often told by non-Austrian authorities that the Austrian Empire is on the verge of dissolution. The medley of diverse nationalities and creeds that goes to make up Austria-Hungary is held together mainly by the influence of the reigning monarch. Facts are not wanting, it must be admitted, to give an air of plausibility to these melancholy forebodings

¹¹⁶ ‘The Recruiting Bills—Count Apponyi's Policy’, *London Evening Standard*, 22nd January 1903.

“The racial dispute in Austria still paralyses the Reichsrat. So long as the Czechs and Germans cannot agree as to the extent to which their respective languages shall be officially recognised in Bohemia...[Austria] weakened by these internal broils is losing all influence in the Near East, and her agreement with Russia to maintain things as they are in Macedonia is to be interpreted as a renunciation of the old Austrian ambition to get to Saloniki”¹¹⁷

While acknowledging the decline of the Dual Monarchy, the *Guardian* underscores the nationalist challenges confronting Eastern European empires. It subtly attributes Britain's favourable perception of Austria-Hungary to Austria's abandonment of past ambitions, including relinquishing claims to Saloniki, Greece. This shift demonstrates Austria-Hungary's opposition to Russian intrigues promoting pan-Slavism, which posed threats to both the Dual Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire. In its weakened state, Austria-Hungary becomes a dependable ally in maintaining the status quo alongside the Ottomans against Russian imperial ambitions. This viewpoint was reinforced by newspapers during the crisis, aligning with Britain's foreign policy objectives of preserving stability and advocating for social reforms to prevent further conflicts.¹¹⁸ Why did the English press portray Austria-Hungary in this manner? Beyond the Foreign Office's ambiguous foreign policy, the English press saw Austria-Hungary and the Ottomans as the safest options for preserving peace despite their internal challenges. Both empires, driven by self-preservation, pursued cautious foreign policies. The English press recognized this and provided a platform for Austro-Hungarian voices that emphasized a shared concern over the threat posed by pan-Slavism and Russia.

¹¹⁷ 'The Overview of the Austrian Empire', *The Guardian*, 31st January 1903.

¹¹⁸ 'Near East Developments', *London Evening Standard*, 6th April 1903, 'Albanian and Servian Objections', *London Evening Standard*, 13th April 1903, 'Italy and Austria—The Irredentist Riots', *London Evening Standard*, 29th May 1903, 'New Servian Government—Conspiracy', *The Guardian*, 20th June 1903, 'Russia's Attitude to Bulgaria', *The Guardian*, 7th July 1903

However, reflecting the complexities of the period, *The Times* illustrates the shifting attitudes towards Russia and the divergence from Austria-Hungary. Specifically, it highlights the Russian compromises in agreeing to preserve Macedonia's position and align with the Ottomans, along with Austrian cooperation despite the existing mistrust between them:

“We assume that a sound conception of the interests of Russia and Austria demands that these two Powers should have confidence in one another and realise the necessity of mutual support...we do not mean to say that ideal relations already exist between them and that there is no longer any occasion for distrust. As a half-Slavonic Power, Austria pursues a policy not of distrust, but of exaggerated aversion towards Russia. Manifestly there is still unfounded fear of Pan Slavism in Austria”¹¹⁹

The article plays into Austro-Hungarian fears over the pan-Slavic threat to emphasize the complexities and underlying tensions in Central and Southern European politics. By portraying Austria-Hungary's fears as exaggerated, the press highlights the potential for cooperation and mutual support between Russia and Austria, despite their historical mistrust, as long as they overcome current divisions. This narrative aligns with British interests in maintaining regional stability by encouraging cooperation among the three great powers. It underscores Austria-Hungary's vulnerability and suggests that a more pragmatic and less alarmist approach to foreign policy is needed, implying that Austria's exaggerated fears of pan-Slavism may hinder rather than help in achieving regional peace and stability. This framing reflects the general outlook of the English press on Austria-Hungary as predictably conservative yet unstable, making it an unreliable partner in the Near East. *The*

¹¹⁹ 'Russia and Austria-Hungary', *The Times*, 6th October 1903.

Times criticism seems directed not just at Austria but also at Russia. It emphasizes the need for mutual understanding to prevent growing mistrust between these great powers. The press underscores that without reform, the Sick Man of Europe—the Ottoman Empire—remains at risk of implosion, highlighting the importance of cooperation in Macedonia to implement the joint reform plan to maintain peace and avoid further nationalistic uprisings.

Although the English press appeared to support Foreign Office policy, even without direct influence, it also highlighted the critical importance of Austria-Hungary, especially in light of declining relations with the German Empire:

“The economic separation of Austria from Hungary would, by effecting a Customs barrier within the Monarchy and placing Austria between German and Hungarian industrial competition, inevitably compel Austria to lean upon Germany for economic support”

“This support would take the form of an Austro-German Customs Union, which would be but a preliminary to political union between Austria and Germany, or rather to the political absorption of Austria by Germany—a contingency which Austrin Slavs could not contemplate without dismay”¹²⁰

The *Times* diverges from the prevailing narrative by emphasizing the potential dangers of Austria-Hungary's collapse, particularly in the context of declining relations with the German Empire. The Czechs viewed the Hungarian Crisis as a critical test for the Dual Monarchy, fearing that Hungarian success could lead to Germany effectively ruling or outright annexing the German portion of Austria-Hungary. Highlighting this scenario serves to alert the British public and policymakers to the risks of a stronger, more unified German bloc, which could

¹²⁰ ‘Austria-Hungary’, *The Times*, 21st December 1903.

threaten British interests. Additionally, it opens up the debate about Austria-Hungary's role as a counterbalance to Germany, suggesting that even with the reforming Ottomans in the Near East, Austria-Hungary remained a crucial actor in maintaining regional equilibrium.

What prompted this realignment of Austria within the English press? It was the fear of destabilising the Concert of Europe. The prevailing geopolitical principle of the era was the balance of power, ensuring no single state could overpower another. The potential collapse of Austria or Ottomans threatened this delicate balance and thus underscored calls for their preservation and compromise to maintain the stability of the multi-national empires.

The Bosnian Crisis and its Consequences

Despite the brief two-year interval between the Bosnian and Hungarian Crises, significant changes had occurred on the continental landscape. The first notable step in Britain's alignment with the Entente powers was marked by the Entente Cordiale of April 8, 1904.

The agreement between France and Britain concerned the spheres of influence in Morocco and Egypt, with both nations agreeing not to compete over these territories. This accord effectively ended the rivalry between the two great powers and reinforced Britain's realignment in response to the perceived growing threat from the German Empire.

However, the Dogger Bank Incident on October 22, 1904, nearly ended the British realignment by escalated into war between Britain and Russia. The incident, which arose from the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, involved the Russian fleet mistakenly firing upon British fishermen, resulting in the death of three citizens and triggering a diplomatic crisis.¹²¹ But, the Russians deescalated the incident by submitting to an international investigation and

¹²¹ Hyam, *Britain's Imperial*, pp. 122-6.

dismissing the officers held responsible. Thus continuing the trend of compromise, in time resulting in the end of the Great Game in Central Asia by 1907 between the two powers.

