

MIRA MILADINOVIĆ ZALAZNIK – DEAN KOMEL  
(Eds. | Hrsg.)

EUROPE AT THE CROSSROADS OF CONTEMPORARY WORLD  
100 Years after the Great War

EUROPA AN DEN SCHEIDEWEGEN DER GEGENWÄRTIGEN WELT  
100 Jahre nach dem Großen Krieg



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## The Habsburg Monarchy and the Future of Europe

*Abstract:* For the EU to overcome populist nationalism, it must ground Europeanism in history. This essay explores the significance of the Habsburg Monarchy's pluralist imperial legacy for Europe. It shows the origins of the contemporary understanding of national and cultural identification in fin-de-siècle socialist proposals for reconciling Austria-Hungary's nationalities through federalism and personal national autonomy.

*Keywords:* Austria-Hungary, Europe, federalism, imperial pluralism, socialism

Europe is in crisis. Participants in the “Europe at the Crossroads of the Contemporary World” conference, in the beautiful Villa Vigoni on Lake Como in September 2018, agreed as much. They had, however, no solution. One hundred years after the Great War, the end of which the Conference commemorated, participants sensed that Europe was coming apart at the seams, captured by hatred of “foreigners” and fears of “waves of refugees,” possessed by nasty populist nationalism, reminiscent of Europe’s darkest past. A melancholic sense of drifting enveloped Villa Vigoni. Participants felt as helpless as the 1930s statesmen who had overseen the disintegration of interwar Europe. “We can only dream,” said former Austrian Vice-Chancellor Erhard Busek, one of Europe’s grand men. A manifesto of thirty prominent European intellectuals, issued a few months after the conference, strived to invigorate the European fighting spirit. “Fight for Europe—or the wreckers will destroy it,” it enjoined.<sup>1</sup> But how does one fight for Europe?

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1 *The Guardian* (January 25, 2019), <https://www.theguardian.com/commentis->

Dedication to the European idea is not enough. Any countervailing force against populist nationalism must be rooted in the European past and be authentic, i.e., grounded in local traditions and memories that bind people to Europe. Fledgling European federalism has never taken a place in people's hearts because they could not track it in their own social environment or cultural memories. Continental pluralist imperial traditions, specifically those associated with the Habsburg Monarchy, may still strike resonances among Central Europeans, but neither conservatives nor (of course) socialists use them strategically to promote Europe. This is unfortunate because they provide a cultural repository that can be productively deployed to advance the prospect of the European project.

This essay seeks to explore the pluralist imperial legacy of Austria-Hungary as a European resource. It will unveil surprising affinities between imperial pluralism and Austrian social-democracy, and urge that pro-Europe forces, conservatives and socialists alike, find in the imperial legacy the grounding for a European platform that may win progressive cosmopolitan youth. After all, the Greens, too, need a *longue durée* view of European history. The essay provides one answer to the question the Villa Vigoni conference failed to address: What is to be done?

### *Post-Nationalist Perspectives on Austria-Hungary*

Historians have recently revised the view of Austria-Hungary as an obsolete multinational monarchy living on borrowed time in the national age. They depict a modernizing society and economy, guided, on the Austrian side, by an enlightened bureaucracy, effecting on the eve of World War I a series of political compromises that advanced equal rights for the nationalities. National protest and demonstrations were not anti-imperial in character but intended to effect alternative

arrangements that would change the balance of power within the monarchy. Late nineteenth-century Europe consisted not of nation-states but of nationalizing empires, and Austria-Hungary was not so much of an anomaly.<sup>2</sup> But for the war, the imperial order could well have survived. Indeed, for post-nationalists, late imperial Austria provides a model of a federalist constitution that reflects a multilayered working of sovereignty, precisely of the kind necessary for a multinational federal Europe.

