

STUDIA IN HONOREM VIBEKE ROGGEN

Ediderunt

Han Lamers et Silvio Bär

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Studia in Honorem Vibeke Roggen

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ANOTHER EFFORT TO SAVE LATIN AS THE MEANS OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION: KARL-HEINRICH ULRICHS (1825–1895) AND HIS *SOMNIUM TRANSALPINUM*

CHRISTIAN LAES*

The history of these campaigns still has to be written.

(IJsewijn, Sacré (1993) 52)

1. Introduction

Thanks to an anastatic reprint, introduced by a Latin preface and concluded by an outstanding index, the Latin periodical *Alaudae* (1889–1895), edited and almost entirely written by Karl-Heinrich Ulrichs, is now one of the most readily available journals of the movement of the so-called *Latinitas Viva*.¹ Whilst a general history of such nineteenth and twentieth-century Latin journals still has to be written,² even the *Alaudae* themselves remain largely understudied.³

This paper will deal with the “Transalpine Dream” (*Somnium Transalpinum*) that appeared in seven episodes in the *Alaudae* from 1890 to 1893. The

* Many thanks go to my colleague John Taylor (University of Manchester) for his careful language review, to Raymond Detrez (University of Ghent) for his help with my exploration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and to my PhD student Karolis Lyvens (University of Manchester), whose project will finally write the history of these Living Latin campaigns. Throughout this contribution, the abbreviation *Al.* is used for references to the *Alaudae*.

1. Ulrichs (2004), with Stroh (2004) as introduction and Setz (2004) as an indispensable index, which makes the periodical much more accessible. Tellingly, Colapietra (1995) did not yet have such readily available edition at his disposal, which made him presume, wrongly, that the *Alaudae* ended in 1892 – a mistake which is already apparent from the title of his article.

2. Sacré (1988); IJsewijn, Sacré (1997) 362–364; Stroh (2007) 292–296; Slednikov (2017). By now, Bernard Platzdasch has compiled and made available on the internet admirable indices to the journals *Candidatus*, *Hermes Americanus*, *Melissa*, *Palaestra Latina*, *Societas Latina*, and *Vox Latina*. See <http://periodica.pantoia.de/> (accessed 30 July 2021). See also Platzdasch (2020).

3. Colapietra (1995) 308–325; Lyvens (2016) 74–77; Slednikov (2017) 217–220 are descriptive on a general level; Sacré (2020) deals with the poet Young in the *Alaudae*. Enthusiastic and eloquent praise is found in Latin articles by Sacré (1994), Jenniges (2005) and Hirschler (2016).

Somnium reads like a pamphlet to introduce Latin as the common language of the Austrian part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. I will present and translate several fragments of this *Somnium*, and contextualise various elements of it. I will study how the different arguments adduced in favour of Latin as an international language relate to or differ from other contemporary projects that served a similar purpose. In the digressions on neologisms, the text also reveals Ulrichs' thoughts on how Latin can be adapted to the modern world. I will also highlight possible political or religious backgrounds that played a role. Finally, the role of Latin will be compared with similar projects that aimed at the establishment of one common international language. I also want to bring the question of Latin as an international means of communication into broader discussions about European intellectual history. But before doing so, something needs to be said both about the quite remarkable author of the *Alaudae*, Karl-Heinrich Ulrichs, and about his admittedly somewhat extravagant initiative of publishing a journal entirely written in Latin.

2. Karl-Heinrich Ulrichs: a remarkable life

From the late 1980s on, the name Karl-Heinrich Ulrichs (1825–1895) rings a bell with the Germanophone gay movement, with streets and squares named after him.⁴ Born from a well-to-do family in the village Westerfeld in East Frisia, which at that time belonged to the Kingdom of Hanover, his mother tongue was Low German.⁵ He read law and theology at the University of Göttingen, where he graduated in 1846 with a thesis entitled *De fori reconventionis origines et doctrina* that was awarded a gold medal. He then studied history at the University of Berlin till 1848, again graduating with a Latin dissertation, entitled *Pax Westphalica quid constituerit de principum jure reformando religionisque exercitio subditorum*. From 1849 to 1856, he served in the administration at the court of Hildesheim for the Kingdom of Hanover. Allegations of homosexual behaviour at first did not stand in the way of his career as a

4. Ulrichs' biography has been described in rich detail by Colapietra (1995) 304–308; in various contributions in Setz (2000) and (2004); by Kennedy (2001). Persichetti (1896) not only contains a *Curriculum Vitae Literarium* by Ulrichs himself (for which see now also Slednikov (2021) 254–256), but also a *Discorso* (p. 10–19) by Persichetti, as well as announcements of Ulrich's death in several Italian newspapers.

5. In fact, the very last lines of the *Alaudae* are a quote of three lines in this language (*Al.* 33, Febr. 1895, p. 388: *Linguae Frisiae orientalis, in qua natus sum, specimen*). Other than its surrounding areas, East Frisia had Low German, and not Frisian, as common language. See Dorren (2017) 271–278 for a vivid account of the language situation in East Frisia and surroundings.