Amidst the British diplomatic realignment, the causes of the Bosnian Crisis can be traced to a series of events that made the annexation propitious. The Russo-Japanese War had left Russia defeated and humiliated, prompting a shift in their ambitions toward the Balkans. Concurrently, the Franco-German Moroccan Crisis of 1905-1906 further isolated Germany diplomatically. Seizing this opportunity, Count Aehrenthal, the Austrian foreign minister, sought to exploit Germany's isolation for his own diplomatic gain in the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Aehrenthal initiated discussions with his Russian counterpart, Izvolsky, as early as 1907, based on an understanding that Russia would support Austria's annexation of Bosnia in exchange for a revision regarding foreign navies in the Dardanelles Straits.¹²² Instead, Austria, with Germany's support, secured Bosnia by threatening to expose the secret agreements with Russia, thereby undermining Russian interests. The tensions that flared across the continent in response to Austria-Hungary's actions cannot be underestimated. However, the true nature of the situation remained hidden from the public due to the secrecy of the agreements. Ultimately, Russia was unwilling to go to war over Serbia's cause, a fact not widely known at the time.¹²³

Upon examination, the English press conveyed more shock than outrage as it scrambled to explain Austria-Hungary's actions. This radical shift in foreign policy undermined the previous stance held by the English press, which had viewed the Dual Monarchy as a crucial counterbalance to German and Russian ambitions. The shift could be seen in the *Standard*:

¹²² MacMillan, *The War*, pp. 390-7.

¹²³ Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, pp. 35-9.

“The Prince [of Bulgaria] is coming back from Central Europe... should he not use all his influence in order to bring about a settlement of the conflict in conformity with most elementary principles of international law he would include the gravest suspicions and heaviest responsibilities”

“Considering the fact that, supposing even Turkey were to offer no opposition to the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, such a measure would at once rouse the fiercest internal jealousies between Austria-Hungary and Croatia. It is inconceivable that any such dangerous folly as lending encouragement to Bulgaria, in order to facilitate an annexation, can be contemplated at Vienna or Budapest”¹²⁴

Fundamentally, the early stages of the Bosnian Crisis marked a critical moment in the transformation of Austria-Hungary’s image among the English press. Initially, the blame was placed on the Bulgarian Prince Ferdinand, with the press deeming it inconceivable that Vienna would encourage a violation of international law. This view stemmed from the belief in Austria-Hungary’s shared interest in preserving the status quo in the Near East. Without context, this stance may appear hyperbolic; however, the *Standard* adhered to the myth of Austria-Hungary’s creation following the Italian Wars of Unification and the Brothers War in 1866. These wars devastated the Austrian Empire, resulting in significant territorial losses and national debt, which led to the establishment of a shared state with the Hungarians. Since the Ausgleich of 1867, Austria-Hungary had refrained from expansionist military actions, even against Bismarck’s desires for revenge during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. It is here on the reputation of the Dual Monarchy that the English press depicted the state as aligned with Great Britain’s interests despite the new international crisis. It is difficult to

¹²⁴ ‘Resort to Arbitration’, *London Evening Standard*, 2nd October 1908.

determine if the English press genuinely believed its own narrative, but almost half a century of inaction from Austria, as illustrated during the Hungarian Crisis, portrayed the Dual Monarchy as predictable in its foreign policy despite its domestic turmoil.

Nevertheless, the new geopolitical realities of Austria-Hungary's new position, along with the conclusion of Great Britain's realignment with the Entente Powers, was captured later:

“The last move of Austria-Hungary acquires additional gravity [as] a deliberate policy which could hardly have initiated without support. There is every appearance of the Triple Alliance throwing down the glove to the other Great Powers in Eastern Europe, and it is singular that the leading role should have been assumed by Baron von Aehrenthal”

“It marks quite a new departure in the history of the Dual Monarchy, whilst Count Goluchowski was blamed for merely following the lead of Germany, his successor has proved that he is gradually reversing the position, and compelling Germany to follow him. This is not only a defeat for the Ottoman Empire, but a defeat for the European Concert”¹²⁵

At the core of this extracted article stands a representation to what the Bosnian Crisis was to the English press. It catalysed the establishment of two power blocs leading up to the First World War and marked the moment when the English press became disillusioned with Austria-Hungary as a potential ally. Although the English press initially continued to advocate for an international committee to restore Austria-Hungary's reputation, Vienna's stalling aligned Austria with the rest of the Triple Alliance in challenging the global order. Even if efforts to maintain a coherent position on Austria-Hungary persisted, including separating Franz Joseph from his Dual Monarchy, the reality of the redundant Concert of

¹²⁵ 'Bismarckian Tactics', *London Evening Standard*, 6th October 1908.

Europe, the annexation of Bosnia with German support, and the violation of an international treaty were insurmountable. Within the same week, Austria faced almost unanimous condemnation in the English press despite its protests of acting in the interest of peace.¹²⁶

The outlier was the *Guardian* maintaining its sympathetic illustrations of the Dual Monarchy choosing to go as far reference French correspondents for its case:

“The Emperor has declared that he will not take the initiative in denouncing the Treaty of Berlin, but in view of Austro-Hungarian interests he is forced to consider certain contingencies outside his own volition...the *Petite Republique* remarks that the Emperor Francis Joseph’s love of peace and his moderation are well known, and it is therefore possible rendered uneasy by the possibility of the Eastern Question’s disturbing the closing years of his reign, he is seeking the support and perhaps the collaboration of the Paris Government to remove the danger”¹²⁷

The *Guardian*, in this instance, does not significantly diverge from the broader English press perspective. During the early stages of the Bosnian Crisis, the paper repeats the scepticism regarding any ambitions of expansion by Austria-Hungary. Furthermore, it takes an early stance in differentiating Franz Joseph from the actions of his empire, emphasizing his lack of personal volition in the actions of his empire. Nevertheless, the *Guardian’s* choice to portray Austria-Hungary's actions in a more favourable light likely stems from its longstanding sympathetic stance. Going as far as to reference the French press, likely reflecting how far it

¹²⁶ ‘Attitude of Austria’, *London Evening Standard*, 3rd October 1908, ‘Austrian Complicity’, *London Evening Standard*, 6th October 1908, ‘British Unanimous Condemnation’, *London Evening Standard*, 7th October 1908, ‘Austria’s Defence—A Policy of Peace’, *London Evening Standard*, 8th October 1908.

¹²⁷ ‘An Autograph Letter’, *The Guardian*, 5th October 1908.

had become isolated from the rest of the English papers in its position. This viewpoint was swiftly adjusted, however, in a subsequent article the following day:

“Great Britain has announced that she will refuse to recognise any breaches of the Treaty of Berlin...the British government in taking this attitude will receive the support of France and possibly of Russia and Italy. The general conviction is that Austria has backed Bulgaria in the important step which has just been taken, and that the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina has already been decided upon”¹²⁸

The *Guardian's* evolving portrayal of Austria-Hungary can be contextualized within broader developments in the Irish press, where unionist voices increasingly dominated, marginalizing dissenting perspectives. Similarly, akin to the *Freeman*, which covered the Bosnian Crisis minimally after its initial article, the *Guardian* may have faced pressure to conform to prevailing consensus. However, the paper resisted this pressure, maintaining a presentation of diverse opinions on the crisis despite backlash. Throughout the affair, the *Guardian* acted as a prominent advocate for Austria-Hungary to the British public, consistently citing the Austrian viewpoint on the Near East.¹²⁹ Criticism did arise regarding Vienna's delay in convening an international conference to address the *fait accompli*. Nonetheless, the paper maintained an overall sympathetic position toward Austria. The rationale behind such sympathetic illustrations is difficult to pinpoint. However, what the *Guardian* accomplished, in contrast to its Irish counterpart, was the maintenance of an open political dialogue. By remaining steadfast in its position on the Dual Monarchy, the paper

¹²⁸ ‘England's Emphatic Pronouncement’, *The Guardian*, 6th October, 1908.

¹²⁹ ‘The Balkan Crisis’, *The Guardian*, 7th October 1908, ‘Conference Prospects’, *The Guardian*, 7th October 1908, ‘Austria's Defence’, *The Guardian*, 9th October 1908, ‘Near East Crisis— Austria and Turkey’, *The Guardian*, 23rd October 1908, ‘England and Austria’, *The Guardian*, 27th October 1908

facilitated public debate and the possibility of revising the British foreign policy stance. Arguably, this position stemmed from the English press's relationship with the Foreign Office, wherein it upheld the same ambiguity, allowing for flexibility to shift allegiances.

