

# Another Europe: remembering Habsburg Galicja

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The past ten years have brought about a profound reordering of the spatial imaginary of Europe. It is a reordering, however, that continues to this day, and the tracing (symbolic as well as institutional) of the future 'Eastern' confine of the common European space remains a highly contested – and politically salient – issue. This paper examines one alternative geographical imaginary seeking to narrate and *negate* this emergent confine and its binary division of the European space by drawing upon the memory of the multinational Austro-Hungarian empire. In particular, I look to the ways in which the Habsburg myth is being adopted and articulated within the context of the erstwhile Austrian province of Galicja – now torn between the states of Poland and the Ukraine and straddling the probable future border of the European Union. Through an analysis of the spatial imaginary of the imperial *Galicja felix*, the paper attempts to trace the ways in which the Habsburg ideal of a liminal space of multinational coexistence is being resurrected in the present day in order to subvert the (national and soon supranational) borderlines cutting through these territories' heart – and to argue for their reconceptualization as a *wholly* European border-space.

## Introduction: drawing the boundaries of Europe

The revolutions of 1989 brought, among other things, a profound reordering of the spatial imaginary of Europe. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet bloc have rendered necessary new geographical stories, new spatial representations to capture and codify the cartographic chaos of the ex-'Eastern' European space. Yet despite the jubilant pronouncements of the early 1990s heralding the 'return to Europe' of those countries and peoples 'unnaturally wrenched' from its bounds by years of communist domination,<sup>1</sup> the past 10 years have hardly signalled a 'return' to an idealized, unbounded Europe. The opening of the Iron Curtain has, rather, given birth to a whole new set of divides and boundary lines marking, as Heffernan points out, 'some remarkably persistent geopolitical instincts of the European idea through the ages': that is, the enduring need to sign the borders of belonging against a constituting 'Other' – in the post-1989 era, a role increasingly assigned to the Orthodox/Russian 'East'.<sup>2</sup>

The post-communist space today is signed in shades of 'European' belonging,

increasingly partitioned between those countries anointed as bona fide 'Europeans' and slated for fast-track incorporation into the structures of the European Union and NATO (such as the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland)<sup>3</sup> and the rest – for now, relegated to the margins of the new Europe, if not entirely denied the right to (material as well as symbolic) membership in the 'European family of nations' (most visibly, post-Soviet states such as the Ukraine and Byelorussia). On the eve of the EU's final deliberations surrounding its eastward expansion, the tracing of Europe's 'proper' boundary has assumed vital political significance. This is true both in the countries of the EU 15 whose leaders are now being called upon to determine the parameters of the European space but, even more so, in the states seeking (re)admission to the European home.

A particularly salient site for the examination of the discourses of European belonging is the Polish–Ukrainian border – increasingly designated by policy-makers and geostrategic analysts alike as one of the future 'hard' frontiers of the emergent European space, enshrined by the 1999 expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the most likely confine of the next wave of EU enlargement.

In recent years, the border has also become a key locus of struggle between the post-communist Polish and Ukrainian states. It is, indeed, one of the key symbolic sites where Polish national elites have attempted to affirm the post-1989 Polish state's European credentials. The border has become a mark of distinction, a divide from the non-European 'Other'. Within its foreign policy rhetoric of the past decade, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has repeatedly distanced itself from its post-Soviet neighbours, noting the 'deep economic but also sociopolitical chasm' that separates Poland from the countries to its east, a chasm evidenced by the differential 'success rates' in the implementation of these countries' transitions to liberal democracy and a free market economy.<sup>4</sup> Such differentials are certainly real, and have been documented by numerous observers of the Eastern European transition process.<sup>5</sup> What is important, however, are the ways in which such indicators of economic and political 'progress' have made their way into the identity discourses of Polish state elites.

Successive Polish governments have all been quick to assert their willingness to police the Union's future external boundary, which will lie, presumably, on Poland's eastern frontiers. Along with a progressive fortification of the checkpoints along the Ukrainian and Byelorussian borders (paid for, in large part, with European Union funds), the Polish state has also introduced a new and highly restrictive visa regime (the 1998 Act on Foreigners, Migrants and Border Traffic) requiring visas and work vouchers for all citizens of the ex-Soviet states travelling into Poland. These restrictions were further enhanced in spring of 1999, targeting in particular the almost six million Ukrainian workers and shuttle traders (*chelnoki*) travelling across the border yearly.<sup>6</sup>

The border has also taken on an important symbolic role in the two countries' processes of national resignification in the post-1989 era. As elsewhere in the ex-Soviet bloc, the fall of communism in 1989 in Poland and the advent of political independence in 1991 in the Ukraine released national tensions suppressed for over 40 years by the totalitarian regimes. The redefinition of the contours of Polish national identity over the past decade has inevitably had to contend with the symbolic role of the country's 'lost' eastern territories – while the newly independent Ukrainian state's national leaders have

had to confront the role of historic Polish colonialism in western Galicja. Both countries have also had to come to terms with the memory of the brutal struggles for these borderlands in the interwar period.<sup>7</sup>

The Polish–Ukrainian border has become in many ways a space of division, one of the new ‘velvet curtains’ that have fallen across the ex-Eastern European space over the past decade. It is also a division that has been actively adopted to trace the national as well as geopolitical identities of the post-communist Polish and Ukrainian states, as well as their relationship and putative belonging to the European project and European institutions.

My focus in this paper, however, is on a competing geographical imaginary of these lands – not as a border-*line* delimiting competing national belongings or the ‘end of Europe’ but, rather, as the centre of an extensive historical border-*space* of multinational – and fully European – coexistence. The historical imaginary to which this geographical narrative appeals is that of Habsburg Galicja – the easternmost province of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

Over the past decade, the Habsburg legacy has been rediscovered in a number of post-communist contexts. Just in the preceding five years, in cities such as Budapest, Kraków, Ljubljana and Prague, a revalorization of the imperial heritage has been the focus of numerous interventions into these cities’ urban landscapes, and savvy tourism entrepreneurs have promptly cashed in on the fashion for empire.<sup>8</sup> The ‘Habsburg model’ has also enjoyed a revival, moreover, as a viable alternative for cross-national political organization following the collapse of the old walls. Indeed, a great number of the collaborative initiatives born in Eastern and Central Europe after 1989 (such as the Visegrad group or the Central European Initiative) have drawn their inspiration precisely within its memory. As many observers have noted, ‘the Habsburg legacy, especially in the early years of the transition, came to represent all that was true, good, beautiful and, above all, European’.<sup>9</sup>

It is on this implied association between the Habsburg heritage and European belonging that I will focus my discussion of the ‘alternative’ narratives inscribing the Polish–Ukrainian borderlands. In particular, my examination will centre on the ways in which this alternative geographical imaginary that has emerged in recent years aims to subvert and negate the cartographical representation of these territories as the boundary of the European space by drawing on the iconography of the liminal space of multinational coexistence that was late imperial Austria.