lawyer, which culminated in his nomination, in 1864, as a secretary to the representative of Johann II, Prince of Liechtenstein, at the court of Frankfurt. From this year on, first under the pseudonym of Numa Numantius, he started his series of *Forschungen über das Räthsel der mann männlichen Liebe*. Before the term homosexuality was coined, he introduced the term *Urning* to designate a man with a sexual inclination that he considered a natural one, by no means a disease and not subject to punishment by law.⁶ His oration at the *Deutscher Juristentag* in 1867 is considered the first coming-out in history. Whilst his publications on the topic were increasingly subject to bans and prohibitions, he also continued his fight for the case of King George V of Hanover, who had lost his rights to the throne due to the annexation of his kingdom by Prussia after the Austro-Prussian war in 1866. Ulrichs spent the 1870s mainly in Stuttgart, the capital of Württemberg, which had stayed independent from Prussian Germany after the treaty of Prague in 1866. In this decade, he published both Latin and German verses, and at the same time continued his intellectual fight for the rights of homosexuals. Increasingly embittered by the spreading Prussian hostility towards gay relations and facing a trial in 1880, he decided to set off for a journey through Italy, which took him several years and damaged his already frail health. In 1883, he was finally received in L'Aquila by the local landowner Marquis Niccolò Persichetti, where he spent the last twelve years of his life. From this city in Abbruzzi, he continued sending and receiving letters from correspondents from over the whole world as the editor and almost only writer of the Latin periodical *Alaudae* (1889–1895). At the same time, he acted as a private teacher of Latin. To this day, Ulrichs' Latin gravestone in L'Aquila, sponsored and erected by 43 *fidissimi amici* from all over the world, is an object of pilgrimage for visitors.⁷

3. *Alaudae*: an extraordinary initiative

The first issue of the *Alaudae* appeared on 6 May 1889 and counted eight pages. The new journal promises to appear twice a month (an ambition that was later adjusted to once a month) and sets out to be dedicated to “small articles and pieces of poetry” (*parvis dedicatae studiis parvisque camoenis*). From the

6. Cf. the elegiac distichon: *Sunt mihi barba maris, artus, corpusque virile, / His inclusa quidem: sed sum maneoque puella* (cited by Stroh (2004) ix). About hundred years later, in 1972, French chansonnier Charles Aznavour wrote the following lines in his song entitled ‘Comme ils disent’: *Nul n’a le droit en vérité / de me blâmer de me juger et je précise / que c’est bien la nature qui / est seule responsable si / je suis un “homo” comme ils disent.*

7. Sacré (2020) 253.

fifth issue on, published in August 1889, the motto about the Latin language being able to unite and bring together nations is prominently present in the first lines of the first page (*Linguae Latinae mira quaedam vis inest ad jungendas nationes*). In all, 33 issues numbering 388 pages saw the light (continuous page numbering throughout), the last one dating from February 1895. *Alaudae* appeared in a small format (initially cm 18 x 12, though this format was modified later on). Prices for single issues and annual subscriptions varied somewhat over the years, but one issue never costed more than forty centimes. In all, Ulrichs' undertaking was well supported by professional publishers (from October 1889 on Hermann Loescher in Rome), typographers and managers.⁸ Throughout the issues, Ulrichs prides himself about his correspondence with readers from all over the world, pointing to the dissemination of the *Alaudae* over the five continents. 'Exotic' examples include subscribers from several places in the United States, from Russia, Egypt, Madras, Tashkent, or New Zealand.⁹ As no archives seem to have been kept, we lack precise information on numbers of subscribers, though an observation by Ulrichs himself indicates that this number hardly exceeded 150 – a total which he did not seem to be particularly proud of.¹⁰

If Ulrichs had lived nowadays, he would have preferred blogs, Facebook, Twitter or websites to communicate his ideals of Latin as a living, international language. Such media would indeed have met his eagerness to have a discussion about everything that happened in daily life, and to spread this around in his Latin circle. His readers are treated with such details as: the frequency with which he attended cold baths, a reader who was almost killed being struck by lightning, or the number of hours of daylight in midwinter and high summer in the Finnish city of Oulu.¹¹ Next to beautiful examples of

8. Colapietra (1995) 308–312 offers rich details. Diffusion of the first issues was guaranteed by contacts in Berlin, Helsinki, London, Leipzig, St Petersburg, Rome, Torino, Uppsala, and Vienna.

9. See e.g. *Al.* 6, Sept. 1889, p. 46–47; *Al.* 10, Jan. 1890, p. 76 and 78–79; *Al.* 24, Jul. 1892, p. 236 (*Sic solem occidere Alaudis recte nunc negabis* – mentioning a reader in Mexico City and one in Madras in India). On the international dissemination of the *Alaudae*, see Colapietra (1995) 312; Ulrichs (2004) xviii; Sacré (2020) 248.

10. *Al.* 26, Feb. 1893, p. 267: *Quot autem lectores vobis sunt? Ad quam interrogationem lacrimae mihi obortae sunt. Cum gemitu confessa sum: CL vel paulo plus. Illa: At hoc nihil est.* Already in 1890, Ulrichs laments about the fluctuating number of subscribers, see *Al.* 15, Nov. 1890, p. 120: *Propagatio Alaudarum res fluctuans. Pars lectorum, missa faciens pacta, defecit. Quae defectio causa fuit, cum meo dolore, intervalli longioris.*

11. *Al.* 22, Jan. 1892, p. 205 (109 plunges in the river Aterno from July up to December, with the temperature of the water never exceeding ten degrees in the last month. Ulrichs remarks: *Efficacissimae hae immersiones frigidae ad corroborandas vires*); *Al.* 5, Jan. 1889, p. 38 (this reader later turns out to be king Charles I of Württemberg); *Al.* 22, Jan. 1892, p. 206 (about Uleaborg, Swedish name for Oulu).

mainly lyric poetry, the *Alaudae* abound with eccentricities on matters as diverse as grammar, linguistics, epigraphy, botanics, zoology, geography, meteorology, archaeology, numismatics, anthropology, sexology – and above all on almost every single occasion, anywhere in the world, where words in Latin had been spoken. Pointing to the intellectual climate of Ulrichs' days, Colapietra has revealed tendencies such as intimism and sentimentality above philological accuracy; romantic sensibility to nature and the world of animals; fondness for folkloristic description of customs from the old days; a liberal spirit favouring small undertakings/nations above constringent superstructures; attention to minor languages; patriotism; philanthropy with a tendency towards pacifism; and a sense of community with the intellectual élites all over the world – a community founded in the common classical heritage of Greece and Rome. As such, the *Alaudae* captured well the *Zeitgeist* in Europe of the late nineteenth century.¹²