Another usually overlooked factor in the illustrations of Austria-Hungary was the English correspondents themselves. Henry Steed, the correspondent for *The Times*, began to recognize the inevitability of a European conflict. He surmised that Aehrenthal's diplomatic victory over Russia was the last humiliation the Tsar could tolerate, predicting the next would be fatal. Steed believed that the ongoing struggle between Russia and Austria over the Slavic races was pushed to the brink by Berlin, which sought to embroil the Dual Monarchy in the Southern Slav affairs, furthering its goal of Germanification of Europe.¹³⁰

These fears of Austria's actions are captured likewise in the start of the crisis:

“Although we have not been unprepared for this flagrant breach of the Treaty of Berlin by the state which owes its existence to that instrument...the news will be received with great regret and even greater indignation. The blow they will inevitably deal to public belief in the faith of European statesmen and to the general respect for solemn treaty rights constitutes a mischief out of proportion to any advantages which the two governments can hope to gain”

“Vienna, it will be remembered, consistently opposed all effective proposals made by other Powers for the amelioration of the Sultan's subjects on the ground that it might endanger the peace of Europe...but now that the Turkish subjects [life] has been improved by the action of the Turkish reformers, the statemen of Vienna do not hesitate to infringe on that territory and induce Bulgaria to do the same”¹³¹

¹³⁰ Hanak, *Great Britain*, pp. 17-18.

¹³¹ 'The Crisis in the Near East', *The Times*, 5th October 1908.

At its core, the article is emotional and evocative, diverging from the typically factual reporting style of *The Times* on international incidents. The influential positions of English correspondents like Steed or Watson drastically shaped perceptions of Austria-Hungary.¹³² The article demonstrates that, despite expectations of journalistic objectivity, the limitations of communication technology, such as reliance on the telegraph, positioned individuals like Steed in roles of considerable influence in their reporting and portrayal of the Dual Monarchy. Consequently, when examining the drastic shifts in tone or stance toward the Dual Monarchy within the English press, it is essential to recognize that correspondents frequently presented their views as facts, often without facing substantial criticism.

Outside of the scandalous actions of Austria pushing the English press sympathies to the Ottoman Empire and the personal views of its various correspondents. The long-held position of Austria was tarnished by the event as captured the following day:

“In the Austrian Emperor’s autograph letter mention was made of the service which Austria had rendered to civilization by her administration of the two provinces and the moral claim which Austria had thus acquired to direct the future destinies of Bosnia-Herzegovina. No government has questioned the merits of Austria’s work in these regions”

“The claim which Austria advances would as everyone knows at the proper time and place have met with the most friendly and courteous consideration of the Powers signature of the Treaty of Berlin. But this very certainty makes the Austrian action more unjustifiable, and

¹³² Bridge, *Great Britain*, pp. 29-34.

the condemnation of Europe heightened by the suspicion, amounting that the Bulgarian coup was arranged at Vienna”¹³³

Another aspect of the portrayal of Austria-Hungary is underscored in the concise article. Contrary to prevailing historical narratives, the annexation was not viewed as scandalous at the time; it was expected to be received with diplomatic courtesy under different circumstances. The chaos and lack of transparency surrounding the secret negotiations fuelled much of the public outrage.¹³⁴ Vienna's delays in convening a summit were heavily criticized for perceived recklessness in escalating tensions. From the perspective of the press, there was a palpable risk of a broader European conflict, with Austria perceived as exacerbating this danger.¹³⁵ Consequently, the Bosnian affair represented a pivotal moment for the English press, marking the severance of longstanding ties with the Dual Monarchy. Austria was subsequently perceived as a pariah state, having breached an international treaty and jeopardized continental peace. The accuracy of this perception, influenced by secret protocols, remains a subject of debate. However, this perception played a crucial role in the radical shift in narrative surrounding Austria. Predominantly, the English press turned to the Ottomans as a new advocate for preserving peace in the Near East.

The English outlook on the Sarajevo Assassination

The unravelling of the Treaty of Berlin due to the Bosnian Crisis unleashed a wave of territorial expansionism among the major Great Powers. France seized the opportunity to

¹³³ 'Bulgarian Independence Proclaimed', *The Times*, 6th October 1908.

¹³⁴ 'The Crisis in the Near East', *The Times*, 8th October 1908.

¹³⁵ 'The Balance of Power in the Balkans', *The Times*, 8th October 1908, 'Austria-Hungary and the Occupied Provinces', *The Times*, 9th October 1908, 'The question of Bosnia-Herzegovina', *The Times*, 13th October 1908, 'France and the Anglo-Russian Negotiations', *The Times*, 16th October 1908,

expand its influence in Morocco, while Italy sought territorial gains in Libya in 1911, capitalizing on the weakening Ottoman Empire. Italy's success in Libya galvanized the Balkan states, leading to a coalition against the Ottoman Empire. The Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 resulted in the complete collapse of Ottoman rule in the region, significantly undermining the Austro-Hungarian position and enhancing Russian influence.¹³⁶ British concerns about Russian ambitions were confirmed, leading to sympathetic outcries in Serbia and instances of terrorism encouraged by Russian support. However, the most critical impact was on Austro-Hungarian statesmen, who were deeply affected by the spectacle of a coalition of Balkan states, backed by Russia, dismantling another multi-ethnic empire.

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand on June 28th, 1914, served as a catalyst for the outbreak of World War I, although the declaration of war was not immediately on anyone's lips. The continental press expressed sympathies for the Emperor's loss, and while there was no immediate war rhetoric, Austrian statesmen were committed to the idea of war during the July Crisis. As the Sarajevo Assassinations unfolded, perceptions of Austria-Hungary abroad underwent a fundamental shift. It had a revitalizing impact on the Dual Monarchy's diplomatic reputation and standing in the Concert of Europe.¹³⁷ The press and European courts displayed sympathy for Austria-Hungary, with an overall outcry supporting the Emperor. In Britain, this sympathetic framing of Austria-Hungary in response to Serbian terrorism was criticized by the Serbian Minister, who accused the British press of following Austrian propaganda. The extent of the diplomatic revival for the Dual Monarchy was evident in Germany's universal condolences for the elderly Emperor and his subjects, along with the Romanian press highlighting the significant loss of Archduke Franz Ferdinand for

¹³⁶ Watson, *Ring*, pp. 26-28.

¹³⁷ Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, pp. 403-4.

Austria-Hungary's future, depicting him as a protector of minorities and supporter of national aims.¹³⁸

The *Standard* on June 30th summarised the dangerous and shocking developments based around the assassinations in Sarajevo. Stating that the paper did not believe it would have any significant political effect on European affairs. It still expressed the surprise of the continent by analysing Franz Ferdinand's positions, declaring that the "late Archduke was by no means anti-Slav in his views". Referencing his marriage to his Slav wife, the paper asserted how it was believed that the heir-apparent domestic aim was to "find a strong Slav state on the model of Hungary, which should be a centre of the Slav people of Southern Europe".¹³⁹ The *Standard* in the short snippet conveys the continental shock that Serbians, a member of the Southern Slav demographic would commit such an act that seems to be counterproductive. It is also important to note that the paper humanises the incident by focusing on the impact of the crime on the elderly Emperor, who is admitted "may not long survive his heir" that would result in a "rapid alteration in the political position of the Austrian Empire".¹⁴⁰ Understanding the Austro-Hungarian mentality from the time it is illuminating of the English Press to emphasise the high probability for internal conflicts in the Dual Monarchy with the death of Francis Joseph. It unintentionally captures the state of mind of the Habsburg leadership that would rather choose to die by the sword than be partitioned like Poland.

As to the detoxification of the Dual Monarchy amongst the English Press following the Bosnian Crisis in 1908, the decade-old British suspicions of Russian intentions in the Near

¹³⁸ Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, pp. 405-6.