The spatial ideology and iconography of the historical Galicjan representation as an open, multinational, ethnocultural *oikumene* confutes, in many ways, the strategies of national and geopolitical bounding of the post-1989 Polish and Ukrainian states. Its ‘rediscovery’ by cultural figures and local political leaders within these territories can be seen as a revolt against the new walls and a counter-discourse to the attempts of *national* political elites to trace the hard confines of the new Europe (just as the geographical imagination of a *Mitteleuropa* during the years of the Cold War allowed Polish, Czech and Hungarian dissidents and literary dreamers to leap outside the closed spaces of the bipolar divide and emplace themselves in the West).<sup>10</sup> Within the article, I will focus on the ways in which the resignification of the Polish–Ukrainian borderlands as a historical

*space* of coexistence and contentment – as Habsburg Galicja – is being actively used to subvert the border-*line* that now cuts through them, as well as the series of other borderlines that are symbolically coterminous with it: the confines of Central Europe, of Europe, of the West.

This geographical resignification is still in its nascent stages and, as I will note, has thus far been limited to local and regional cross-border cultural initiatives and a flourishing market for books documenting the history of the period. Yet, I will argue, it is none the less important, for the very act of giving an alternative name to these border territories is the very first – and vital – step in their reimagination and in the crafting of a new border-regional togetherness. Finnish geographer Anssi Paasi, in his examination of the ‘institutionalization’ of a different border region, has noted that one of the first steps in the formation of the conceptual shape of any regional entity is precisely the establishment of a distinct set of territorial symbols, the most important of these being the name, ‘which connects its image with the regional consciousness of the inhabitants and outsiders’, which concretizes the regional whole and which, by naming it, makes it ‘real’.<sup>11</sup>

Naming, however, also acts to ‘place’ territories and their inhabitants in geopolitical, civilizational, historical and cultural space. Recalling Galicja’s name not only evokes a series of nostalgic associations recalling a ‘lost home’ and ‘tradition’, but also serves to locate that home, that tradition. The act of giving a name thus also serves to ‘place’ the (now-‘Galicjan’) territories within a set of broader spatial containers, within a set of wider geopolitical representations. Indeed, as I will argue, the reevocation of the Galicja of Habsburg times also suggests an alternative organization of the post-Cold War European space, and, more broadly, carries with it a whole set of normative assumptions about the desirable character of the European project.

To better understand the spatial as well as sociopolitical ideals upon which such present-day reconstructions draw, I begin with an overview of some of the guiding representations of the Habsburg myth, and in particular its expression within turn-of-the-century Galicja.

## **The Habsburg myth**

Myth-making, following Barthes, can be considered as the ways in which a civilization attempts to reduce the plurality of social, political, cultural realities into a unity; the chaos of the world into an order; fragmented and accidental existence into essence; historicopolitical contradictions into a harmonious whole capable of unifying if not resolving them.<sup>12</sup> In the Habsburg case, the social role of myth was particularly pronounced. As its foremost scholars suggest, the Habsburg mythology was not so much an alteration or deformation of reality or an attempt to extract some supposed metahistorical ‘truth’, as ‘the sublimation of an entire society into a picturesque, safe and orderly fairy-tale world’.<sup>13</sup> The Habsburg myth was not only one which *derived* from an ideal time-space, but one upon which that time-space was *actively built* in practice. In the words of Robert Musil’s protagonist, it was the time of the ‘good old days when there was still such a place as imperial Austria, [when] one could leave the train of events, get into an ordinary train on an ordinary railway-line, and travel back home’.<sup>14</sup> This ‘home’,

according to Stefan Zweig, another master narrator of the Habsburg myth, was one where everything appeared long-lasting and the State itself appeared as the guarantor of such continuity . . . Everyone knew how much he possessed or how much was owed to him, that which was allowed, and that which was prohibited: everything had its norm, its precise weight and measure.<sup>15</sup>

It was an ideal – and idyllic – place:

Whenever one thought of that country from some place abroad, the memory that hovered before the eyes was of wide, white, prosperous roads dating from the age of foot-travellers and mail-coaches, roads leading in all directions like rivers of established order, streaking the countryside like ribbons of bright military twill, the paper-white arm of government holding the provinces in firm embrace. And what provinces! There were glaciers and the sea, the Carso and the cornfields of Bohemia, nights by the Adriatic restless with the chirping of cicadas, and Slovakian villages where the smoke rose from the chimneys as from upturned nostrils, the village curled up between two little hills as though the earth had parted its lips to warm its child between them.<sup>16</sup>

Imperial Austria was a place and a time indelibly marked by that which Franz Werfel would term its 'superior ideal': the attempt to reinstate 'God's reign upon the Earth, in the unity of all peoples'; the antithesis of 'the nation-state which is, in its very essence, demonic and, as such, idolatrous and menacing'.<sup>17</sup> The Austro-Hungarian empire, Musil's 'Kakania', was, in its own mind, an ideal beyond time and beyond history (with history coming to equal progress and modernity). It was the rightful heir of the spirit of the Holy Roman empire, both embodying the universalism of European culture and playing the role of mediator between East and West. Its paternalistic myth of the 'peoples' ran counter to the very ideals upon which nationality and nationhood were founded. Emperor Franz Josef's invocation of *Meine Völker* thus served not merely as the symbol but as the fundamental ideological basis of the imperial project – both its spiritual support and its propaganda tool in the struggle against the emergent ideal of the modern territorial nation-state.