4. Presentation of the *Somnium Transalpinum*

4.1 Ulrichs had a dream

In the October issue of 1890, Ulrichs mentions a dream he has had:

In umbra noctis alatus Phantasmus in auras me rapuit. Per nubes me in longinquum portavit. Vidi ex alto nivea culmina Alpium. Ad ripas Istri me tulit, in aulam magnam, repletam spisso conventu septem nationum. (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 105–106)

In the shadow of the night, winged Phantasmus lifted me into the air. He transported me far away through the clouds. From above, I saw the snowy peaks of the Alps. He took me to the banks of the Danube, to a large auditorium, filled with the crowded assembly of seven nations.

Phantasmus is a quite specific allusion to a passage in Ovid. As one of the thousand sons of Somnus (Sleep), Phantasmus is mentioned only by Ovid as the bringer of dreams of inanimate objects putting on “deceptive shapes of earth, rocks, water, trees, all lifeless things” (transl. F. J. Miller). He has two

12. Colapietra (1995) 310–317.

brothers: Morpheus, who appears in dreams in human form, and Icelos/Phobetor who takes the form of animals.¹³

This is by no means the only time Ulrichs recurs to the dream metaphor to develop ideas on international Latin. In 1891, he mentions a dream he cherished while he was still a teenager attending the gymnasium.¹⁴ Back in those days, he wanted to establish a brave, virtuous and exclusively male academy in the City of Rome, which would consist of young men carefully selected from all over Europe. The only language of instruction would be Latin, any other language being prohibited, and the groups of students would be mixed in relation to their origin, so that there was no danger of them conversing in the mother tongue. Their pronunciation of Latin should be pure and classical, even pronouncing *c* as *k* before the letters *e* and *i*, thereby avoiding the Italian and ecclesiastical pronunciation.¹⁵ The detail on pronunciation left aside, one cannot but think about the present-day Accademia Vivarium Novum, founded by Luigi Miraglia, which both in summer school and in the academic year translates into action the intention brought forward by (young) Ulrichs.¹⁶ In his days, Ulrichs might have thought of the great Comenius who in 1657 had written about the foundation of a “a Latin school or a new little Rome” (*Latinissimi collegii ceu novae Romanae civitatulae*), in which the language of instruction and daily life would be Latin exclusively.¹⁷ Similar dreams or projects about exclusively Latin schools or institutions have been cherished in the last 150 years, but like Ulrichs’ utopia they were never brought to completion.¹⁸

13. Ov. *Met.* 11.633–645, spec. 641–643 about Phantasos: (...) *est etiam diversae tertius artis / Phantasos: ille in humum saxumque undamque trabemque, / quaeque vacant anima, fallaciter omnia transit.*

14. IJsewijn, Sacré (1993) 57 mentions how also Olmo writes about an idea that came to him in a dream (cf. infra p. 307–308).

15. *Al.* 20, Aug. 1891, p. 168–169. Ulrichs admittedly reflects with some irony on his youthful impetuosity: *Haec somnia tantum me movere, ut jam versus aliquot inchoarem, quorum primus hic erat: “Tandem tempus erit, capitolia sancta recondi” (...) Quae si diutius mecum excoluissem, etiam de armis fortasse cogitavissem, Romanis meis dandis. Certe theatrum exstruxissem, ut iteraretur raptus Sabinarum.*

16. See <https://vivariumnovum.net/en> (seen September 2020) – in particular the Rules and Admission.

17. IJsewijn, Sacré (1993) 57. Comenius’ text is reprinted in *Vox Latina* 12 (1976) 26–35.

18. See e.g. Eichenseer (1998) with strong Catholic emphasis. From 1973 up to 2007, Eichenseer organised no less than 84 Latin seminars, in which participants gathered together for a one week immersion in Latin. In the same vein, Eichenseer initiated Latin summer schools, which are now organised in different formats by Latinists all over the world.

4.2 *A dream about Latin in the Austro-Hungarian Empire*

Phantasmus has brought his passenger to Vienna, where he is witness to a most peculiar event:

Ecce, introiit vir augustus, venerandum Caesareum caput, cum summis civitatis rectoribus. Septem populi assurexere. Coram convocato septem populorum coetu ille solemnem habuit orationem, qua auspicia sua daret indictis communibus eorum comitiis. At res mira et vix expectata. Orationem dixit Latine. Quam ingens populorum secuta est acclamatio. Etiam acclamantium voces esse Latinae videbantur. (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 106)

Look, entered a man with utmost dignity, the venerable Emperor, together with the supreme governors of the state. The seven nations stood up. In front of the assembly of the seven nations he held a solemn speech, in order to give in which his best wishes to their appointed common assemblies. But, an extraordinary and unexpected thing happened. He gave his speech in Latin. His words were followed by an enormous shout of approbation of all people. And even the words of those who approved seemed to be Latin.

At first, Ulrichs is astonished to witness all this, but his gentle guide immediately reminds him of similar events in the recent past. In Stockholm, King Oscar II of Sweden spoke in Latin on 7 September 1889, and the whole assembly understood him.¹⁹ At a medical conference in Berlin in August 1889, at least three speakers and stars of medical science chose to present in Latin, by common approval of the audience: the Italian Guido Baccelli, the Greek Theodoros Konstantinidis (better known as Theodoros Aretaios) and the Prussian Rudolf Virchow.²⁰ So, why would Emperor Franz Joseph not speak in the language of the Romans (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 106)?