### *Imperial Federalism: Austrian Visions of Supranationalism*

Austria-Hungary confronted similar challenges to contemporary Europe in envisioning a supranational federalist order in an age of nationalization and demographic change. In Austria-Hungary, a federalist constitution and imperial governance encouraged political and cultural pluralism, and allowed minorities to nationalize within the imperial framework. The instruments of Habsburg imperial rule, the *Verwaltung* and officer corps, were multiethnic and multilingual. The court cultivated an imperial ethos, presenting the Monarchy as embodying a supranational ideal. Nationalization was taking place all over but, unlike other empires, Austria-Hungary federalized and pluralized rather than advanced a uniform national culture. Imperial patriotism constrained any hegemonic nationalism and provided an alternative to it. Empire could not nationalize without undermining its own foundations. Austria-Hungary was nationalizing against the imperial will.

Nationalization made premodern imperial ideals look modern and cosmopolitan. The imperial state-conception became consciously supranational. Competing visions of imperial reform circulated in fin-de-siècle Austria, from the court and bureaucracy to the socialists

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2 Stefan Berger and Alexei Miller, eds., *Nationalizing Empires* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2014).

to the different minorities: Their common denominator was pluralism. The Emperor was popular among Austria-Hungary's minorities, who were seeking protection against hegemonic nationalism. Traditional Jews' attachment to the Emperor is legendary, but they were not the only ones. The idea of a federalist empire that would enable the Slavs to organize as a third major imperial constituent beside the Germans and Hungarians remained alive until World War I.<sup>3</sup> Crown Prince Rudolph's monumental ethnography of the imperial peoples, *The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Words and Images*, a twenty-four volume illustrated guidebook, published in German and Hungarian between 1886 and 1902, gave expression to a multicultural view of the Empire.<sup>4</sup> Empire and Emperor alike became supranational almost by default.<sup>5</sup>

The most pronounced supranational vision, however, belonged to the socialists. Neither historians nor the socialists themselves have recognized, any time after 1918, just how embedded the socialists were in the imperial order. They had no love for Franz Joseph, but they were emphatic that Austria-Hungary was viable. The Empire created an integrated economic market, protected its national minorities against autocratic Russia, and presaged the universal order of humankind.<sup>6</sup> The party's federalist structure replicated the imperial one and its constituency was multinational: The "little interna-

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3 Andreas Moritsch, ed., *Der Austroslavismus* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996).

4 James Shedel, "The Elusive Fatherland: Dynasty, State, Identity and the Kronprinzenwerk," in *Inszenierungen des kollektiven Gedächtnisses: Eigenbilder, Fremdbilder*, ed. Moritz Csáky and Klaus Zeyringer (Innsbruck: Studien Verlag, 2002), 70–82.

5 To defend the Austrian *Sonderweg*, Austrian sociologists undertook a major rethinking of the state. My student Thomas (Tevye) Prendergast is completing a dissertation at Duke University on the emergence of Austrian sociology as a counter-nationalist project, aiming to sustain imperial pluralism and a multinational state in a nationalizing age: *In Defense of Empire: Austrian Sociology and the European Nation-State, 1870–1914*.

6 Karl Renner, *Die Nation als Rechtsidee und die Internationale* (Vienna: Verlag des Vereines in Kommission bei Ignaz Brand, 1914).

tional,” socialists called the party. They alone developed a federalist plan for Austria-Hungary and a modern rationale for its existence as a multinational state. Their 1899 Brünn program proposed turning the Monarchy into a democratic multinational federation (*Nationalitäten-Bundesstaat*) that would grant individuals non-territorial cultural autonomy based on their declared national affiliation. “Personal national autonomy” became the Austrian socialists’ solution to the Monarchy’s nationalities problem.<sup>7</sup> Ironically, it also became, in the long run, a blueprint for post-national European nationality. For the EU in its heyday, subjective cultural affinity purportedly mattered most in determining national affiliation.

Contemporary Europe has emerged with a federalist future in mind, and national identification imagined as cultural and exterritorial. If Austrians could see the image of this Europe in their old Empire, they would find a home in Europe. If Europeans could see the EU grounded in Europe’s pluralist past, old and young alike might feel less anxious about the multiethnic European landscape.