Above all, the Habsburg vision provided an alternative vision of governance and community, opposing a dynastic ideal, a 'historical unity' representing 'an organic pluricultural, pluri-ethnic and multinational totality, cemented by the legitimacy of the ruling house and a web of geopolitical alliances'<sup>18</sup> to the emergent Prussian statist ideal, with its particularism, its romanticization of the one and only (German) *Volk*, its idealization of the ties of blood, soil and belonging. As Franz Grillparzer (whose literary works would be ordained by the Habsburg authorities as emblematic of the 'essence of the Austrian spirit' – required reading in all imperial schools and adorning the shelves of every respectable bourgeois home) admonished in his 1848 drama *Libussa*, 'the itinerary of modern culture goes from humanity to bestiality passing through nationality'.<sup>19</sup>

The Habsburg empire asked of its subjects 'that they not only be Germans, Ruthenians, or Poles, but something more, something above'; it required 'a true *sacrificium nationis*'.<sup>20</sup> It was a supranational ethnocultural *oikumene* that strove to transcend the nation both as an exclusive territorial ideal and the exclusive claimant of identity. It was 'an indefinable *Stimmung* binding Bohemia and Galicja, Hungary and Moravia, bringing

together all origins into a harmonious unity'; it was the empire of many crowns and many languages which intoned together the *Gott erhalte*; the land where 'everyone was born *zwolfstimmig*' – with 12 tongues, and 12 souls.<sup>21</sup>

In Galicia, the souls – and tongues – were at least three: Yiddish, Polish and Ukrainian. And just as the Habsburg myth writ large combined the cosmology of a universal, multicultural and multilingual family with an idealization of regional particularisms<sup>22</sup> – the many homes of the many peoples under the emperor's benevolent gaze – so too in Habsburg Galicia (and within its later mythologization) the almost visceral memory of home became inseparable from a broader European-federalist vision.

## Tracing the Habsburg myth in Galicia

When the Polish state was partitioned by Russia, Prussia and Austria between 1772 and 1795, disappearing from the European map until 1918, the south-eastern territories granted to Austria (now the imperial province of Galicia – see Figure 1) were generally considered the most fortunate of the partition areas. The Austrian rulers' policies were



FIGURE 1 The provincial boundaries of Austro-Hungarian Galicia

never as heavy-handed as those enacted by the Russian or Prussian authorities, and despite foreign political and institutional domination, the local cultural and economic life of the territories was allowed, in great measure, to proceed uninterrupted throughout the second half of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was, however, following Austria's defeat by Prussia and the subsequent *Ausgleich* with Hungary in 1867 that the autonomies afforded the province underwent a profound transformation, and so did the relationship of the imperial bureaucracy with its Galician subjects.

In the post-1867 period, Galicia was granted more privileges than any other province in the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy, and it is within this era that the myth of a *Galicia felix* is located.<sup>23</sup> For the very first time, the interests of the local, Polish-dominated, elite were acknowledged by Vienna in administrative fashion. In 1867, the Habsburg authorities permitted a Polish-dominated school board to be added to an already Polish-controlled provincial Diet, 'thus giving Poles the means of ending the former policy of Germanisation and setting up a Polonised school system'.<sup>24</sup> In 1869, an imperial decree established Polish as the language of the bureaucracy and the courts within the provincial boundaries, and in 1870–71 Polish was restored as the official language of instruction in the province's two universities in Kraków and Lwów/L'viv. While in the other two partition areas Polish political activism was being brutally repressed, the political status of Galician Poles continued to rise. The viceroyalty was made a Polish monopoly and, in 1871, a Polish *Landesminister* for Galicia was made a permanent fixture of every Austrian cabinet. The Polish parliamentary delegation rose in status through the years following 1867, and Poles began to be appointed to important ministerial posts in subsequent Habsburg cabinets, including those of prime minister (Count Alfred Potocki (1870–71) and Count Kazimierz Badeni (1895–97) were the only non-Germans to hold that office).<sup>25</sup> As Poles rose in the ranks of the imperial bureaucracy, Galician elites also fast became a vital incubator of Polish national feeling; understandably so, as Poles' status within the Habsburg realm stood in increasingly sharp contrast to the condition of their co-nationals in Russia and Prussia.

As numerous historical commentators have noted, Polish national aspirations under Habsburg rule also presented a rather different project from the romantic-revolutionary vision of 'crucified Poland' sustaining national spirits in the other two partition areas.<sup>26</sup> The 'typically Habsburg trace of rationalism' which marked Galician elites rejected the grey, depressing martyrology of Congress Poland, postulating that uprisings had always brought the Poles more losses than gains and concentrating instead on advancing the careers of Galician administrative/institutional cadres within the imperial bureaucracy, channelling patriotic pride into the ministerial careers of the Polish aristocracy.<sup>27</sup> Thanks to the rights conferred by the empire, the Polish elite under Habsburg occupation fast became Polish-speaking 'Austrians',<sup>28</sup> with loyalty to the imperial project effectively 'translating' the Galician Polish nobility and political leaders into fully fledged 'Europeans'.<sup>29</sup>

Galicians' wide-ranging political and cultural freedoms under imperial rule certainly contributed to the elaboration of the felicitous myth of Habsburg times.<sup>30</sup> However, to understand fully the persistence of the allure of that distinct place and time that was Habsburg Galicia, it is necessary to examine in more detail the particular time-space of

the myth: an Arcadian space of felicitous coexistence of peoples, cultures, languages and faiths at the peripheries of the empire. Within this representation, Galicja is both a reduced mirror of the multilingual, multicultural Habsburg coexistence – a part reflecting the unity of the greater whole – and also a vital, emblematic piece necessary to the construction of the vision of the empire and the emperor's 'peoples'.

Some important parallels can be traced between the idealization of a *Galicja felix* and the Habsburg myth writ large. Just as in the imperial myth, Galicja's imaginary also came to symbolize, above all, a 'being beyond history', subsumed under an ideal and idyllic chronotype of *tam i kiedys* (there, once upon a time), and necessarily opposed to the determinate 'here and now', as Polish literary historian Ewa Wiegandt notes.<sup>31</sup> To its inhabitants and narrators during the years of Habsburg rule (as well as its later bards), Galicja represented the antithesis to the traditional Polish national(ist) historicism and romantic-messianic tradition; the high moral vision of Poland as the 'Christ of nations'. Habsburg Galicja was depicted, rather, as a lost 'private homeland',<sup>32</sup> where 'one could be what one wanted to be' and where the prevalent definition of belonging was *tutejszy* (one from here).<sup>33</sup>

The prevalent topos of the Galicjan myth was that of a landscape of childhood, seen both as an ideal time–space<sup>34</sup> but also as a time–space of indeterminacy. The Galicjan territories were undefined and never fully definable (culturally, ethnically, nationally) borderlands, marked by an 'unstable geography' (as Gunter Grass has characterized the Gdansk/Danzig of his youth). In the narrative of the myth, it was history (identified with the advent of the modern nation-state) that froze this flux and enforced absurd categorical (cultural, ethnic, national) choices, thus robbing the peoples of these borderlands of even the right to name the places of their birth.<sup>35</sup> Within the myth, Galicja – and the Habsburg empire in its dying days – became 'the last Europe',<sup>36</sup> the last expression of a multinational cosmos before the chaos of the two world wars and the imposition of categorical choices of language, nationality, bloc.