19. The event is mentioned in *Al.* 7, Oct. 1889, p. 51–52. King Oscar addressed some audience members whom the knighthood was conferred on, among them one learned Persian, named Mohsin Kahn.

20. Guido Baccelli (1830–1916) was a most important Italian statesman and physician, see Borghi (2015). Theodoros Aretaios (1829–1893) is commonly viewed as the most eminent surgeon of nineteenth-century Greece, see Tsoucalas, Sgantzios (2016). Rudolf Virchow (1821–1902) was a prolific writer, father of modern pathology and the founder of social medicine, see Ackerknecht (1953). These three men are mentioned on several occasions in the *Alaudae*, always in connection with Latin speeches. See Setz (2004) s.v.

One of the committee members now joins the conversation, and his remarks add to the amazement of the bystander. It just is not the case that only the Emperor and the assembly have turned to Latin. In fact, the whole institutional apparatus of the Empire has now become Latin. Past were the days of German:

Legislationis quoque lingua, decretorum, rescriptorum, breviter: lingua publica civitatis nostrae omnis facta nunc est Latina. Cessit Latinae Germanica. Studuere ei paulo magis quam antea Caesaris ministri, civitatis rectores, administratores, procuratores, officiales. Studuimus ei et nos, septem populorum mandatarii electi. Sic facta res est et absoluta. Haud erat ita arduum id coeptum. Ante erat studendum 6 populis, ut loqui scirent in hac aula unum solum verbum, Germanicae. Nunc student Latinae. Quid refert? Et quicumque inter nos Germanus est, nonne studuit ante Gallicae vel Anglicae? Conversum tantummodo nunc est studium in aliam linguam. Et inter nos electos interque senatores quot sunt, quin jam ante illius non prorsus fuerint ignari? Nonne plerique nostrum didicere Latine quondam in schola? Jam quoniam in aula hac legifera loquimur Latine, nemo in eam amplius eligitur, quin sciat Latine. (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 106)

Also the language of legislation, decrees, rescripts: in sum, the common language of our whole nation has now become Latin. German has yielded to Latin. The ministers of the Emperor, the leaders of the nation, the administrators, procurators and state officials have studied Latin a bit more than before. Also we, the elected representatives of the seven nations, have studied this language. In this way, the whole thing came to completion. The undertaking was not even so very difficult. Before this, six nations had to study German to be able to say only one word in this hall. Now they study Latin. What does it matter? All of us who are German have also previously studied French or English. The only change is that the object of study has now turned to another language. And how many among us, representatives and senators, were previously entirely ignorant of this language? Did not most of us study Latin once at school? Because of the fact that we speak Latin in this assembly hall, nobody is elected anymore who does not know Latin.

One may wonder why Ulrichs chose the Austro-Hungarian double monarchy as the setting of his Latin dream. First and foremost, this empire experienced

a multilingual reality *par excellence*, not only in the Hungarian Transleithanian part with about fourteen languages currently spoken, but also in the Austrian Cisleithanian regions.²¹ In Hungary and Croatia, Latin had been the official language of the parliament up to 1847, and it remained the spoken language of a part of the nobility.²² Furthermore, languages had been at the centre of Emperor Franz Joseph's education: German and French as the most important international languages, but also Czech, Hungarian, Italian and Polish, as the main languages of his monarchy, next to Latin and Ancient Greek.²³

As will be clear from what follows in the *Somnium Transalpinum*, Ulrichs in particular looked at the Austrian part of the Empire. Though his native region of Hanover by then belonged to Prussian Germany while he himself was living in Italy, there were good reasons for this option. Indeed, Ulrichs strongly disliked the highly centralised German Empire that had taken shape under Bismarck from 1871 onwards.²⁴ He rather refers to the Germany of small independent kingdoms and entities as his true fatherland, his 'political heroes' being King Ludwig II (r. 1864–1886) of independent Bavaria; Adolph of Nassau (r. 1839–1866) as the last Duke of Nassau, to become Grand Duke of independent Luxembourg from 1890 to 1895; blind George V of Hanover (r. 1851–1866) who as a deposed king fled to Vienna and never renounced his rights to the throne or acknowledged Prussia's actions and for the rest of his life appealed in vain for the European great powers to intervene on behalf of Hanover; and Charles I (r. 1864–1891) King of independent Württemberg.²⁵ As such, the relatively strong autonomy of the members of the patchwork that formed the Austrian Empire must have appealed to him. This being said, one cannot escape the observation that the Austrian situation only served as a rather poor cover for developing Ulrichs' Latin dream. It is not clear at all to which seven nations he is referring, neither what assembly in particular is supposed to have taken place. In fact, the Austrian *Reichsrat* consisted of

21. Marácz (2012). The special issue of this journal focuses much more on the Hungarian than on the Austrian part.

22. IJsewijn (1990) 94–95 (Parliament in Zagreb with Latin as the official language up to 23 October 1847 and Croatia nobility resisting Germanisation or Maygarisation by resorting to Latin); IJsewijn, Sacré (1993) 53 (parliaments in Hungary and Croatia). See also Demo (2020) on the persistent use of Latin in Croatia.

23. *Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 108: *Caesari optime nota est. Est ei etiam lingua gratissima* (about the Latin language).

