I began toying with the idea of *Words in Space and Time: A Historical Atlas of Language Politics in Modern Central Europe* in the mid-2000s, when I was still busy finishing my monograph *The Politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe* (Kamusella 2009). Even though at 1200 pages this monograph was already quite extensive, I could not hope to fit into it all the material I had gathered. Another problem was that it is difficult to maintain the reader’s interest in such an encyclopedic tome. Then it dawned on me that the wealth of information may be more effectively presented in the form of maps, which also makes it possible to show crucial spatial relations among various elements of the story. On the other hand, employing cartography for this task would allow for subverting and problematizing the typically twentieth-century use of this technology for fortifying national master narratives across Central Europe’s ethnolinguistic nation-states.

Paul Robert Magocsi’s renowned *Historical Atlas of (East) Central Europe* (1992, 2003, 2019) offered an immediate inspiration. In 2010, I had the good luck to meet him during the conference on Slavic Languages in Migration organized by the Institut für Slavistik at the University of Vienna. Professor Magocsi (and earlier, in 2009, Anngret Simms, University College Dublin, in her capacity as an editorial board member of the *Irish Historic Towns Atlas*) forewarned me that mapmaking was extremely labor-intensive and costly, while there were no customized grants available for covering such expenses, especially commissioning the drawing or generating of maps with professional cartographers. Unfortunately, nothing has changed in this regard during the last decade. Most grant-making institutions either push a historian to acquire a mapmaking skill (which takes decades to hone) or refuse to pay for a cartographer’s services.

That is why I appreciate all the more the understanding and foresight of these few grant-making bodies, which going against the grain of received knowledge and preconceptions, decided to support the research and mapmaking for this atlas. Importantly, the initial two grants that I used to launch this project, came in 2008–2009 with no strings attached, namely, from the Start-up Fund for New Lecturers and the Long Room Hub Research Initiative Funding Scheme, both based in Trinity College Dublin. After a longish hiatus, in 2013, I received a small research grant from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland. However, a breakthrough came the following year when the grant board of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) agreed with my opinion that purchasing a cartographer’s services is an instrument for analyzing and presenting research data, hence in essence not different from securing a spectrometer for a physicist or a specialized computer for DNA sequencing. The RSE Arts & Humanities Small Grant enabled me to produce more than half of the maps in this atlas. My home School of History at the University of St Andrews kindly offered some further research support for necessary mapmaking. However, in a couple of cases, rather than sitting on my hands, I decided to press on with the project by paying for cartographic services from my own pocket.

In its initial stage, the project gained much from the discussion, which at the invitation of Motoki Nomachi 野町 素己, was held in 2011 in the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center (SRC) at Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan. The discussants, namely, Yukiyasu Arai 荒井 幸康 (SRC), Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly (University of Victoria,
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British Columbia, Canada), Catherine Gibson (European University Institute, Florence), Michael Moser (University of Vienna) and Motoki Nomachi (SRC) shared their opinions in the form of articles that were usefully gathered in the edited volume Central Europe Through the Lens of Language Politics: On the Sample Maps from the Atlas of Language Politics in Modern Central Europe (Kamusella, Nomachi and Gibson 2017). The plans presented in that volume predicted about 70 to 80 maps for this atlas, but the aforementioned problems with securing appropriate grants for mapmaking convinced me to stop this project at 40-odd maps in order to finally conclude it after an entire decade in the works.