## **The spatial ideology of the empire**

What were the ideals binding the unique multinational creation that was late imperial Austria? Two guiding representations may be identified in the ideology of the imperial project; representations that also form a constitutive part of the Habsburg – and Galicjan – myths.

The first can be summed up as the ideal of the 'reconciliation of difference', which allowed for the coexistence of what Polish sociologist Stanislaw Ossowski terms 'shared institutions and private homelands'.<sup>37</sup> In his work on the emergence of modern nationalism, Benedict Anderson has noted that the 'ease with which [the Habsburg] Empire was able to sustain its rule over immensely heterogeneous, and often not even contiguous, populations for long periods of time' relied precisely on the 'porosity' and 'plurality' of the imperial identity.<sup>38</sup>

That identity demanded only partial allegiance, and never strove to impose the bounded and historicized homogeneity of national belonging. The inhabitants of Habsburg Galicja were thus contemporaneously citizens of Europe as well as 'locals'



(*tutejszy*). Regardless of social station, they were all versed in the common cultural signifying code which granted every student who had passed through the doors of any of the imperial gymnasiums – from the postal clerk to cabinet ministers – ‘a knowledge of both European as well as national history, of the Bible and Greek mythology, of all branches of philosophy, literature, art – all that which, through the ages, formed what we term “modern civilization”’.<sup>39</sup> Both Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm have remarked on the key role played by Habsburg institutions in creating the imperial commonality – from the educational system to the armed forces to the famed Habsburg bureaucracy, entrusted with the execution and policing of the empire’s manifold rules and regulations.<sup>40</sup>

The empire’s institutions and regulations coexisted, however, with a multitude of local contexts – those which Ossowski terms ‘private homelands’. The emperor’s many subjects may have all shared the same official *lingua franca* and cultural reference points, but they were all also equally proficient in whatever happened to be the *Geschäftssprache* of their everyday life. In Galicja, this most often indicated a fluid mix of Polish, Yiddish, Ukrainian and German, incomprehensible to outsiders.

The mythologized Habsburg ideal of the ‘unity in diversity’, in the empire’s later years ossified within the so-called ‘Austrian legalism’ (the conviction that all disputes could be addressed and resolved through the appropriate channels and the appointed legal representatives), was the very glue holding together widely disparate local realities. It was ensured by the imperial bureaucracy that reached out into even the most remote corners of its territories, even into the lost *shtetls* of the Galicjan plains. As Bruno Schulz picturesquely evokes in his childhood memoirs, to the inhabitants of the small Galicjan towns and villages, the local representatives of the imperial bureaucracy were seen as the direct emissaries of the emperor, ‘the Divine Father of his peoples’, who

sent out into the world a heavenly contingent, clothed in symbolic celestial blue uniforms, divided into ranks and orders: angelic personnel in the form of postmen, officials and tax inspectors. Even the most petty of these celestial messengers reflected in his eyes the Creator’s eternal wisdom and the jovial, sideburn-framed smile – even if, as a consequence of his earthly toils, his feet stank of sweat.<sup>41</sup>

The laws of the empire were similarly depicted as a guarantee of individual and local freedoms, albeit under the emperor’s watchful eyes. Ewa Wiegandt provides a wonderful anecdote of the local interpretation the 1867 constitution of the Dual Monarchy by one Galicjan *wojt* (mayor). Article 19 of the new constitution pronounced the equality of all peoples within the empire and their rights to the protection and cultivation of their nationality and language. The official thus translated the proclamation to his small-town subjects:

Our Emperor tells us, writes in bold letters black on white, gold on silver: ‘People, be what you wish to be – of divine or human faith, peasant or noble, baptised or Jewish, Latin or Uniate, Turkish or Bosnian, Armenian, Gypsy, or – whatever you wish. If it suits you, it suits me. Do not worry about your faith, nor that of anyone else; faith is like skin – no one can be blamed for their own skin. I, the Emperor, like your skin. I ask you kindly only for one thing: do not bring shame to the Emperor. Believe one another, this is the most ancient faith. And do well, do your

best. I know you are capable of it. That will be very nice, that will make me quite happy.' Signed, your Emperor, Franz-Josef.<sup>42</sup>

The above citation in many ways provides the perfect synthesis of the mythologized paternal (if not paternalistic) vision of the empire's relationship to its subjects – and the latter's rights and responsibilities.

This vision was also extended to matters of identity. Although the Dual Monarchy's 'nationality policy' was only made explicit in the 1867 constitution, the empire had never put a high premium on national belonging. National identification in Austrian Galicja – just as in the empire's other provinces – was never too clear. It was, as Wiegandt terms it, 'faded': 'an outline of official belonging [the Austrian one], within a chiaroscuro of variously fading and emerging shades of other "we"s'.<sup>43</sup> A character in Jozef Wittlin's novel *The salt of the earth* provides a case in point:

Piotr Niewiadomski was a Ruthenian – although his father was Polish. Well, his faith decided. National consciousness was never Piotr's strong point. Actually, Piotr always stopped short of national consciousness. He spoke Polish and Ukrainian, he worshipped God according to the Greek-Catholic rite, he served the Austro-Hungarian Emperor.<sup>44</sup>

Indeed, for the empire's Galicjan subjects, national or ethnic belonging did not constitute the primary focus of identification, and certainly not the most important one that guided everyday existence and determined an individual's life chances and her/his 'place' in Galicjan society. Habsburg Galicja was in many ways the quintessential liminal community, characterized by unstable belongings and identities combined and recombined daily in an endless tangle of reconfigurations and rerepresentations which shifted from one conversation to the next – depending on the interlocutor.<sup>45</sup> 'I am a public employee, an Austrian, a Jew, a Pole – all in the space of an afternoon,' Bruno Schulz wrote in his notebooks.<sup>46</sup> Belonging, when delimited, was traced along class and religious divides – peasant, noble, Uniate, Jewish – although it was the attribute of *tutejszy* (local) that traced the sharpest confines. As Wiegandt suggests, it was as though the babel of languages and cultures of the eastern Galicjan town symbolized the primeval state of harmony, of perfection, and only those 'not from here' were considered as 'others' (though, if imperial subjects, still part of a broader commonality since they were still the 'Emperor's peoples').<sup>47</sup>