24. He calls Bismarck "destroyer of Germany" (*eversor Germaniae*) in *Al.* 17–18, Mar. 1891, p. 154.

25. Colapietra (1995) 308 (Ludwig II); 320–321 (Adolph of Nassau); 321–322 (George V); 322 (Charles I) – all with quotes from the *Alaudae*, which can also be retrieved via Setz (2004) s.v.

seventeen entities, called *Königreiche* and *Länder*, while the Hungarian part had three main territorial entities. The vagueness, even incorrectness of institutional information that must have been known to the jurist Ulrichs, adds to the impression that the dream should not be taken too seriously.²⁶

4.3 Three objections and their refutation

As an imagined critical visitor, Ulrichs now turns to objections to this great Latin plan. Does the obligation of knowing Latin not restrict the freedom of choice in electing delegates for the six non Germanophone people? In no way, answers his witness. Previously, the choice was restricted to those who knew German. German-speaking Austrians were not at all hindered by this condition. Thanks to Latin, conditions are now equal for all: everybody has to learn a language that is not his (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 107: *par nunc conditio cunctorum*).

But are the representatives not terrified by the labyrinth of Latin grammar? Not at all. They work night and day. When they fall prone to despair, the prospect of earning a seat in the assembly serves like an adequate motivation (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 107–108: *spe adipiscendae sellae expergefunt, spe incitantur, spe reficiuntur* – the irony in this passage seems intended by Ulrichs: people would indeed study Latin, if they were motivated by money and power).

And is all this supposed to remain a secret? Quite the contrary. Studies at the *Gymnasium*, which have seemed to be sterile for quite a while, will now greatly profit from the Latin revival and gain renewed attention (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 108).

The section ends on an optimistic note. The Austrian representatives have by now become as eloquent in Latin as the famous Croatian bishop Strossmayer, who shone by his eloquence at the First Vatican Council in 1870.²⁷ And as years pass by, things only improve:

Certe, si quid mansit usus asperioris, et parvi momenti est et in annos sensim decrescet. Paucis annis elapsis evanuerit. Praesidi nostro ad

26. Kann (1974) and Detrez (2013) are solid introductions to the institutions of the Habsburg Empire.

27. Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815–1905) was a Croatian politician and Roman Catholic bishop, famous for his eloquence in both Italian and Latin.

latus addidimus censorem cum potestate monendi. Si quis orator nimis obluctatur grammaticae: “Abi”, ait ille; “recede de rostris. Fac pacem cum patre Prisciano.” (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 108)

Certainly, if some usage of Latin remains difficult, this is of little importance and it will gradually deminish as the years pass by. After a few years, it will have disappeared. In support of our Emperor, we have created a censor, with the power of admonishing. When a speaker wrestles too much with the grammar, the censor will tell him: “Go away, and remove yourself from the speaker’s platform. Make peace with father Priscian.”

4.4 Practical solutions, a crude awakening and a credo

The first domains, continues the guide, that embraced Latin were coins and money, military commands and postal matters. In order to prove the efficiency of all this, he proudly shows an envelope which has a new Austrian stamp on it. Above the two-headed eagle shone the Latin motto *Imp. reg. posta Austr.* (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 109). Ulrichs eagerly asks to have one such stamp. At this moment, the dream comes to a sudden end:

Nam repente os mihi praecluserat importunus famulus postalis. Hic introiens in cubiculum meum me expergefecit. Vix compescui fastidium, dum epistolas apprehendo, quas tulit. Inter quas uni agglutinata erat tesella, quae et ipsa bicipitem mihi ostendit aquilam. Avide ejus inspexi inscriptionem, ut iterum quod videram viderem et ut nunc saltem mitterem lectori rem tam raram. At quo me malus abstulerat error! Deceptus eram. Legi, quod legere soleo: *Kais. Kon. Oest. Post.*, non: *Imp. reg. posta Austr.*, quantumlicet manifesto nuncnunc haec conspexerim hoc ipso temporis vestigio. Quicquid narraui, ludibrium fuisse vidi pulchri quidem et alati, sed inveterati falsarii, mendacis Phantasi. (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 109)

Suddenly the rude postman caused me to shut up. He entered my room and woke me up. I could hardly repress my aversion when I took the letters he delivered to me. Among those, there was one with a stamp stuck to it, which showed me again the double-headed eagle. I eagerly looked at the inscription, since I wished to see what I had seen in order to now at least report to my readers this strange occurrence. Alas, my bad mistake had taken me so far away from the truth! I was

disappointed. I read what I used to read: *Kaiserliche Königliche Österreichische Post*, not *Imperialis regalis posta Austriaca*, no matter how much I would have liked to read this at that very moment. I now realised that everything I told you was a mere jest of the beautiful and winged Phantasmus, who at the same time is an inveterate forger and lyer.

Ulrichs concludes that dreams indeed contain a tiny bit of seriousness (*mica seri*). He then proceeds with the second part of this treatise, with what can be considered the nucleus of the whole manifesto:

Linguae Germanicae dominatio, sublatae in apicem rerum, aegre fertur a 6 reliquis populis. Et merito. Quis enim tulerit dominantem 6 populis linguam populi septimi? Cuius populo idem jus esto. Sic instar jugi 6 nationibus illa incumbit:

et quaevis ardet iniquum
excussisse jugum.

Gubernari a lingua unius populi, res indigna est caeteris populis. Exuatur lingua Germanica – non luce sua. Qua quae exuere eam valeat, est nulla potestas. Exuatur iniqua dominatione. Est Austriacarum nationum dignitas, quae hoc poscat. De dignitate agitur. (*Al.* 14, Oct. 1890, p. 110)

The domination of the German language, which is considered as the most important of all languages, is not accepted with ease by the six other nations. And they have every reason to be put out over this. Who would tolerate that the language of a seventh nation would dominate six other nations? Each nation should have the same rights. Now, this one language is lying as a yoke on the shoulders of the six other nations “and each of them is eager to shake off the unjust yoke”. To be dominated by the language of one people is an unworthy thing for the other nations. Let’s strip German – of course not from its bright reputation. There is just no human power that can possible take away the fame of this language. Let’s just strip it of its unjust domination. It is the dignity of all nations of the Austrian Empire that requires this. It is a matter of dignity.