¹³⁹ 'Trials Before Austria— What the Murders may mean, *The Guardian*, 30th June 1914.

¹⁴⁰ 'Trials Before Austria— What the Murders may mean, *The Guardian*, 30th June 1914.

East and their threat to the Mediterranean reemerged based around Austria-Hungary's role as her check in power. In the same extensive article, the *Guardian* states that the alliance of Balkan States was brought to life by the "tutelage of Russia and looked to Russia and not Austria as the natural protector of the Slav people". Further adding that the murders were risking a Russian attack as the "great military preparations of Russia have been directed solely to the possibility of a conflict with Austria".¹⁴¹ Though not an outright accusation of Russian ambitions in the Near East, it is an observation and presentation of the Austrian position almost echoing the one in 1903 that Russia, once more, undermined Austria-Hungary and had secured her interests. Of course, the British position in the decade had gradually aligned with the Entente. As such, the sympathetic presentation of Austria to the vilifying of Russia is long gone. However, it is worth noting that the framing of the newspaper leaves an impression that Russia had planned the whole ordeal. Of course, it is now known that no such conspiracy existed, but the English Press creates an impression of returning to its position of Russian mistrust from a decade earlier.¹⁴²

The *Guardian* on the same day continues in another article to highlight the foreign Minister's opinion as well as the British revival of the close association with Emperor Francis Joseph and his Empire-Kingdom, Sir Edward Grey commenting on the matter:

Having been for so many years in friendly relations with the Foreign Ministers of Austria-Hungary and for so many years in frequent, sometimes constant, personal communication of a most friendly nature with the representation of that great country, I cannot forebear saying a few words to express my sympathy with that country in the tragic loss it has

¹⁴¹ 'Trials Before Austria— What the Murders may mean, *The Guardian*, 30th June 1914.

¹⁴² Watson, *Ring*, pp. 27-28.

suffered. There is not a Foreign Minister in Europe who can be today without a personal feeling of the deepest sincerity concerning the loss that has befallen the Emperor of Austria.

There is not one of them who does not know the incredible support that the life of the Emperor has been and continues to be to the cause of the peace of Europe, which is of such paramount interest to us all¹⁴³

The statement is lengthy, but two things to bring to attention are the proclaimed universal outcry of sympathy for that “great country” and its loss where “not a foreign minister in Europe” could not provide his “deepest sincerity” to the loss of the late Archduke. As highlighted in the contextual piece, this is far from the truth, and instead, it should be stated as a reflection of British views on the matter. Furthermore, the invocation of the Emperor’s renown is placed under display to his “great support...to the cause of peace of Europe”. Arguably, the assassinations were a critical junction in the English Press and leadership outlooks of Austria-Hungary. The statements in the face of the tragedy show that Austria-Hungary or, at a minimum, her Emperor had been reinstated in the English Press and British leadership to a venerated position.

The *Standard* on June 29th made a broader geopolitical assessment of Franz Ferdinand's death and his character. The paper outright declares that the late Archduke was “recognised as the foremost exponent of Austrian Imperialism” as well as the “inspiring force behind the vigorous foreign policy pursued by Austria-Hungary”.¹⁴⁴ The paper presents how in some quarters in the English Press that the death of Ferdinand could be inferred as a positive to European stability based on his militaristic tendencies. The vigorous foreign policy the paper

¹⁴³ ‘Sir E. Grey’s Tribute’, *The Guardian*, 30th June 1914.

¹⁴⁴ ‘Heir Through a Tragedy’, *London Evening Standard*, 29th June 1914.

is referring to is the Bosnian-Herzegovina annexation. Demonstrating that though an outcry of sympathy for Austria-Hungary was taking place, the standing of the Dual Monarchy on the Concert of Europe was still stained. The paper, however, also demonstrates the potential future of Austria-Hungary as standing to German Imperialism and playing her role. The declaration that Ferdinand was dominated by “clerical influence and his inclinations were pro-Slav”. The paper argues in his favour, stating his view that he “believed that if Austria lost her religion, the strongest bar against absorption into the German Empire would be gone”.¹⁴⁵ Here, the paper presents a distinct possibility of courting Austria-Hungary from Germany or at least using her to keep the German Imperialism in check. The focus on faith is particular; as seen in the Irish Home Rule debates, the Catholic faith of the Irish was a significant division in reaching a compromise. Thus, an admission in favour of clericalism to resist Germany presents a significant step amongst the English Press.

The next day, the *Standard* continues the positive presentation of the Dual Monarchy and its Emperor, emphasising the continuing detoxification of the Empire-Kingdom amongst the English Press. When taking into account the Austro-Hungarian mentality from the time, it is presentative of how far it diverged from English perspectives to the fortunes of Austria.

The *Standard* stated that to anyone who spoke of the Dual Monarchy’s chances of shattering to pieces over the assassination was “certainly premature and probably absurd.” Furthermore, echoing the Irish *Freeman*, the paper states that “it has become a commonplace of political disquisition that Austria-Hungary will go to pieces”. Nevertheless, it has persisted “all through sixty-six years reign of Francis Joseph and the prophecy seems rather further from fulfilment than at several other crises in that period”.¹⁴⁶ Though but one

¹⁴⁵ ‘Heir Through a Tragedy’, *London Evening Standard*, 29th June 1914.

¹⁴⁶ ‘The Nationalities in Austria’, *London Evening Standard*, 30th June 1914.

of the many observations in the long article it demonstrates a significant shift in the English Press narratives and perceptions of the Dual Monarchy. From its bound state of failure during the Irish Second Home Rule Bill from 1893 to the shocking revelations of its alteration in foreign policy in 1908, finally settling in its stubborn persistence by 1914.

The *Times*, however, provides much more sceptical perceptions of the Empire with the passing of the Archduke to round out the divergences of opinion amongst the English Press. On June 29th, the newspaper observed that the assassination of Ferdinand had left an “incalculable void in the affairs of the Dual Monarchy”. Adding that Ferdinand had “thrown himself into domestic, military and diplomatic questions hardly to be paralleled”. The main takeaway strongly implied that the assassination had shaken the foundations of the future of Austria-Hungary. Ferdinand was, after all, the heir-apparent of the ailing and old Francis Joseph. Though greatly respected, who was facing the inevitability of a natural passing that, as pointed out in the *Guardian*, had left Europe in anxiety for the future. However, *The Times* also pointed out that Ferdinand, as seen in the *Standard*, was polarising. His commitments to the Austrian Conservatives under Lueger earned him immense disapproval from the Magyars and the Jewish minority.¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, an echo for the future of Austria-Hungary as a federalist state continued amongst the English Press. *The Times* raised the belief that if “he came to the Throne, he would seek to undermine the dual system...on the federal basis desired by the Slav aristocracy of Bohemia”.¹⁴⁸

The *Times*, correspondent compared to the *Standard* or *Guardian*, raises a remarkable understanding of the consequences of the Balkan Wars 1912-13. It was stated that “the

¹⁴⁷ ‘Political Aspects of the Murder’, *The Times*, 29th June 1914.

¹⁴⁸ ‘Political Aspects of the Murder’, *The Times*, 29th June 1914.

Balkan Crisis brought him severe disappointment". The case of Austria-Hungary "would have been ready to intervene or stay the hand of the victorious Turks or Bulgarians," winning her in the negotiation table the ability to "expend her protectorate over the whole of the Serbo-Croat race". However, the success of the Balkan Coalition of Greece, Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Serbia had ended the Archduke's ambitions. Even with the modern historical debate, it is undermining the Austro-Hungarian position so drastically that it led the Austro-Hungarian Empire to act rashly in the face of Serbian pan-Slavic actions. *The Times* pointed out the excellent "antagonism in which these indies involved Servia...and with all partisans of the Pan-Serb ideal [it] is possibly the source of the conspiracy".¹⁴⁹ Though the paper, to the outcries of Serbia's calls of Austrian propaganda rhetoric, shows that the English Press were not complexly supportive of Austria-Hungary's position. It still highlights that the long-term trends of the Pan-Serbian movement and its consequences for Austria-Hungary are not to be downplayed but a clash of interests in the Near East that is unavoidable in coming years.