### *The Imperial Legacy in the Interwar Years*

The collapse of the continental empires—Austrian, German, Ottoman, and Russian—in the aftermath of World War I constituted a caesura for imperial federalism. Austria-Hungary was disbanded in the name of national self-determination, the nation(alizing) state became the European norm, and national sovereignty seemed sacrosanct. Yet, bringing Europe’s ethnocultural mosaic into conformity with the eth-

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7 Synopticus [Karl Renner], *Staat und Nation: Staatsrechtliche Untersuchung über die möglichen Principien einer Lösung und die juristischen Voraussetzungen eines Nationalitäten-Gesetzes* (Vienna: Josef Dietl, 1899); Rudolf Springer [Karl Renner], *Der Kampf der Österreichischen Nationen um den Staat* (Leipzig: Deuticke, 1902); Otto Bauer, *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy*, ed. Ephraim J. Nimni, trans. Joseph O’Donnell (1907; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

nonational principle proved a gargantuan (and eventually genocidal) task. The interwar nationalizing states were almost as ethnically diverse as the disbanded Empire. The Versailles Minority Treaties tried to confront the challenge of defending “national” minorities in sovereign states. Their failure, and the inability to manage ethnic and cultural diversity in the European nation-state, precipitated World War II.<sup>8</sup>

During the interwar years, the European mosaic still resisted the new political boundaries. Imperial commercial and intellectual networks persisted in the Danube basin in defiance of national economy and culture well into the 1930s. Austrian Danubian trade far exceeded in volume German-Austrian exchange.<sup>9</sup> The Vienna Circle of philosophers expanded across international borders. In Vienna and Prague’s literary cafés, Jewish writers still pretended that Austria-Hungary never fell apart. Continuous efforts were made to find new European international frameworks to mediate among the nation-states, highlight their shared economy and culture, and, above all, settle minority issues. In the Danube region, such efforts necessarily invoked the imperial legacy. By the 1930s, the efforts reached a stalemate. The onset of the global economic depression brought to power National Socialism in Germany and clerical fascist dictatorships in Austria and East Central Europe, and accelerated the ethnizationalization of economy and culture. The European crisis, it became clear, would only be resolved through conflict, exclusion, deportation, and, once World War II broke out, mass murder.

In the aftermath of World War I, Austria-Hungary was considered almost universally a dismal failure. The Monarchy, and especially the Emperor, were blamed for the disastrous war. The Austrian socialists staged an abrupt break with the imperial past. They expressed deep

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8 Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

9 Andreas Weigl, “Beggar-Thy-Neighbour vs. Danube Basin Strategy: Habsburg Economic Networks in Interwar Europe,” *Religions* 7 (2016): 129, <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/7/11/129> (accessed July 24, 2019).

hostility to the Habsburg legacy, and became the nation-state party *par excellence*. Yet, they did not think that Austria was viable as a nation-state, and the 1848 dream of a democratic Greater Germany resurged. Socialist support for German unification became axiomatic. The socialists suspended their call for unification only after the Nazis had come to power. When the *Anschluss* came in March 1938, they accepted it unhappily as a *fait accompli*. If they previously had no choice but to be multinational under the Empire, the socialists now had no choice but to opt for German nationalism.

*Paneuropa* was the first major movement for European unity.<sup>10</sup> Its architect, the Count of Coudenhove-Kalergi (1894–1972), was an aristocrat descending from multiethnic origins. *Paneuropa* represented an amalgam of old imperial supranationalism and new internationalism. Coudenhove-Kalergi sketched out a “United States of Europe,” excluding Britain and Russia, a federal state with a single currency, custom union, two-house parliament, and a unified judiciary that would protect the plurality of national cultures and languages. *Paneuropa* became a broad international movement. Intellectuals, artists, and politicians across the political spectrum joined, from Albert Einstein to Thomas Mann, to Pablo Picasso. The three-day congress in Vienna in October 1926 had two thousand participants, and attracted a few heads of states. A series of congresses and economic conferences followed, the last in 1936. As long as European unity remained only a distant prospect, *Paneuropa* could keep nationalists and pacifists, Catholics and socialists together. Its reality check came in 1930, when former French Premier Aristide Briand proposed to the League of Nations a European federation. The Germans and Austrians countered by proposing a German-Austrian customs union, and both plans came to naught. *Paneuropa*’s success was symptom of a disease that it could not cure.