Another source of inspiration for the atlas were ad hoc conversations during the exhibitions of sample maps. The first exhibition, thanks to the kind invitation extended by Motoki Nomachi and Akihiro Iwashita 岩下 明裕, took place in 2009 at the Start-up Conference of the Global Center of Excellence Program on Reshaping Japan’s Border Studies, held at the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center. Five years later, in 2014, at the invitation of Kiyoshi Hara 原聖 (Kiyoshi University of Art and Design, Tokyo), Liangun Bao 包聯群 (University of Tokyo) and Xing Huang 黃行 (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), a broader range of the by then completed maps was exhibited during the conference on Standard Norms in Written Languages: Historical and Comparative Studies Between East and West, held in the Institute of Mongolian Studies at the University of Inner Mongolia in Hohhot, China. In addition, while still at Trinity College Dublin, in 2009, I used the concept of the atlas and some initial maps was exhibited in order to make them work properly. In the course of re-search, designing and executing further maps, helpful advice and suggestions were kindly shared with me by Ágoston Alibasić (Faculty of Islamic Sciences, University of Sarajevo), who introduced me to Bosnia’s Slavophoie language in Arabic letters. Significantly, this experience made me more attuned to the fact that a variety of scripts may be employed for writing different languages. I understood that actually, any language can be written in any script.

In 2009, in Sarajevo, my friend and colleague, Kurt Bassuener (with whom I graduated from Central European University in Prague) arranged a meeting with Ahmet Apor, Just Doherty, Ewa Grzegorzyczyk, Guido Hausmann, Clemens Ruthner and Sarah Smyth in the Department of Russian and Slav Languages, and to Moray McGowan and Jason McElligott in the Long Room Hub. After the conclusion of the first batch of maps, Amelie Dorn (Centre for Language and Communication Studies, Trinity College Dublin) proofread them, which made me aware of how much care and time must be lavished on maps in “postproduction” in order to make them work properly. In the course of researching, designing and executing further maps, helpful advice and suggestions were kindly shared with me by Agoston Berecz (European University Institute, Florence), Peter Burke (Cambridge University), Andrea Graziosi (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II), Jaroslav Hrytsak (Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv), Krzysztof Jaskulowski (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw), Mateusz Kamusella (Wrocław), Mariusz Markowski (Opole), Akiyoshi Nishiyama 西山 晃義 (Kyoritsu Women’s University, Tokyo), Rok Stergar and Jernej Kosi (University of Ljubljana), Hienadź Sahanovič (Mienšk and Warsaw), Bardhyl Selimi (Tiranë), Timothy Snyder (Yale University), Jolanta Sujecka (University of Warsaw), Paul Wexler (Tel Aviv University) and Leonid Zashkilnyak (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv).
At the University of St Andrews I received many suggestions for improvement, especially from Riccardo Bavaj, John Clark, Andrew Cusack, Tom Dawson, Aileen Fyfe, Elinor Graham, Tim Greenwood, Joanna Hambly, Bridget Heal, Dimitri Kastritis, Konrad Lawson, Christine McGladdery, Frank Müller, Steve Murdoch, Andrew Peacock, Andrew Pettegree, Bernhard Struck, Michael Talbot and Kostas Zafeiris. As peer reviewers of the submitted draft, Andrea Graziosi, Antonio Ferrara (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II) and Akihiro Iwashita shared with me valuable advice. But above all, I am grateful to my two former students and now researchers in their own right—Catherine Gibson (European University Institute, Florence) and Iemima Ploscariu (Dublin City University)—who attentively read through all the explanatory texts. Obviously, it is me alone who is responsible for any remaining infelicities.

It would have taken considerably longer to complete this atlas without David Stonestreet’s gentle but persistent encouragement. László Kontler and Balázs Trencsényi (both from Central European University) kindly recommended the manuscript to Linda Kunos, Senior Editor of Central European University Press. I was delighted to learn that she immediately was interested in publishing this atlas. Indeed, it is a serendipitous occurrence that the publishing house’s name is shared with the atlas’s title, showing what a fitting home it is for this book. I thank Tertia Gillett for careful editing and John Puckett for compiling the index.

Last but not least, I thank my wife Beata, daughter Anna Maria, and mother-in-law Maria for their love, understanding, patience and forbearance. Thankfully, at the screen of my computer, our cat Mochi distracted me at times, so at long last I could reconnect with my family.

November 2020