Conclusion

The English press, although not directly influenced by the Foreign Office, often mirrored the narratives and priorities of British foreign policy. For instance, following the occupation of Egypt, which diplomatically isolated Britain from the Concert of Europe, the English press praised the Triple Alliance, praising the roles of Austria-Hungary in maintaining peace in the Near East. However, these narratives began to shift in response to the geopolitical realignment of Great Britain toward the Entente Powers. Whilst the Hungarian and Bosnian crises served as catalysts for cementing the new critical and pessimistic perspectives on the Dual Monarchy. Each crisis underscored Austria-Hungary's perceived unreliability and

¹⁴⁹ 'Political Aspects of the Murder', *The Times*, 29th June 1914.

einstability in maintaining the status quo in the Near East. Therefore, when the Bosnian Crisis erupted with its secret agreements unknown to the public, the English press responded with severe condemnation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which was viewed as acting recklessly and risking a continental war for little apparent gain.

Beyond the English press's shifting narratives in line with the Foreign Office's ambiguous position, various domestic factors also played a role. The personal views of correspondents often influenced reporting on events unfolding in Vienna, a situation enabled by the limitations of contemporary communication technology. Additionally, the ongoing debates over Irish Home Rule, although not as prominent in the English press, left an impression. Any concessions by the English press regarding the success of the Dual Monarchy were avoided to prevent emboldening Irish nationalists to demand a similar model of dualism in Great Britain. Furthermore, the relationship between the monarchs, though downplayed by the Foreign Office as irrelevant to official state relations, was widely reported upon. The press's efforts to separate Franz Joseph from his Dual Monarchy highlighted the complexity of the English press's position. From one perspective, it may seem that there was a gradual shift from positive portrayals out of necessity to condemnation due to Austria's aggressive actions. However, it is more accurate to assert that the portrayals of Austria in the English press fluctuated throughout the examination period, aligning with domestic needs and foreign developments concerning the stability of the Balkans. Austria-Hungary could be depicted as a natural ally in containing the ambitions of Germany and Russia or as an unstable and anachronistic state on the verge of collapse for the Irish nationalists. This inconsistency contributed to the public's confusion, exemplified by the shock at why Britain was at war with Austria-Hungary, aside from its circumstance as an ally of Germany.

Chapter Three: Comparison of Views

The closing chapter explores the complex relationship between Franz Joseph, Austria-Hungary, and the Anglosphere press. It uses the Bosnian Crisis of 1908, alongside Franz Joseph's Diamond Jubilee in the same year, to illustrate how the Irish and English press both diverged and occasionally converged in their portrayals of the aging monarch. This event serves as a crucial catalyst, highlighting the extent to which narratives about Franz Joseph were crafted to maintain a consistent image of him in the British public eye amid the threat of a European continental war. Additionally, the chapter argues that the Bosnian Crisis was a pivotal moment in the evolution of the Irish narrative about Franz Joseph, marking a rare moment of consensus between Ireland and England.

Presentations of Francis Joseph before and after the Bosnian Crisis in the Irish Press

The Irish press presented two opposing depictions of the Dual Monarchy and Emperor Franz Joseph. The nationalist press, aiming to advance the cause of Home Rule, attempted with limited success to equate Franz Joseph with the state of Austria-Hungary. Conversely, the unionist press, mirroring efforts in Great Britain, sought to separate the aged monarch from the body politic. The Bosnian Crisis of 1908 acted as a catalyst in reinforcing these perspectives, leading to a form of uniformity between the Irish and English unionist press. Only the *Freeman* stood out among the examined Irish papers by voicing the Austrian Reichsrat in support of the annexation:

The Austrian Delegation to-day begun the debate on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Almost all the speakers approved of the annexation, which, they declared, was an absolute

necessity. Count Latour expressed the conviction that public opinion both in the West and East would return to the traditional appreciation of the Monarchy if the latter remained calm and firm. Herr Oppenheimer replied, to what he termed the unjust criticism of a section of the British press, which, he said was aimed not at Austria-Hungary's position in Bosnia, but at her position in the Triple Alliance¹⁵⁰

So why did the crisis intensify the divergence of views? The nationalist press could no longer remain aloof, unlike during the Hungarian Crisis. The unionist press's decision not to defend the emperor likely stemmed from their alignment with the English press, which was already distancing the actions of Aehrenthal from Franz Joseph. Meanwhile, the nationalist press, needing to present Austria as a strong state for their own cause, continued this portrayal even at the risk of alienation by siding with the aggressor in this case.

Notably, during the time of the Diamond Jubilee, the *Freeman* did not report on the event, unlike the rest of the Anglosphere press. In fact, it remained silent on all Austro-Hungarian foreign affairs following the crisis. It is reasonable to believe that the unpopular stance of categorically supporting the Dual Monarchy by reiterating the Austrian position, despite continental outcry against the violation of the Treaty of Berlin, had significantly isolated the paper. Nevertheless, the *Freeman* chose to focus on the secret agreements between Russia and Austria, presenting Russian objections to the annexation minus compensation as redundant, hypocritical and diplomatically outwitted.¹⁵¹ This continued the trend of the nationalist press unambiguously supporting the Austrian cause during the Bosnian Crisis. However, the Bosnian Crisis had a long-term impact on the position of Franz Joseph among

¹⁵⁰ 'Warning to Minor States', *The Freeman's Journal*, 28th October 1908.

¹⁵¹ 'Austria's Indiscretion', *The Freeman's Journal*, 2nd December 1908.

the nationalist press. Breaking the trend, by not mentioning or associating Franz Joseph as synonymous with Austria-Hungary, the nationalist press aligned with the Irish and English unionists in separating Franz Joseph from his empire.

Despite the subtle but long-term change among the nationalist press in dissociating Franz Joseph from his Dual Monarchy, it was the unionist press of Ireland that underwent the greater transformation in discussions of Franz Joseph. After over a decade of downplaying his significance and role in the administration and political decision-making of Austria-Hungary, the *Dublin Express*, following the Bosnian Crisis, made a radical shift in its narrative in line with the rest of the English press. In practice, during the event, the unionist and nationalist press inverted the last fifteen years of political debate. The unionists began using the same tactics as the nationalists to emphasize the role of Franz Joseph in the governance of Austria-Hungary. This marked a significant reversal in their approach, aligning their narrative with that of the nationalists and highlighting the emperor's influence:

The Emperor is, we think, in a better position to give an authoritative opinion on this question, not merely than anyone else within the limits of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

It will be to his government and his government alone, that the guilt of invoking a great European war will attach, if such should unhappily be the outcomes of the existing tension.

An opportunity will be presented to his own subjects and to foreign Powers for testifying to

the venerable Monarch the high esteem in which he has long been universally held, it is

from every point of view a most deplorable circumstance that on the eve of this Diamond

Jubilee he should allowed his name to be blazoned throughout every country as principal actor in an act of international charge of rapacious self-aggrandisement¹⁵²

Though the sudden change might seem unusual, it aligns with a broader trend in the Anglosphere press's portrayal of Franz Joseph. The emperor was consistently depicted positively, often described as a venerated, wise, and stable leader amid the chaos of the Near East.¹⁵³ Much of this positive framing stemmed from his reputation for living a soldier's life dedicated to serving his Dual Monarchy, which was argued to be the source of his popularity among his subjects despite parliamentary crises. The English and unionist press further reinforced this image through frequent reporting on the state visits between the Austro-Hungarian and British royals, fostering cordial relations between the two monarchies, even though the foreign office disavowed these royal relations as reflective of geopolitical positions.¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, after it isolated the paper, both nationalist and unionist presses began to consistently acknowledge Franz Joseph's significant role in the domestic and foreign affairs of Austria-Hungary. This created an oxymoron in the press: they portrayed Franz Joseph as the key figure capable of resolving the crisis, while concurrently, particularly in the English press, distancing him from the affair and attributing it to the intrigues of his foreign minister, Aehrenthal, to preserve his esteemed position.