5. Love for the mother tongue, and love for the fatherland

On the very first page of the next issue, of November 1890, Ulrichs continues his plea for the introduction of Latin in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The

tone becomes harsher. Imposing German in the Austrian part of the Empire means fear and terror for other people (*perpetua formidine*), aggression (*a principatu tam minaci*), dominance and intrusion (*ut se intrudat*), devouring and stealing (*edax est et rapax*) of other cultures and languages. German is even compared to an incubus, assaulting those who are vigilant for the preservation of their own language. The following passage clearly testifies to a romantic approach to language as the soul of a people:

Patria lingua! Est aliquid, quod populus generosus amet super omnia, quod ei sit sacrum quoddam *noli tangere*, quasi delubrum. Et periculum, in quo versari id conspicitur, dum incutit metum, auget amorem. Quis populus, sui ipsius non immemor, paratus non esset, defendere ejus incolumitatem supremis viribus? (*Al.* 15, Nov. 1890, p. 114)

The native language! It is something that a noble nation loves above everything else. It is as something sacred, a *noli tangere*, almost a sanctuary. And the danger, in which the native language can be observed to be, only increases the love for it, while at the same time it instils fear. Which nation that is not oblivious of itself would not be prepared to defend its own integrity with all possible force?

The third part of the pamphlet opens with two hexameters:

Sic age triste jugum cervicibus, Austria, deme
sexque tuas longa solves formidine gentes. (*Al.* 15, Nov. 1890, p. 114)

Come on, Austria, take away the sad yoke from the necks,
and free your six nations from the fear that has lasted for so long.

Moreover, Ulrichs now stresses that giving up on the dominance of German is in reality a supreme act of patriotism. In almost religious terms (*studium loci superioris, sacra ferentes patriae*), it is emphasised that harmony and concord throughout the Empire will be the result of introducing a neutral, non-aggressive language such as Latin:

Mira quaedam ad jungendas nationes vis inest linguae Latinae. Cujus principatus parere mirum in modum poterit reconciliationem animorum et concordiam. Concordia nationum Austriacarum Austria

magna efficietur et quam pulchra et quam decora! Concordiae aram erigamus.

[...]

GENIO PATRIAE SACRIFICAMUS. (*Al.* 15, Nov. 1890, p. 114–115)

Latin has a wonderful power to unite the nations. The sovereignty of Latin will wonderfully cause reconciliation of minds and harmony. By the concord of the Austrian nation, Austria will be great, beautiful and shining! Let's erect an altar in honour of concord.

[...]

WE PLEDGE AN OFFER TO THE GENIUS OF OUR FATHERLAND.

6. Festive Latin *sodalicia* and Latin post all over the Empire

Ulrichs opens the first issue of 1891 with what he considers the fourth part of his essay. In his enthusiasm, it seems as if he is slackening the reins. All over the Austrian part of the Empire, brotherhoods of Latin (*sodalicia Latina*) should be established. Like the irredentists of Trieste, these associations have to carry the motto *Pro Patria*. At their annual meetings, copious and solemn dinners and an exquisite wine list should be part of the order of the day, as well as welcome and farewell speeches in Latin, all recited by heart, and with responses from joyful table companions, obviously also in Latin. Fashionable places to found such brotherhoods are suggested: Vienna (*Vindobona*), Prague (*Praga*), Olomouc (*Holomucium*), Graz (*Gratia*) and Ljubljana (*Lubiana*). Such associations will spread all over the Empire, from the northern duchy of Bukovina to the kingdom of Dalmatia in the south, and more specifically the cities of Kotor and Zara (with a reference to Luc. 4.405: *in molles Zephyros excurrit Iader*). How spectacular would it be to have an association in Prague that is co-chaired by a German and a Bohemian, collaborating in peace and harmony (*Al.* 16, Jan./Febr. 1891, p. 121–122)?

The Latin post office is the main theme of the fifth part of the manifesto, which appeared in the March 1891 issue of the *Alaudae*. “That Latin from now on be the language of the postal office in Austria” (*lingua postalis in Austria hinc inde Latina esto*) was the bill of the representatives of Bukovina, Bohemia and Dalmatia. It could not be difficult to pass this one. In the following passage, we finally understand to which seven peoples Ulrichs has been referring:

Et populus, qui rebus postalibus utitur? At nunc discunt verba postalia Germanica Dalmatae, Istri, Carniolani, Carinthii, Bohemi, Bucovini. Eorum adulescentes arma ferentes discunt Germanica verba concepta. In ecclesiis fundere preces didicere Latinas. Cur non discent et haec tam pauca verba Latina? Inviti hi intuentur verba postalia Germanica. Latina certe videbunt animo libenti et discent, nemine cogente, sponte sua [...]. Sic, nulla e septem dominante in solo Austriae, par jus erit septem linguis omnibus. (*Al.* 17–18, Mar. 1891, p. 132)

And the nations that make use of the postal office? At the present moment, Dalmatians, Istrians, those from Carniola and Carinthia, Bohemians and inhabitants of Bukovina learn German postal terms. Their young men who serve in the army learn commands in German. They have learnt to pray in Latin in church. Why would they not learn Latin words, surely when so few are involved? Nowadays, they reluctantly look at German postal words. Surely they will look at Latin equivalents with joy and they will learn them spontaneously, with nobody forcing them to do so. [...] In this way, there will be equal rights for all seven languages, with none of the seven in the Austrian territory being dominant.