## Jewish Galicja

The Galicjan chiaroscuro of identities and its 'theorization' (by elite intellectuals, but also its 'practical theorization' in daily life) would have been inconceivable without its significant Jewish presence, just as the Habsburg *koinè* more broadly – and its enormous intellectual contribution to what we consider 'modern' European culture – is inconceivable without the Jewish cultural elite which, according to Milan Kundera, represented 'its intellectual content, a condensed version of its spirit, creators of its spiritual unity'. Claudio Magris, the foremost scholar of the Habsburg myth, takes this assertion a step further, noting that German culture alone would have never been capable of crafting the Habsburg dream without Judaism and secular Jewish thinkers.<sup>48</sup>

The Jewish presence in Galicja is age-old. The first large-scale eastward migration of

the Ashkenazim to these lands is traced back to the twelfth century and rising persecution within the territories of the Holy Roman empire. Most settled in the then kingdom of Poland, a migration which continued into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. As Poland expanded eastwards in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and with the creation of the Polish–Lithuanian commonwealth, Jews were encouraged to settle in the eastern territories of the republic: in the lands of present day Byelorussia, Lithuania and the Ukraine. The Zaporozhian Cossack revolt of 1648 sowed terror among the Jewish population, with thousands killed and forced to flee from the Ukrainian areas. Within the next century, however, many returned, and countless new waves of settlers followed. With the partitions of Poland, most of the areas of significant Jewish presence fell under Russian rule. Tsarist authorities were swift to discipline the Jewish population by placing stringent restrictions on the movement of Jews to other parts of the Russian empire, constraining them to remain in the ex-Polish lands which now came to be known as the Pale of Settlement, or simply the ‘Pale’.<sup>49</sup>

Along with the provinces of the Pale, Galicja came to represent the heartland of Ashkenazi Jewry: of the estimated 7.5 million Jews living in Eastern Europe in the early years of this century, over 70% lived in the Pale and Galicja. Jews made up 30% of the population of both Kraków and Lwów/Lviv and over 50% in a number of other key Galicjan towns such as Brody, Sanok, Ivano-Frankiv’sk/Stanislawów and Ternopil/Tarnopol. With the outbreak of pogroms in the Russian empire in the 1880s and early 1900s, many other Jews sought refuge in neighbouring Galicja and Bukovina.<sup>50</sup>

Jews made up a vital part of Galicja’s multinational, multicultural *koinè* and numerous outstanding Jewish political figures and scholars, such as Isaac Deutscher, Karl Radek and Martin Buber, were born or raised in Galicja. Significant portions of both Zionist and Jewish socialist movements can trace their origins to Galicjan Jewish intellectuals. Galicjan Jews were, as Le Rider notes, the quintessential Habsburg citizens of the ‘*shtetl* and the world’: a widely diverse community which brought together conservative Hasidim and the progressive intelligentsia, those advocating Polonization and ardent Germanophiles – or those following in the footsteps of Emil Byk’s Shomer Israel movement who declared with pride, ‘We are Austrians.’<sup>51</sup>

It was precisely Jewish artists and intellectuals, such as Emil Franzos, Josef Roth, Manes Sperber, Bruno Schulz and Andrzej Kusniewicz, who first raised the alarm at the dismemberment of the Galicjan babel, as the Habsburg dream slid into a nightmare of language laws, ethnic registers and violent nationalisms.<sup>52</sup>

## **The nationalization of the empire**

How did it happen that I became the author of ‘Polish’ books, good or bad, but ‘Polish’? Why was I forced into this role? Me – a European, no, a citizen of the world, an Esperantist, cosmopolitan ex-citizen of the Universal Empire – who transformed me, as though by wicked spell, into but a close-minded, stubborn, ignorant ‘Pole’?<sup>53</sup>

... at this point, that damned Ròzkowski from the security services comes up to the cart and screams at the peasant: ‘You, you a Pole?’ And the peasant: ‘I don’t know, Sir, I just came to see

the doctor', and Ròzkowski: 'Idiot! Pole or not?' and the peasant, getting scared, slurring his words: 'What you mean Sir, 'Pole'? I am coming to the doctor', and Ròzkowski: 'Ukrainian?', and the peasant 'Devil may take me, I am no Ukrainian', and Ròzkowski, grabbing his arm: 'So what the hell are you?', and the peasant: 'I am from here, I'm a Roman Catholic', almost in tears; so Ròzkowski pushes him away: 'Ehhh . . . you people . . .'<sup>54</sup>

Most historical observers trace the first institutional attempts at the delimitation of the Galician space along national and ethnic lines (and the beginnings of the slow death of the Habsburg ideal of 'unity in diversity') to the 1896 Austrian electoral reform. The reform marked a sea-change in Habsburg nationality politics, both because it significantly transformed the national balance in the Austrian parliament, thus giving rise to new alliances and facilitating national(ist) organizing by a number of groups (the Ruthenian delegation among them), but also, and perhaps even more importantly, because it signalled a rupture in the previous multinational vision of the Emperor's peoples'. The reforms of 1896–97 attempted, for the very first time, to delimit ethnic groups for the purposes of provincial and imperial elections, through the construction of double or (in Bukovina) multiple networks of constituencies along ethnic lines and the drawing up of ethnically or linguistically separate voters' registers (the famed *nationale Kataster*) and in Moravia, the organization of elementary education on a strictly ethnically and linguistically separate basis – marking what Stourzh has termed the 'ethnicizing of Austrian politics'.<sup>55</sup>

The primacy of ethnic divides not only tended to de-emphasize (and, to some extent, delegitimize) the traditional role afforded to the provinces and to the imperial government. This new-found primacy also 'reduced the position of the individual as citizen of the state, stressing, instead, the individual's role as a member of an ethnic group'.<sup>56</sup> As Jacques Le Rider notes, from the Emperor's *Meine Volker*, a historical organic pluricultural unity cemented together by dynastic right, the citizens of Austria now became 'nationals', with the structuring of public bodies along ethnic lines producing the entirely new need to attribute ethnic membership to individuals: 'constrained by the nationalism of others to become a nation', as Joseph Roth noted of the period in his collection of essays *Juden auf Wanderschaft*.<sup>57</sup>