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10 Anita Ziegerhofer, *Botschafter Europas: Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi und die Paneuropa-Bewegung in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2004).

When the collapse of the interwar order became evident in the 1930s, nostalgia set in for the Empire, especially among Jewish writers, who bemoaned the loss of the golden imperial age.<sup>11</sup> Jewish memory of imperial Austria ranged from Stefan Zweig's Vienna to Franz Werfel's Prague to Asher Barash, Joseph Roth, and Soma Morgenstern's Galicia, and from liberal Europeanism to Austro-romanticism, from Zionism to multiculturalism. The common denominator of the divergent imperial models offered by Jewish writers was their pluralism and their search for protection for minorities. On the eve of World War II, the disintegration of Austria-Hungary was widely acknowledged to have been a disaster, and the imperial legacy seemed again vital.

The early years of World War II saw reemergence of federalist schemes for postwar Central Europe among the Western powers and the governments-in-exile in London. Those converged, however, with mad schemes for postwar ethnonationalization and population transfers. The Moscow Declaration of April 1943, which stipulated the restoration of a small independent Austria, made it clear that the Allies would restore the discredited nation-state system in Europe, and consider no Central European federation that would build on the imperial legacy. The Austrian socialists now had to give up on Greater Germany and re-envision the nation-state as a small Austria. Federalism and empire parted way, at least in continental Europe, with federalism converging with the nation-state system to form new European projects. The imperial federalist legacy was lost. In the postwar era, "empire" quickly became a pejorative term, associated with humanity's darkest chapters. The idea that empire might be the historical norm and had something to recommend itself, remained a taboo until the twenty-first century. Austria-Hungary survived only in the literary imagination.

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11 Claudio Magris, *Der habsburgische Mythos in der modernen österreichischen Literatur* (1963; Vienna: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 2000).



*The Postwar Years: Ethnonational Europe and the EU*

The Holocaust and postwar ethnic cleansing turned Central Europe into a conglomerate of ethnonational states as it had never before been in history. The Iron Curtain fell in its midst splitting it between the Soviet and western camps, and its culture lost its multicultural vitality. The economic infrastructure lay in ruin. Rebuilding Europe became an international project that was carried on separately in the west and in the east. Whether under the auspices of the Marshall Plan or the Soviets, it affirmed the ethnonational state as the basic unit: The western welfare state and the eastern communist economy alike were nation-state projects. The international military alliances, NATO, and the Warsaw Pact, reflected Europe's loss of global control, and assumed the European states' inability to defend themselves, but they sanctioned the new ethnonational borders. When Western European collaboration restarted, it reflected the initiative of Christian democratic statesmen from the borderlands of Germany, France, and Italy. The European Economic Community first and the European Union later emerged as projects of economic collaboration translated into politics. European discourse and culture never converged into a political culture that could support the new Europe.

In the postwar years, the Habsburg legacy seemed irrelevant. It was virtually proscribed in communist Eastern Europe and had but few advocates in the West. Central European intellectual networks were shattered. The *remigrés*, predominantly Jewish, who either returned to Central Europe, or chose to settle in Western Europe, were best positioned to rebuild international cultural relations. Many had childhood memories of Austria-Hungary, and most had been active in interwar German-speaking international networks. However nostalgic they may have been about their youth, only an Austrian contingent made it their mission to reclaim the imperial legacy. They had no hope of providing a blueprint for a future Europe but, by the 1980s, they shaped celebrated visions of Central Europe grounded in the imperial legacy.