Even so, the long-term positive framing of Franz Joseph, fostered by the cordial relations between the British and Austro-Hungarian monarchies, was likely not the major factor

¹⁵² 'Diamon Jubilee', *Dublin Daily Express*, 23rd November 1908.

¹⁵³ 'England and Austria', *London Evening Standard*, 15th May 1893, 'The King in Vienna—Comments on the Visit', *London Evening Standard*, 4th September 1903, 'The King of Vienna—Meeting with the Emperor', *Northern Whig*, 1st September 1903, 'The System of Home Rule', *Dublin Daily Express*, 19th December 1906, 'Austria-Hungary and England', *Dublin Daily Express*, 7th September 1909, 'Austria-Hungary', *The Guardian*, 9th May 1910, 'A force for Peace—Austrian Tribute to Great Britain', *The Guardian*, 30th April 1914, 'Friendship and Sympathy with the English People', *Northern Whig*, 31st July 1914.

¹⁵⁴ Bridge, *Sarajevo*, pp. 190-191

contributing to the monarch's elevation to prominence. It is more probable that his political outmanoeuvring of the Hungarian nationalists, particularly regarding the attempt to introduce Hungarian as the language of command in the Hungarian army, led to his elevated status. The Irish press seemed particularly impressed with Franz Joseph's handling of the Hungarian Crisis.¹⁵⁵ Importantly, this was not depicted as an outright triumph but rather as a hard-fought battle. While the emperor was ultimately presented as influential in resolving the crisis, it was acknowledged that his success involved threats of universal suffrage, the undermining of the Hungarian parliament through continuous prorogation, and an iron grip over his cabinet, including the appointment of a prime minister without a majority. This narrative echoed a bygone era of an absolute monarch asserting his will without checks or bounds. More importantly, it offers a rare glimpse into the complexities of Franz Joseph in the Anglosphere press. While venerated as a steadfast monarch, he was not unfamiliar with the despotic tendencies of his neighbours in Prussia and Russia. The criticism levied against him openly highlights the difficulties he and Austria faced in forming closer ties with Great Britain. Despite being admired by his people for his commitment to his military lifestyle in their service, his grip on power and belief in his divine right to rule was evident to all—perhaps blindingly so—at a time of rising nation-states and calls for civil rights and liberties.

Continuing the altered course of the unionist press after the Bosnian affair, the *Northern Whig* echoes a similar line of argument, expressing confusion and disbelief that Emperor Francis Joseph would permit such a dangerous action on the verge of his Diamond Jubilee:

¹⁵⁵ 'The Emperor's Ultimatum', *Freeman's Journal*, 25th September 1905, 'The Situation in Hungary', *Freeman's Journal*, 14th November 1905, 'Austria-Hungary', *Dublin Daily Express*, 16th September 1905, 'No Prospect of a Settlement', *Dublin Daily Express*, 25th September 1905

Austria seems determined to persist in the dangerous game of keeping alive the controversy in the Near East. Her attitude towards Turkey and Serbia approaches within distance of provocation...we can hardly believe that the Emperor Francis Joseph will signalise the sixtieth anniversary of his reign by giving his sanction to a step so insensate¹⁵⁶

Given that Joseph Robert Fisher was editor for both the *London Evening Standard* and the *Northern Whig*, it is unsurprising that the paper was most aligned with the English press among the three Irish papers examined, even before the Bosnian Crisis. This alignment sheds light on the presentation of Franz Joseph compared to Austria-Hungary. The belief that Austria was conspiring with Bulgaria to undermine the Young Turk regime in the Ottoman Empire reflects the influence of Steed and Watson, who had grown disillusioned with the Dual Monarchy.¹⁵⁷ Statements of conspiracy and provocation of Serbia and Turkey are not new but an echo of this disillusionment. Among the Irish and English, Franz Joseph was admired for his conservative approach to state and foreign policy. However, his sanction of the aggressive annexation left him at odds with the Entente Powers, including Britain, under the perception that Austria was risking a European war, much like its neighbours for prestige. Criticisms of Franz Joseph often targeted his fame as an advocate of European peace and the status quo. The shock expressed by the Irish press seems genuine, and the *Northern Whig's* calls for a European conference to establish a new order reflect the unionist as well as English press belief that Franz Joseph still wished to maintain peace.

¹⁵⁶ 'Emperor Francis Joseph's Part', *Northern Whig*, 1st December 1908.

¹⁵⁷ Harry Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 11-35.

Presentations of Francis Joseph before and after the Bosnian Crisis in the English Press

The extent to which Franz Joseph believed in peace and preserving the status quo and how he was presented in the Anglosphere press is nuanced. It is debatable whether he was truly committed to maintaining the status quo at all costs, even though the English press often framed him as such. It is entirely possible that the Austro-Hungarian leadership, like their monarch, were aware of their precarious position as a multiethnic state amidst rising nationalism and sought to avoid rocking the boat. Thus, they advocated for peace and the status quo to maintain stability in the Dual Monarchy. Nevertheless, the English press tended to present the annexation as primarily a state affair, distancing Franz Joseph from the backlash. For instance, the *Guardian* wrote during the Diamond Jubilee:

Few people in this country will go far towards wasting sympathy upon Serbia. If that little state was foolish enough to want a war with Austria...the fate it would bring on itself would be as easily foreseen as it would be calmly borne. But everyone now sees that the talk in which Serbia indulged was not meant to culminate in a suicidal rush against a great Power.

Is threatening the peace of Europe by preparations on a scale obviously far more than sufficient to punish severely any offensive action on the part of Serbia. The Russian Government shows itself less inclined to abandon its position as protector of the Slavs, although it is that with a view to facilitating the meeting of a Conference, the Tsar is now willing to drop the claim for territorial compensation to the Serb States¹⁵⁸

The short article by the *Guardian* firmly illustrates the great divergence in perceptions between Austria-Hungary and its southern Slavic states. Franz Joseph and Austria-Hungary

¹⁵⁸ 'The Austrian Emperor's Jubilee', *The Guardian*, 3rd December 1908.

are portrayed as a great power, in stark contrast to the negative depiction of Serbia. The cold-blooded murder of King Aleksander seems to be an influence, with little sympathy expressed for Serbia, seen as nothing more than a provocateur on a suicidal mission.¹⁵⁹ However, the *Guardian* still calls for peace, fearing an escalation of the crisis by Russia, which, while offering to compromise on land compensation, still stands by Serbia. The article captures the intricacy of the time, portraying the annexation and Serbia's sabre-rattling protest as insults to Austria-Hungary, leading to a loss of prestige—an unacceptable position for the traditionalist House of Habsburg. The *Guardian* downplays the severity of the insult and appeals for the preservation of peace during Franz Joseph's Jubilee. Although the article never mentions the old monarch by name, the uniformity of articles across newspapers during the Diamond Jubilee suggests the appeal may have been coordinated or at least opportunistic by the English press.

Why then appeal to Franz Joseph to resolve the crisis? As argued, it's difficult to determine if Franz Joseph genuinely believed in European peace or was simply biding his time to reform his fractured and unstable Dual Monarchy. Nevertheless, the English press, and later the Irish press following the Bosnian Crisis, believed in his rhetoric of preserving the status quo. This belief led to the appeal for the Austrian leadership to present their case for a continental conference to establish a new order in Europe. Given the peak of the Hungarian Crisis, the decision to appeal to the emperor over the statesmen of Austria is not surprising. The unionist press had spent fifteen years discrediting Austria-Hungary and its dualism. Meanwhile, Franz Joseph, though callous with the nationalists, secured his position by forcing the Hungarian nationalists to negotiate, showcasing his competence and power.