What we see here is a typical conflation of territorial entities, spoken languages, and ethnic divisions (“peoples” or “races” as they were called in the 1911 atlas). Based on the census of 1910, I reconstruct the following overview. The “six other” languages meant by Ulrichs were in all likelihood: Croatian, Czech, Italian, Romanian, Slovenian, and Ukranian, whereby he leaves out Polish at least.²⁸

Entity	Main Languages Spoken (over 10 percent)
Dalmatia (kingdom)	Croatian
Istria (margraviate)	Italian, Slovenian, Croatian
Carniola (duchy)	Slovenian
Carinthia (duchy)	German, Slovenian
Bohemia (kingdom)	Czech, German
Bukovina (duchy)	Ruthenian (Ukranian), Romanian, German

28. The data of the 1910 census are now easily accessible on the internet, e.g. the Wikipedia entry “Ethnic and Religious Composition of Austria-Hungary”. See Kann, David (1984) for a rich scholarly survey; Detrez (2013) 220 on the census.

The presumed success of the new Latin post office will have international consequences too – in this passage, we get a glimpse of Ulrichs' wish to establish Latin as a real *lingua franca* for all over the world:

Sic exemplum Austriae facile incitamento esse posset ad ejiciendam e foedere linguam Gallicam, tot nationibus immerite impositam et ad substituendam in ejus locum linguam revera universalem. Sic addita rebus postalibus verba Latina ad antipodas usque penetrarent et ad circulos polares. (*Al.* 17–18, Mar. 1891, p. 132)

As such, the Austrian example could easily be an incentive to get rid of the French language in international dealings, a language that has been unjustly imposed on so many nations, and to have in its place a truly universal language. In this way, Latin words used for postal matters could reach both the antipodes and the polar circles.

Ulrichs now takes the opportunity to digress about neologisms in Latin. Should “post” not rather be translated with *cursus publicus*, an institution well known in Roman times? But *posta* has been in use for such a long time in more recent Latin, and is also the word used in the Peace of Westphalia (the topic of Ulrichs' history dissertation in Berlin back in 1848).²⁹ Ulrichs proceeds with some other neologisms in postal matters (I only cite one example per item; Ulrichs mostly has three): *appendix responso scribundo* (a postcard, one part of which contains the information on the addressee), *epistola curae praecipuae commendata* (priority mail), *mandatum de solvendo postale* (a cheque), *chartula epistularis clausa. Quam ut aperias, secundum foraminum seriem avelle marginem* (a double glued card that one has to open by tearing off the margins).

7. Loose ends

Starting with the sixth part of the pamphlet, Ulrichs remarks that he wants to discuss the “Italian blood of the Austrian provinces” (*ad loquendum de Austriacis provinciis sanguinis Italici*). This promises to be revealing information, since it may explain his intentions to Latinise the Austrian provinces of the Empire. In fact, the reader is left with a reference to Emperor Henry VII, King of Germany (1308–1312) and Holy Roman Emperor (1312–1313) who, origi-

29. In a similar way, a present-day advocate of Living Latin as Sigrid Albert has proposed the neologism *moda* to express “fashion”. See Albert (2003).

nating from the House of Luxemburg, made his way to Italy to reinvigorate the imperial cause. Ulrichs not only makes a chronological mistake by dating the expedition to 1317 – he also mentions how this emperor was praised by the greatest Italian poet ever (Dante being meant). He then quotes a Latin verse which he pretends to be a translation of a Dantean verse. In fact, it is not, and it seems as if Ulrichs is merely quoting by heart without actually checking the sources (*Al.* 17–18, *Mart.* 1891, p. 143–144).³⁰

Ulrichs never returned to the theme of the Italian nature of the Austrian provinces. Only in one of the later issues does he briefly come back to his delusive dream under the guidance of Phantasus about a Latin postal office, though he does not even number this section as the seventh part of the pamphlet. Once, he recounts there, he received a letter from the Bulgarian city of Rustschuk near the Danube. The two stamps had the following inscription: *imper reg posta austr 10 sld.* Ulrichs jocularly remarks that the text may play on a sort of intended ambiguity: *imper(ialis) reg(ia) posta austr(iaca) 10 s(o)l(i)d(i)* in Latin, or rather *imper(iale) re(ale) posta austr(iaca) 10 s(o)l(i)d(i)* in the Italian version (*Al.* 26, *Febr.* 1893, p. 268–269). And so, in the associative fashion of mental leaps the *Somnium Transalpinum* comes to a sudden and unexpected end – or rather lacks any grounded conclusion, let alone a kind notice to the reader that the series actually ends here.

8. Conclusion

“In the business of life, I have not really achieved anything” (*in vita actuosa, vulgo practica, nihil fere prestiti*). Thus Ulrichs, “at the edge of the academic world” in a slightly dilettante, Bohemian and melancholic way reflects upon his own life and achievements.³¹ His project, or rather dream about Latin as the means of communication for the Austrian Empire very much reflects the same tendencies.

In reality, the whole idea is hardly worth being named a project. Unlike nineteenth-century predecessors such as the Spanish priest Miguel Maria Olmo, who wrote his pamphlet *De lingua Latina colenda et civitate Latina fundanda*

30. The verse: *Salve! Salve! Celse Henrice, pie Caesar; sine brachia mea amplectantur tua genua!* Emperor Henry VII is indeed mentioned in Dante, *Par.* 17.82 and *Par.* 30.138 as the bringer of a new Golden Era, but none of the verses in these passages resembles even remotely the Latin line by Ulrichs.