Postwar Austria was the single major imperial territory to remain, as a neutral state, on the western side of the Iron Curtain. Its post-

war leaders were determined to detach Austria from Germany, but they did not quite know what to make of the imperial legacy. Postwar school textbooks, literary histories, museum exhibitions, and debates on “Austrian culture” all suggest that Austrians encountered difficulties in forming a national historical narrative.<sup>12</sup> They remembered both the Monarchy and the First Republic as failures. The First Republic failed to negotiate the transition from empire to nation-state, and Austrians now lived with this failure’s result—a small disgraced nation-state on the outskirts of the West, seeking to free itself from the Allies’ military occupation and rebuild its economy, surrounded from three sides by communist countries. What were Austrians to do with the imperial past?

Communist Viktor Matejka stated in 1945 that no historical model existed for a new Austria.<sup>13</sup> The socialists took this seriously and reaffirmed their hostility to the Habsburgs. The conservatives, in contrast, repeatedly referred to Austria’s imperial past but were incapable of forging a relationship between pluralist past and nationalist present. The Austrian remigrés provided a solution. They redefined the imperial legacy as multinational and Central European, and foregrounded German-Jewish writers as quintessentially Austrian, thereby conceptualizing a literary tradition setting Austria apart from National Socialism. The postwar Viennese politico-cultural magazine, *Forum*, joined Hermann Broch, Franz Kafka, Karl Kraus, Joseph Roth, Arthur Schnitzler, Franz Werfel, and Stefan Zweig to Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Robert Musil, Rainer Maria Rilke, and Georg Trakl, shaping a literary sphere in Central Europe with centers in Vienna and Prague, but one which extended all the way to Galicia.<sup>14</sup> The émigrés

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12 Douglas Patrick Campbell, *The Shadow of the Habsburgs: Memory and National Identity in Austrian Politics and Education, 1918–1955* (Ph.D. Diss., University of Maryland, 2006); Wolfgang Kos, *Eigenheim Österreich: Zu Politik, Kultur und Alltag nach 1945* (Vienna: Sonderzahl, 1994).

13 Viktor Matejka, *Was ist österreichische Kultur?* (Vienna: Selbstverlag des Verfassers, 1945).

14 *Forum: Österreichische Monatsblätter für kulturelle Freiheit*, 1954–65. Reprin-

anchored the twentieth-century writers in classical nineteenth-century Austrian figures, such as Franz Grillparzer, Johann Nestroy, and Adalbert Stifter, and joined them also to twentieth-century ethno-cultural hybrids, like Fritz von Herzmanovsky-Orlando and Alexander Lernet-Holenia, who embodied the old cosmopolitan aristocracy. Their Central Europe was a permeable and expandable *Literaturraum*, German-speaking yet multiethnic, reaching to Brody with Joseph Roth and to Czernowitz with Paul Celan, enabling different nationalities to belong without violating borders. The remigrés emulated the old socialist proposals for extra-territorial nationality. Without ever intending such a feat, they brought together Central Europe's imperial past and its future in a post-national search for cultural heritage. Constructing an Austrian national narrative, they turned the eternal outsiders, the Jewish intelligentsia, into the embodiment of Europe's post-national future.<sup>15</sup>

Initially marginal, the remigrés' Central Europe became, by the 1980s, the one imagined past that could successfully claim the imperial heritage for Austria. "Austrian literature" vindicated the Second Republic's founding myth of a separate destiny from the Third Reich, and, at the same time, made it possible for Austrians to be "European" even before Central and Western Europe came together again. Yet, Austrian literature did not quite reshape the Austrian national narra-

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ted as *Forvm*, 28 vols. + index vol. (Vienna: Ueberreuter, 2002–4).