Individuals now had to delimit their belonging to one collectivity, the *Volkstamm* – the nationality, the people, the nation, the ethnic group. This requirement had a number of consequences. First, as Stourzh stresses, it tended to put a premium on persons who not merely 'belonged' clearly to one or the other nationality but who were 'nationally minded'. Such persons were deemed particularly qualified, for example, to serve on provincial school boards in Moravia and a number of other provinces.<sup>58</sup> There was a second connotation as well – the ability of the imperial state 'objectively' to attribute ethnic membership to persons on the basis of evidence gathered through official questionnaires.<sup>59</sup> The modern ideal of a nation bound to a distinct territorial base thus slowly supplanted previously dominant Austro-Marxist conceptions of 'freely chosen' nationality within which, to cite Hobsbawm, 'nationality could attach to persons, wherever they lived and whoever they lived with, at any rate if they chose to claim it'. This ideal was perhaps best articulated by Karl Renner in *Staat und Nation* who envisioned national membership as a status 'freely chosen, *de jure*, by the individual who has reached the age of majority'.<sup>60</sup>

## **Purifying the Galicjan space**

Although the Austro-Hungarian empire expired on the eastern front of the First World War, the violent national struggles and the subsequent national repartitioning of the Habsburg lands did not succeed in fully ‘purifying’ the East Central European spaces – and certainly not those of Galicja.<sup>61</sup> That task was to be accomplished first by Nazi Germany – and completed by postwar planners. By 1945, the Final Solution had eliminated 5.4 million Eastern and Central European Jews – erasing all traces of the vibrant Ashkenazi communities in Galicja and the Pale. Another 9–10 million people – Rom, Poles, Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Russians – were killed in the Nazi sweep through these territories. The multinational dream of the Habsburgs, Karl Renner’s ideal of ‘freely chosen nationalisms’, if still alive in tatters after the strife of the First World War and the interwar years, expired at Auschwitz.

The Allied postwar project for the reordering of the eastern borderlands of Europe, albeit clothed in the rhetoric of peace and political stability, in epistemological terms lay perfectly in line with the ‘pure geometry’ of politics theorized by Carl Schmitt and put into practice by Nazi geopoliticians.<sup>62</sup> When post-Second World War planners sat down at Teheran, Yalta and later Potsdam, their aim was to ‘secure eastern Europe’s frontiers on the basis of practical considerations’.<sup>63</sup> By the war’s end it became common dogma, in fact, to assert that it was the presence of large numbers of ethnolinguistic minorities within the states of East Central Europe that constituted one of the major factors that, during the interwar years, had contributed to political instability, culminating in military conflict. The apparent solution lay with ‘bringing some logic to the map of Europe’, and though substantial tensions existed as to the specifics, there was little fundamental disagreement among the members of the Grand Alliance as to the necessity of sorting out the ‘demographic chaos in the East’.<sup>64</sup>

To ‘clean up’ the eastern European space, populations needed to be realigned to conform with the new frontiers. As part of organized population transfers and forced resettlement, between 1944 and 1948 no fewer than 31 million people were uprooted and moved from what in most cases had been for decades, even centuries, their homes and the homes of their ancestors.<sup>65</sup> Alongside the mass resettlement of Germans from the former eastern territories of the Reich, Galicja became the chief focus of population transfers in the years following the war. The new boundary between Poland and the Soviet Union – designated by the Curzon Line – cut clear across the historical provincial boundaries, and its enforcement necessitated a programme of forced population transfers which swept through communities on both sides of the new border, uprooting and resettling over 1.4 million individuals, including 810 000 Polish inhabitants of former eastern Galicja and Volhynia, and 630 000 individuals identified with the Ukrainian ‘ethno-linguistic community’ coming primarily from now Polish territories.<sup>66</sup>

## **Back to *Galicja felix*?**

*Kraków*: town located 210m above the Adriatic Sea. This confirms Kraków’s role as cradle of Mediterranean customs north of the Carpathians . . .

*Lwów*: . . . through Lwów runs the principal European continental divide . . . There is, in fact, a particular house in Kortumówka that appears quite ordinary when the sun shines. Yet even the slightest drizzle betrays its unique position: water from one side of its roof flows into the Baltic; from the other, the rain drops proceed into the Black Sea . . .<sup>67</sup>

Galicja was born of myth – and from myth would rise again. And in the post-1989 era, when myths would prove in short supply, that of a *Galicja felix* would prove particularly attractive. Galicja's re-materialization first became apparent in a sudden and progressive proliferation of its name. The early 1990s witnessed *Galicja* suddenly cropping up on store signs and on restaurant and bar insignia<sup>68</sup> in the principal towns of the ex-Habsburg province (albeit largely on the much more prosperous Polish side of the border). Evocations of Galicja and of the Habsburg past were associated with a variety of new consumer goods – from mineral water from Przemysl, *Galicja*, blessed by the emperor's smile (*'es bat mich sebr gefreut'*) to C&K (recalling the Dual Empire's K&K – *Kaiserlich und Königlich* – seal) beer produced by a Kraków-based micro-brewery (see Figure 2), and an assortment of 'Galicjan-era' sweets.

Beyond its role as simple marketing tool (discounted by many as merely a means of signalling the given product's long heritage and thus its worth vis-à-vis shoddy state



FIGURE 2 Advertisement for the C&K Brewery: 'our doors are open to everyone, from common soldier to sergeant. Ministers and imperial advisers are particularly welcome' (Czuma and Mazan, *Austriackie gadanie czyli Encyklopedia Galicyjska*, reprinted by kind permission of Anabasis, Krakow).

factory-produced goods), the use of the 'Galician' denominative also began to proliferate among a whole variety of both public as well as private institutions and associations in Kraków, Rzeszów, Nowy Sącz and surrounding areas.<sup>69</sup> Alongside historical preservation associations and literary and cultural groups, there is an active Galician Television Association (*Galicyjskie Towarzystwo Telewizyjne*), presided over by prominent Kraków journalist Leszek Mazan and funded by the cream of the 'Galician' entrepreneurs and corporations<sup>70</sup>, as well as a series of advertising agencies, travel bureaux, radio stations, banks and even brokerage firms. Portraits of Franz Josef hang in the offices of *Tygodnik Powszechny*, Poland's longest-established progressive Catholic political weekly, as well as Kraków's daily newspaper *Dziennik Polski*; the Emperor has also begun to grace the walls of numerous city bars, restaurants and coffee-houses.