¹⁵⁹ Cornwall, *Sarajevo 1914*, pp. 185-87.

Thus, the appeal to the emperor is as much about the great prestige he retained as it is about the rapid decline of Austria's diplomatic position in the outcome of the Bosnian Crisis.

The Bosnian Crisis left Austria-Hungary as a global pariah, a status that cannot be understated. The Dual Monarchy faced unanimous condemnation for violating an international treaty. This sentiment was profoundly captured by *The Times* newspaper, which refrained from assigning blame and instead used the British public's voice to express a desire to return to the previous status quo and maintain the reputation of Franz Joseph:

The higher our conception of the character of Francis Joseph, and the deeper the esteem and the veneration which we have accord him, the ruder would the shock, which any manifest departure from that ideal must cause us. It will need unanswerable proof to convince the British people that the Sovereign whose truth and consciousness have won their admiration and respect has renounced in his old age the principles which seemed unfailing guides of his life¹⁶⁰

While the decision to disavow any aggressive actions by Austria-Hungary as being led by Franz Joseph, framing such actions as inconceivable without irrefutable proof, likely reflects the general fear of a greater European war. *The Times* critical portrayal of the British public, a unique approach during the incident, indicates the paper's intentions. It represents a sympathetic outcry on behalf of both the intellectual and public view of Franz Joseph. The favoured position of Franz Joseph with Edward VII, despite the displeasure of his foreign office, is well known, even to the extent of attempting to visit Franz Joseph before his own ally in France.¹⁶¹ Moreover, although the foreign press had little influence on the English

¹⁶⁰ 'The Jubilee of Emperor Francis Joseph', *The Times*, 2nd December 1908.

¹⁶¹ Bridge, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, P. 26 & F.R. Bridge, *Sarajevo 1914*, pp. 188-190

press, it is fair to assume that the close relationship between the two royals impacted the reporting of the crisis, spinning it in a way that separated Franz Joseph from the actions of his foreign minister, Alois Aehrenthal.

The meeting between King Edward VII and Emperor Franz Joseph at Bad Ischl, coupled with early celebrations of the upcoming jubilee and extensive news coverage, underscores a deliberate effort to distance Emperor Franz Joseph from the Bosnian Crisis. This approach aimed to sustain the positive narrative constructed over the decade by the English press.¹⁶² Notably, Austria-Hungary had secured an unofficial position as the German state with which Great Britain could do business, sharing a mutual interest in maintaining the status quo in the Balkans—especially during the 1890s when Franco-Anglo relations were strained over African colonies, and Russia and Great Britain were still engaged in the Great Game over Central Asia. The Entente Cordiale between France and Great Britain in 1904 and the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 significantly downplayed Austria's importance to Great Britain. However, after building up the Dual Monarchy as a beacon of stability and Franz Joseph as a venerated monarch, a radical narrative shift was impossible. Therefore, the continued glorification of Franz Joseph, alongside the criticism of Alois Aehrenthal and Austria-Hungary's foreign policy, seems to have been the compromise. This narrative strategy allowed the English press to maintain the favourable image of Franz Joseph while acknowledging the complexities of the new dangerous political situation.

¹⁶² 'Austrian Diplomacy', *London Evening Standard*, 15th October 1908, 'Austro-Russian Negotiations', *London Evening Standard*, 29th October 1908, 'Warlike Movements in Austria', *Dublin Daily Express*, 10th October 1908, 'The British Press Criticised', *Dublin Daily Express*, 28th October 1908, 'Warning to Minor States', *The Freeman's Journal*, 28th October 1908, 'Austria and Proposed Conference', *The Freeman's Journal*, 13th March 1909, 'Count Von Aehrenthal—Austria's Foreign Minister', *The Guardian*, 5th January 1912, 'Dividing the Balkan Spoils—Austria's Ambition', *Northern Whig*, 8th November 1912.

The *London Evening Standard*, indirectly linked to the *Northern Whig* in Ireland, shares many of its positions. The major presentation centres on the personalized appeal and understanding of Franz Joseph as the primary political force in Austria-Hungary capable of resolving the crisis. Similar to the Irish press, the state of Austria-Hungary is under scrutiny, but the article goes further than any other English newspaper in separating Franz Joseph from his Dual Monarchy:

In the congratulations offered to the Monarch all the nations of Europe will join with hearty accord, for to all Europe he has been a good friend—none more cordially than England..all his life he has sedulously pursued peace, nor has any ruler had a stronger reason for detesting war...that his government has drifted or been dragged into a false position is not more certain than that the blunder was not of his making.

It would be a welcome solution of the international anxiety if the universally revered Sovereign should reassert his authority and once again display the mellow wisdom which has steered the Dual State through many a dangerous crisis. The regret is almost universal that the Emperor-King has not yet set aside the counsellors by whom his reputation has unfairly been impaired¹⁶³

Although the *London Evening Standard* does not break the trend among the English press of separating Austria-Hungary from Franz Joseph and propping up one while criticizing the other, its calls for a return to the status quo and personal appeals to Franz Joseph underscore the extent to which his reputation as an advocate of peace had been cemented in the Anglosphere press. Echoing the sentiments of denial of *The Times*, the article calls for the dismissal of the council of ministers advising Franz Joseph, accusing them of unfairly

¹⁶³ 'Emperor's Diamond Jubilee, *London Evening Standard*, 1st December 1908.

undermining his globally admired reputation as a diligent pursuer of peace. The long article emphasizes Franz Joseph's continental position as a friend to all, especially the English, harking back to a time of closer relations in the 19th century. It highlights how the old sovereign had maintained and fostered friendly relations between Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, contrasting this with the strained diplomatic ties with the German Empire. Symbolically and practically, the emperor is portrayed as the olive branch in sustaining any positive relations between Germany and Great Britain. In the face of a potential continental war, the significance of Franz Joseph's role is immense, reflecting the reason behind the Anglosphere press's efforts to preserve the sovereign's reputation.

Nevertheless, criticism surfaces, suggesting that the crisis might have been of Franz Joseph's own making. Although downplayed as merely a blunder, this criticism highlights the test of confidence the Bosnian Crisis posed for the emperor. Continuous appeals for a conference and for Franz Joseph to live up to his reputation reflect a mixture of faint hope and ultimatum, challenging him to prove he was indeed the figure of peace he was reputed to be. Beyond the emperor, the political leadership of Austria-Hungary reveals an intent to seek conflict to instil monarchist patriotic duty among its minorities.¹⁶⁴ Here, the influential position of English correspondents becomes crucial. By avoiding Reuters reports through Berlin, known to be tampered with, the English press, unlike its Irish counterpart, could reach its own conclusions.¹⁶⁵ Consequently, the separation of Franz Joseph from his cabinet ministers could be an organic development. The *Evening Standard* strategically highlights Austria's past defeats and Franz Joseph's aversion to war, underscoring the stark contrast with the Bosnian crisis. This reflects how the crisis disillusioned many English journalists with

¹⁶⁴ Watson, *Ring of Steel*, pp. 14 -28

¹⁶⁵ Bridge, *Great Britain and Austria*, P. 32

the Dual Monarchy's direction. The decision to distance Franz Joseph from his empire's actions ties back to the belief that the empire might disintegrate upon his death. By portraying him as a sovereign who upheld peace and the status quo for decades, any drastic policy shifts could be blamed on rogue agents within his cabinet, justifying the oxymoronic position of the English press in praising the former and criticising the latter.