- 15 Anne-Marie Corbin, "Die österreichische Identität in Friedrich Torbergs *Forum*," *Österreich in Geschichte und Literatur* 46, no. 1 (2002): 2–16; Hilde Spiel, ed., *Die zeitgenössische Literatur Österreichs* (Zurich/Munich: Kindler, 1976); idem, *Vienna's Golden Autumn 1866–1938* (New York: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987); Friedrich Torberg, "Austrian Literature Since 1927," *Books Abroad* 28 (1954): 15–20; idem, *Wien oder Der Unterschied: Ein Lesebuch*, ed. David Axmann and Marietta Torberg (Munich: Langen Müller, 1998), 127–75. For an overview of the debate on "Austrian literature," see Katrin Kohl and Ritchie Robertson, *A History of Austrian Literature 1918–2000* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2006), 1–20. For a synthesis: Herbert Zeman, ed., *Literaturgeschichte Österreichs von den Anfängen im Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1996), 377–563.

tive, let alone a European one, because its imperial context was virtually ignored. The émigrés' Central Europe was a project of nostalgia and melancholy. They regarded themselves as literary executors of a passing culture and had no hope that they would ever see it revive. The political ramifications of their project and its European potential were never recognized. Austrians live among the ruins of an Empire that remind them daily of the past, but they seem determined to forge their way to Europe without it. The EU has had to do without Central Europe's pluralist and federalist imperial legacy. The amnesia proved perilous as populist nationalism has returned to haunt Europeans.

*The EU: Resurgent Nationalism and the Recovery of Imperial Pluralism*

In its arduous search for European identity and a common culture, Europe of the EU has made the old Jewish intelligentsia, especially the émigrés, into cultural icons. The protagonists of "Austrian literature" and "Central European culture" are recognized European literary figures. Yet, Europe stopped short of reworking the legacy of imperial federalism and pluralism. It is high time Europe does so. Triumphant expanding, after the Soviet collapse, to include almost all the former territories of Austria-Hungary, and some of the Russian Empire, too, the EU has begun crumbling in recent years under the strains of internal and external migration and demographic diversification. Poisonous ethnonationalism has resurged. Europe needs to anchor itself quickly in a shared European past that appears as genuine as nationalism and equally appealing. Central Europe's pluralist and federalist past provides one attractive option.

Historians have recently noticed the survival of imperial trade networks in the postwar years across the Iron Curtain, and their revival since the 1990s, especially in south-eastern Europe.<sup>16</sup> Others

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16 Andreas Weigl, "Will Vienna Regain the Status of a Global City?" unpublished

have remarked on the postwar survival of imperial memory in former Bukovina and Galicia.<sup>17</sup> In Austria and elsewhere, imperial culture left monuments of art and architecture that serve as tourist attractions. This all offers Europeans a political and cultural resource that should be tapped. The Jewish intelligentsia provided us with a model of how a marginalized group can read itself into Central European culture and claim the imperial legacy without threatening others. Why should this be impossible for other Europeans? Shared cultural memory can project a common destiny against divisive nationalism and sustain federalism. The international research project on “Empire, Socialism and Jews” that resulted in five international conferences in the United States and Austria, the last in 2017 at the Wien Museum, represents one scholarly intervention that seeks to revitalize the pluralist and federalist imperial legacy for Austria and Europe.<sup>18</sup>

A pluralist-federalist revival is especially pertinent for socialist parties. They have been a bulwark of the EU without ever working out their relationship with it. Vested in the welfare state—a nation-state project—socialists have become the European “social party,” but their cultural attachment to Europe has never gone beyond democratic and humanitarian ideals: It was never grounded in national traditions that could fortify European attachments. Socialist amnesia about the imperial past calls for historical therapy that would promote European healing. The imperial federalist legacy could inspire transnational bridge-building, as it did once under the Monarchy. Once the Austrian socialists had rejected the imperial legacy, they had nowhere to go but Germany and nationalism,

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paper delivered at the Symposium on “Global Cities” at Duke University, February 6, 2015; Charlotte Natmeßnig, “Broken Links? Austrian Economic Networks across the Iron Curtain,” unpublished paper delivered at the Conference on Empire, Socialism & Jews V, V&A Vienna, May 23, 2015.