31. Cited in Colapietra (1995) 307. Sacré (2020) 247 on Ulrichs being on the edge of the academic world.

between 1815 and 1816, Ulrichs did not do any networking or establish contacts to realise his Latin dream³² (note that Ulrichs apparently was not even aware of the contents of Olmo's booklet as he did not know of most of his other predecessors).³³ The least one can say is that Ulrichs is not particularly clear on what his aims and intentions actually were. At times, he seems to aim at a quite everyday, simple use of Latin, so it would become the means of communication for basic military commands or postal matters. On other occasions, he advocates the use of Latin for public affairs such as Parliament meetings, and in rather bourgeois brotherhoods in fanciful cities all over the Austrian Empire: posh orations were to be part and parcel of such festive celebrations. Unlike Olmo, Ulrichs does not develop any serious thoughts on how this widespread use of Latin could be achieved. He once points to the possible roles of gymnasia, but again the practicalities of this teaching of Latin are the least of his concerns.³⁴

Yet in other aspects of the language question, Ulrichs' *Somnium Transalpinum* truly is a child of its time. The insistence on Latin being not particularly difficult goes against tendencies in nineteenth-century thought that aimed for a simplified and/or readily available common language and did not find Latin to be a good fit for this.³⁵ The stress on the neutrality of the Latin language, avoiding domination of one people by another and therefore promoting peace and harmony between different cultures and nations³⁶, echoes in the discourse of artificial languages, of which Esperanto, conceived in 1887 by Ludwig Lejzer Zamenhof (1859–1917), is the best known example³⁷ (note

32. On Olmo's relative success, as audiences with several ambassadors, a meeting with the French minister of Internal Affairs and even a royal audience with King Louis XVIII in October 1821, see IJsewijn, Sacré (1993) 58. See also Sacré (1990) and (1993).

33. See the useful tentative list in IJsewijn, Sacré (1993) 64–66, citing about forty works on the problem of Latin as an international language between ca. 1760 and ca. 1840. Olmo's booklet is only mentioned in *Al.* 20, Aug. 1891, p. 168, where Ulrichs observes that this publication is mentioned in the third issue of the Latin journal *Phoenix*.

34. Unlike Hungarian Arcadius Avellanus (1851–1935), whose quest for Latin as the international language of the educated elite was closely connected to interest in the right way of teaching the language. See Lyvens (2016) and Sacré (2020) 247. Cf. also the continuous and strenuous didactic efforts by William Henry Denham Rouse (1863–1950), British pioneer and advocate of the 'living' approach to Latin and Ancient Greek, on which see Stray (2011).

35. IJsewijn, Sacré (1993) 55 mention how in the eighteenth century Latin was generally not thought of as "too difficult".

36. IJsewijn, Sacré (1993) 54 mention the Croatian writer Faustino Galjuf from Dubrovnik who in a pamphlet from 1833 emphasised the neutrality of Latin, since it was nobody's mother tongue. Setz (2004) 415 s.v. "Latein als lebende, völkerverbindende Sprache" cites over thirty passages in the *Alaudae*.

37. For the context of Esperanto, see Garvia (2015) and more in particular Becker (2010), pointing to the international language question being topical in opinions expressed in the *New York Times* for

that Zamenhof's project is never mentioned by Ulrichs, while Volapük, which was popular as an artificial language in the eighties of the nineteenth century, is mentioned with utmost contempt³⁸). The unifying force of the Latin language, creating a community with the past in general and the Roman cultural heritage in particular, is another standard argument in defence of (spoken) Latin, and occurs in the *Somnium Transalpinum* in the stress on the Italian/Roman character of the Austrian Empire. As a Protestant by birth, Ulrichs did not develop the idea of the inseparable bound between Latin and Roman Catholicism. According to the 1911 census, over ninety percent of the Austrian Cisleithanian lands adhered to Catholic faith (with the Habsburgian dynasty being profoundly Catholic), but even a Catholic priest like Olmo in the end did not restrict his utopian Latin state to Catholics.³⁹

I started this article with a quote by Jozef IJsewijn and Dirk Sacré, and the title of this essay obviously alludes to a study by the same scholars that is still fundamental to understanding the question of nineteenth century pamphlets in favour of Latin as an international language. In a plain, simple, and everyday Latin, not shying away from unclassical neologisms, Ulrichs added only a little note to the history of efforts to save Latin as a means of international communication. Nevertheless, his dreamlike pamphlet opens a fascinating window into the intellectual life of an eccentric man, whose thoughts and ideas connected in more than one way to the fashion of his age. And whose dream returned in a rather unexpected way. When Otto von Habsburg (1912–2011), the very last crown prince of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, in 1980 responded to a Latin speech by the Italian left-wing politician Mario Capanna (°1945) in the European Parliament in Strassbourg as an elected member of the German CSU party, he did so in Latin. Not only did Otto von Habsburg master Croatian, English, French, German, Hungarian, Latin, and Spanish, he also believed Latin to be the mother of all of Europe – the language that could bring Croats, Hungarians and Slovenians into the European Union. The crown prince devoted his entire life to the ideal of a unified Europe – a coalition characterised by peace among its peoples, who would all share the values of Christian humanism (*humaniores et sapientiores ...*

no less than 35 years.

38. According to Setz (2004) 424, Volapük is mentioned nine times in the *Alaudae*. See in particular *Al.* 27, May 1893, p. 284: [...] *linguam Volapuc, cui non sit admixta una vel altera forma barbara, sed quae tota sit una barbaries.*

39. IJsewijn, Sacré (1993) 59. See *Al.* 28, Aug. 1893, p. 296, where Latin is called *comes inseparabilis* of Catholic faith, and where Ulrichs deplores that Protestants have left the Latin tradition: *curnam hanc deseruere protestantes?*

totque gentes, tot nationes omni respectu diversae in von Habsburg's words). Latin was indeed part and parcel of the European dream of the last scion of the Habsburgian dynasty, who perhaps with a glimpse of recognition would have gently smiled at Ulrichs' manifesto.⁴⁰

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40. Von Habsburg (1980); Stroh (2011).

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