In 1992, a conference under the title of 'Galicia and its heritage' was organized in the cities of Rzeszów and Lancut; not only did attendance vastly exceed the organizers' expectations, but the eight-volume work of the same name that emerged from the proceedings quickly went through several printings.<sup>71</sup> As one of the conference organizers, Kazimierz Sowa, notes in his introduction to the series,

Galicia is a powerful, still-living myth in the culture of two nations: the Polish and the Ukrainian. Certainly, it is not a unitary or homogeneous myth – yet in both cultures it is viewed, overwhelmingly, as an 'ideal' past – as the lost Arcadia [and, thus, by extension], as the path towards their future.<sup>72</sup>

Sowa identifies two guiding elements to the present-day Galician myth: first, the idealization of the lost time-space of the local – of the familiar Galician village or *sbtetl*, but also of the urban magnificence of turn-of-the-century Kraków and Lwów/L'viv; second, the defunct ideal of social and ethnic peace, of the peaceful coexistence of the 'many peoples, many nations' inhabiting 'these lands' since time immemorial. Both elements, however, as Sowa himself notes, are predicated upon a unitary/unified Galicia and thus upon a *negation* of the increasingly rigid border which cuts through it.<sup>73</sup>

## **The politics of spatial representations**

Space . . . tells you where you are and puts you there.<sup>74</sup>

We should be wary of hastily equating this recent fashion to the resurgence of a recognized 'Galician' identity. Yet the trend is revealing to some extent, for the names that we grant to our social world, to ourselves and to the institutions to which we belong are hardly accidental. They emerge, rather, from a complex negotiation of meanings that attempts to grant (a particular) sense to the world around us – to mark not only *who* we are but also *where* we are.

The names we give to 'our places', to ourselves as social actors, matter – and they matter in two distinct ways. First, as I noted in the introduction, it is naming that concretizes the 'reality' of a spatial representation. Naming is vital to the creation of feelings of togetherness and shared representations of spatial belonging. The act of naming a Galician region thus 'gathers together [the region's] historical development,

its important events, episodes and memories and joins the personal histories of its inhabitants to this collective heritage'.<sup>75</sup>

At the same time, however, naming also acts to 'place' territories and their inhabitants within a set of broader representational containers – whether geopolitical, civilizational, historical or cultural. As I have noted previously, (re)calling Galicja's name not only evokes a series of nostalgic associations recalling 'home' and 'tradition', but also serves to *locate* that home, that tradition, both within the mytho-poetic space of the past, and vis-à-vis the spatial and political 'containers' of the present. In the case of Galicja, the evocation of the historical region is predicated upon a negation of the legitimacy of present-day national spatial divides.

Indeed, no reterritorialization – not even the symbolic – is possible without a prior de-territorialization, and any 'institutionalization' of a new spatial representation is always predicated upon the 'de-institutionalization' of some other territorial unit, of some preexisting spatial representation.<sup>76</sup> As Denis Cosgrove and Mona Domosh have stressed, all our representations of space are 'not to be judged by a theory of correspondence but in terms of their value as moral/political discourses'.<sup>77</sup> Defining a Galicjan region is thus a micro- as well as a macro-strategic exercise, coterminous with a whole series of political/geopolitical choices about what constitutes the 'proper' organization of this part of Europe.

There is, indeed, a distinct politics to the Galicjan resurgence. It is an ironic politics of opposition that plays with space and spatial representations in order to contest the formal politics of the Polish state. One of the first public 'Galicjan' actions came in the wake of the scandal that followed the Polish Supreme Court's ratification of the legitimacy of the 1995 presidential elections, whose legality was put into question after revelations that President Aleksander Kwasniewski had lied about his educational qualifications.<sup>78</sup> Reacting with disgust to the scandal, prominent Kraków journalists and cultural figures joined local parliamentary deputies to erect mock border crossings along the historical boundary between Austro-Hungarian Galicja and what once was Congress Poland, proclaiming it 'a *cordon sanitaire* separating us from the barbarians'.<sup>79</sup> The event was playful in tone, and intended to ridicule the political and spatial integrity of the Polish state, and above all its representative institutions. The comments that followed the initiative, published on the pages of Kraków's principal daily newspaper *Dziennik Polski*, point to some of the ways in which the event's participants conceived the initiative and its political-symbolic significance. As one of the participants noted to a local journalist:

it is time to finally admit that the people who live here [Galicja] are different, have different traditions, a different way of thinking and they cannot be just thrown into the same [national] sack with someone from, for example, Sieradz . . . There was a time when the nations of Central Europe lived together in unity, within a common, democratically governed state, taking the best from their respective cultures. This is before the onset of that disease of nationalism. Think about what Kraków and Kielce [a town which lies less than 100km north of Kraków] have in common. Nothing, besides the language, a couple of elected monarchs and a common history that ended 300 years ago.<sup>80</sup>

The Kraków city council (*Rada Miasta Krakowa*) has also become increasingly vocal in recent years on matters which are usually the province of national institutions and



actors, most visibly that of foreign policy. The council has, since 1990, taken to issuing numerous directives to the Polish parliament, concerning anything and everything from demands for President Kwasniewski's resignation to condemnations of the Russian intervention in Chechnya. The council has also been particularly active in contesting Polish state policy towards the Ukraine, and over the past decade has established a wide-ranging network of exchange and aid programmes with cities in western Ukraine.<sup>81</sup>

Such local 'scale-jumping' strategies<sup>82</sup> of empowerment have also been put into practice quite successfully by Galicjan economic actors ever since the Wall came down, with local entrepreneurs and chamber of commerce leaders rapidly launching their firms and cities into cross-border trade and capital investment networks, long before competent national bodies regulating this sort of activity had even been set up. Over the past 10 years a Galicjan regional economic space has in effect been born,<sup>83</sup> despite the lack of any institutionalized, formalized administrative ties – and increasingly despite the Polish and Ukrainian states' growingly isolationist border policies.<sup>84</sup>

## Conclusions

What do such strategies tell us about the relevance of the Galicjan myth in the present? The idealization of the historical region of Galicja raises two sets of important questions. The first concerns the very nature of regions and regional identities. The second pertains to the ongoing construction of the 'common European home' and the ways in which it is being imagined. I will tackle these in turn.