- 17 Cristina Florea, “The Last Yiddish Mohican: Josef Burg and Austria’s Legacy in Postwar Bukovina,” unpublished paper delivered at the Conference on Empire, Socialism & Jews V, V&A Vienna, May 23, 2015; Jacek Purchla et al., eds., *Mythos Galizien* (Vienna: Metroverlag, 2015).
- 18 Cf. <https://sites.duke.edu/esj5/> (accessed July 24, 2019).

and they lost both Austria and Europe. Likewise, contemporary socialists have no past on which they can draw to imagine Europe.

If we remove the nation-state teleology, and assume instead that socialist imperial federalism in the 1900s was just as authentic as their interwar nationalism, we may recover a socialist past that speaks to post-nationalism. Bauer's and Renner's "personal national autonomy" and imperial federalism reflected post-national thinking relevant to contemporary Europe. Renewed appreciation for imperial diversity may be the cultural resource socialists need to wholeheartedly support European diversity. Maverick socialists already rethought the Empire in the interwar years, and writer Robert Musil brilliantly drew a portrait of Austria-Hungary as a laboratory of modernity.<sup>19</sup> An imperial history from a socialist perspective may endow Austria and its neighbors with a deeper and richer past and a European future.<sup>20</sup>

Those apprehensive lest recalling the imperial past would return also its authoritarian and reactionary aspects should be mindful that, alas, this is already happening. Recent electoral campaigns have seen nationalists evoking the Habsburg crusade against the Ottomans as a vision for Europe confronting Islam and migration today. The imperial past will be deployed. The only question is whether its nationalist use will be confronted by a progressive one. Conservatives, too, should join in the imperial pluralist revival. Catholic imperial traditions had both progressive and reactionary dimensions. To sustain the legacy of the Christian democratic founders of Europe, conservatives must protect against the racialization of imperi-

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19 Robert Musil, *The Man Without Qualities*, trans. Sophie Wilkins, 2 vols. (New York: Knopf, 1995).

20 I have argued for such a history in: Malachi Hacoheh, "Das Kaiserreich, die Sozialdemokratie und die Juden: Ein Versuch, die k. und k. Monarchie wieder in die österreichische Geschichte einzuschreiben," in "1914–2014 – Monarchie als Integrationsmodell?" *Wiener Journal Beilage* (March 12, 2014): 12–13. My book *Jacob & Esau: Jewish European History Between Nation and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), chapters 7–8 and 12, provides an elaborate outline of the Austrian imperial legacy from a progressive perspective and discusses also Catholic cosmopolitanism.

al traditions and ensure that they are transformed into cosmopolitan post-nationalism.

The European Greens have become a major force defending Europe. Originating as a new social movement, they have rejected the national and European past. They will have to acquire a longer and deeper history than the one they presently have. It is doubtful that imperial pluralism and federalism would appeal to their sensibilities, but they, too, are vested in European pluralism. The Cold War coalitions between socialists and conservatives should be extended to forge alignments with the new antinationalist forces. Whether one is socialist, conservative, or green, anchoring a pro-European political alliance in a deep European past and highlighting the shared European investment in the imperial pluralist heritage could only enhance a sense of common culture and destiny. Antinationalist forces must unite, or Europe is lost.

As pluralism and federalism will be major tenets of any successful European order, Europe diminishes its prospects of regional and national affinity for the EU and its ability to resist xenophobic nationalism by foregoing the past. Imperial pluralism is no panacea, but reactivating it may provide an edifying example of mobilizing historical traditions to forge communal, regional, and national affinities with Europe. Regenerating the legacy of imperial pluralism could be one answer to the question “what is to be done,” which the conference at Villa Vigoni refused to answer. Those who call on Europeans to fight for Europe must anchor themselves in the European past, or their call will remain a cry in the desert.

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