Conclusion

While Austria-Hungary faced numerous crises that could illustrate Franz Joseph's complex relationship with his empire to the Anglosphere, the Bosnian Crisis notably aligned the Irish unionist press with its English counterpart. The *London Evening Standard* and the *Northern Whig's* similar reporting during this crisis cemented this trend. Nationalist silence, after siding with Austria, highlighted the Anglosphere's unified stance on the perceived risk of an unnecessary European war. Efforts to frame Austria-Hungary's foreign policy as the work of rogue ministers undermining Franz Joseph's prestige seemed excessive but served to distance the emperor from his Dual Monarchy. This allowed the Anglosphere press to paradoxically praise Franz Joseph for maintaining peace while passionately criticizing Austria-Hungary's actions. This stance preserved the rapport between the royal families and emphasized Franz Joseph's crucial role as a mediator with Berlin during heightened tensions with Russia, elevating his position to deescalate the situation. Despite this, the Bosnian Crisis also tested the old sovereign, as many English correspondents became disillusioned with Austria-Hungary, further distancing it from Great Britain. This criticism followed earlier scrutiny of Franz Joseph's competent yet ruthless handling of Hungarian nationalists.

Conclusions:

When Gladstone cited Austria-Hungary and the Sweden-Norway Union as successful examples of dualism, he could not have anticipated the subsequent turbulence and debates that unfolded in these states. Similarly, the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) and the nationalist press faced significant upheaval following Parnell's death, leading to a decade-long division within the nationalist cause. Concurrently, Austria-Hungary experienced its own challenges, with the Bohemian Diet Crises and Hungarian Constitutional Crisis causing political instability. The unionist press, represented by the *Northern Whig* and *Dublin Daily Express*, seized the opportunity and advocated for Austria-Hungary to serve as a model for discussing home rule in Ireland. The visible political turmoil within the Dual Monarchy ultimately discredited the concept of dualism, forcing the divided nationalist press to begrudgingly to acknowledge Austria as the new framework for debating Home Rule. Consequently, the nationalist press struggled to dominate the discourse on Austria-Hungary, contending with both internal conflicts and the visible domestic turmoil in the Dual Monarchy. By 1906, with the conclusion of the Hungarian crisis, Home Rule seemed defeated, the liberal leadership abandoned the cause, and the IPP's alignment with the Boers in the South African War ended their alliance with the Liberal Party.

An opportunity, however, arose with the Bosnian Crisis that reshaped Austria-Hungary's narrative. The English press, aiming to preserve Emperor Francis Joseph's reputation, distanced him from his government's actions. Austria-Hungary, once seen as weak and subservient to Berlin, emerged as a formidable power despite its damaged reputation. The unionist press lost a crucial argument when the *Freeman* depicted the crisis as a humiliation for Britain. This forced the unionist press to align more closely with the English press, which

universally condemned Austria-Hungary for violating an international treaty. Against this new backdrop, the debate on Home Rule resumed, and dualism could not be dismissed outright. The IPP, leveraging their unique position, succeeded in passing the Third Home Rule Bill in 1912. Two years later, the assassination of Franz Ferdinand highlighted the press's transformation: unionists expressed sympathy for Franz Joseph and Austria-Hungary, while nationalists dismissed rumours of the Dual Monarchy's collapse. This shift reflected the nationalist press's reluctant support for Austria-Hungary, which they abandoned as soon as possible, and the unionist press's alignment with the English press's pragmatic exposition of British foreign interests.

The pragmatic shifting of narratives in the English press reflects the absence of a political issue as significant as Home Rule for Ireland. Consequently, reporting on Austria-Hungary was influenced by continental developments. This shift is evident in the transition from depicting Austria as a bulwark of peace in the Near East to condemning it as a violator of international treaties and subordinate to Berlin during the Bosnian Crisis. These shifts aligned with Great Britain's geopolitical realities, particularly Salisbury's alignment with the Entente, leading to more critical coverage at the turn of the century. Crises from Hungary to Bosnia catalysed this shift, dismantling the belief in a shared vision for Balkan stability. The assassination of Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo had a revitalising effect with the *Guardian* featuring Sir Edward Grey's condolences to Franz Joseph and his people, *The Times* condemnation of Serbian terrorism, and the *Evening Standard* highlighted the death of Franz Ferdinand as a missed opportunity for a new beginning for Austria-Hungary. This terrorist act almost provided the Dual Monarchy with a chance to remove itself from being a

global pariah. However, Franz Joseph's decision, influenced by his military command, to go to war ultimately closed the opportunity for a potential European realignment.

In conclusion, portrayals of Austria-Hungary in the Anglosphere press fluctuated significantly during the three crises under investigation. In the 1890s, Austria-Hungary was depicted as a cautionary tale against dualism in Great Britain, yet later as a valuable ally in maintaining good relations with Germany. However, the unprecedented aggression and treaty violation during the Bosnian Crisis in 1908 secured her position as a pariah state in the last years to the Great War. While shifts in the narrative around the Dual Monarchy are evident throughout the period, each crisis acted as a catalyst in reshaping its depiction in the Anglosphere press. Of the three crises examined, the Bosnian affair had the greatest impact on how the Dual Monarchy was perceived and discussed, particularly in unifying the Irish unionist press with the rest of the English press in the years leading up to the Great War.

Amidst the evolving discussion of the state, Franz Joseph remained a constant factor.

Various domestic crises brought him to the forefront, sparking debate about his influence in preserving the Dual Monarchy. Depending on the newspaper's political leaning, the old sovereign was portrayed either as the saviour of his empire or as a minor factor in its daily administration. The Bosnian Crisis, however, pushed these perspectives to their breaking point. When sides had to be chosen, the Anglosphere press chose to separate Franz Joseph from his empire. This practical decision allowed the press to adopt a paradoxical stance: they could freely criticize Austria-Hungary's aggressive actions while upholding Franz Joseph's esteemed position as an advocate for European peace. Several reasons justified this approach, including his relations with British royals, the myth built around him by the English press, his role as a mediator with Berlin, and his personal character.

On a national scale, the Irish press was significantly influenced by the crises that tormented Austria-Hungary. Due to the actions of unionists and Gladstone, the debate around dualism or Home Rule for Ireland was often framed through the lens of Austria-Hungary. Each crisis became a point of heated debate: nationalists saw dualism as a model of resistance and perseverance, while unionists viewed it as a source of torment and difficulty. By 1906, the nationalist cause seemed defeated, with the Liberals abandoning them and Austria-Hungary facing its Hungarian crises. Dualism appeared increasingly unattractive due to its political turmoil and near martial law, mitigated only by the Russian Revolution of 1905 as a cautionary tale. The Bosnian Crisis had an unexpected long-term effect on the Irish debate. By 1912, Austria-Hungary's role in European politics had shifted, and nationalists abandoned their support as their Home Rule goals were achieved. Meanwhile, unionists began defending Austria's right to demand justice for the Sarajevo murders, aligning with the English press post-1908. In a poetic twist, Austria-Hungary, a central figure in the Home Rule debate, became the final hurdle to its implementation by igniting the Great War.

The English press, unlike its Irish counterpart, lacked a unifying political issue and generally reflected British foreign interests, often influenced by continental developments. Initially, during Britain's diplomatic isolation over the Egyptian affair, it relied on Vienna for support and thus portrayed the Dual Monarchy positively. However, as Salisbury realigned Britain with the Entente Powers by the turn of the century, more critical articles emerged, especially during the Hungarian and Bosnian affairs, which challenged the notion that Britain and Austria shared a desire for the status quo in the Near East. Despite this, the assassination of Franz Ferdinand showcased the press's adaptability, as it universally condemned Serbia, attributing its actions to Russian interference. The Habsburgs were

depicted as striving to maintain peace in the Near East amidst Serbian terrorism. Within a month, the outbreak of the Great War silenced these narratives. Nonetheless, the English press demonstrated pragmatism, with private correspondents in various capitals enabling it to form its own conclusions and present diverse perspectives on the Dual Monarchy, particularly during crises that catalysed these shifts.

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