Is it proper to speak of a Galicjan region today? If we consider regions to be, above all, geographical representations, we can claim that such representations are 'real' – and thus politically/socially/culturally 'relevant' – once they are shared, once they constitute a referent for political action, for the articulation of identity, for the forging of economic networks. The fact that the Galicjan regional representation is, at present, constrained to the sphere of limited cultural and economic exchanges does not detract from its importance as an alternative spatial imaginary, as an alternative identity for the 'region' that stretches across the Polish–Ukrainian border.

Care must be taken, however, not to conflate this new 'regional identity' – that is, the *re-evoked identity of the historical Galicjan region* – with the potentially endless *identities* of the region's inhabitants, which may or may *not* coincide with the identity of the region.<sup>85</sup> In this sense, 'regional identity' is best conceived as a *shared or dominant territorial idea or representation* (of the region), shaped and articulated by *certain* actors: those 'specialized' in the production/maintenance of territorial distinctions and identities (politicians, journalists or cultural and business elites) – those, in other words, with the power to craft representations of territorial identity precisely because of their social rank and thus their assigned role in producing/maintaining the hegemonic structures of society. Regional identity is therefore a shared geographical representation that induces coherent behaviour and that, over time, can act to consolidate the region.<sup>86</sup> The myth of *Galicja felix* can, I would argue, play this role in the near future.

The revival of the Galicjan imaginary also raises some key questions surrounding the

construction of identities in the new Europe. The adoption of the Habsburg myth within the post-communist states is in many ways paradoxical in its expressions. On the one hand, as I have noted in the introduction to this article, imperial belonging has been adopted by national state elites as a marker of 'European-ness' and thus *distinction* against an obviously non-European 'other'. On the other, however, the Habsburg myth (or, better yet, its current popular reappraisals) is based within an idealization of multicultural and multinational *diversity and inclusion*, envisioned as fundamental 'European' values.

This paradox speaks to a fundamental paradox inherent to the European project itself and one that has been raised in recent months by scholars such as Ralf Dahrendorf, Jürgen Habermas and Claus Offe in the debates surrounding the nature of a future 'European citizenship'.<sup>87</sup> How to reconcile a necessary delimitation of the boundaries (political, symbolic and territorial) of European belonging, while at the same time proclaiming Europe's 'unity in diversity'? For many in this part of the world, the 'pluricultural, pluri-ethnic, multinational totality'<sup>88</sup> represented by the Habsburg empire and its multiple, porous belongings provides an ideal model.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> D. Shaw, 'The chickens of Versailles: the new Central and Eastern Europe', in B. Graham, ed., *Modern Europe: place, culture and identity* (London, Arnold, 1998), p. 14.
- <sup>2</sup> M. Heffernan, *The meaning of Europe: geography and geopolitics* (London, Arnold, 1999), p. 239.
- <sup>3</sup> Most commonly designated with the 'Central European' label.
- <sup>4</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, 'Annual foreign policy statement' (Warsaw, 5 Mar. 1998). See also the Ministry's 'Annual foreign policy statement'. (Warsaw, 8 Apr. 1999), and 'Security strategy of the Republic of Poland' (Warsaw, 4 Jan. 2000).
- <sup>5</sup> An excellent overview is provided in V. Bunce, 'Postsocialisms', in S. Antohi and V. Tismaneau, eds, *Between past and future: the revolutions of 1989 and their aftermath* (Budapest, Central European University Press, 2000), pp.122–52. For a look at Poland's 'progress' in the implementation of economic and political reforms, see the recent survey published by the *Economist*, 'Limping towards normality' (27 Oct. 2001).

- <sup>6</sup> For a more detailed discussion, see L. Bialasiewicz and J. O'Loughlin, 'Re-ordering Europe's eastern frontier: Galicjan identities and political cartographies on the Polish-Ukrainian border', in D. Kaplan and J. Hakli, eds, *Boundaries and place: European borderlands in geographical context* (London, Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).
- <sup>7</sup> See the discussion of these borderlands' history in C. Hann, 'Ethnic cleansing in Eastern Europe: Poles and Ukrainians beside the Curzon Line', *Nations and nationalism* 2 (1996), pp. 389–406. See also C. Hann, 'Postsocialist nationalism: rediscovering the past in southeast Poland', *Slavic review* 57 (1998), pp. 840–63. On the role of historical memory in post-1989 Poland, see J. Jedlicki, 'Historical memory as a source of conflicts in Eastern Europe', *Communist and post-communist studies* 32 (1999), pp. 225–32.
- <sup>8</sup> For a discussion of the urban transformations in Budapest, see J. Bodnar, *Fin de millénaire Budapest: metamorphoses of urban life* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2001). For the case of post-1989 Prague, see L. Hoffman and J. Musil, 'Culture meets commerce: tourism in postcommunist Prague', in D. Judd and S. Fainstein, eds, *The tourist city* (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1999).
- <sup>9</sup> The citation comes from P. Matvejvic, *Mondo 'Ex'* (Milan, Garzanti, 1996). See also the postscript to the 1999 edition of R. Dahrendorf's *Reflections on the revolution in Europe: in a letter intended to have been sent to a gentleman in Warsaw* (London, Chatto & Windus, 1996).
- <sup>10</sup> The notion of *Mittleeuropa* carries many diverse connotations, many far from positive. It is not the aim of this paper to dwell on its various interpretations. It should be noted, however, that the *Mittleeuropa* fondly recalled by Habsburg-era nostalgics stands in clear opposition to the Prussian *Mittleeuropa*, with the empire's multinational vision seen as the very negation of the Prussian state-centric ideal promoted by Friedrich Naumann and others and later coopted by Nazi geopoliticians. On this point see e.g. A. Agnelli, *La genesi dell'idea di Mittleeuropa* (Milan, Giufre, 1971); J. Le Rider, *Mittleeuropa: storia di un mito* (Bologna, Il Mulino, 1995); C. Magris, *Il mito absburgico nella letteratura austriaca moderna* (Turin, Einaudi, 1963), as well as *Danubio* (Milan, Garzanti, 1986); H.D. Schultz, 'Fantasies of *Mitte*: *Mittelage* and *Mittleeuropa* in German geographical discussion in the 19th and 20th centuries', *Political geography* 8 (1989), pp. 315–89; P. Stirk, 'The idea of *Mittleeuropa*', in Stirk, ed., *Mittleeuropa: history and prospects* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1994). For the *Mittleeuropaean* imaginary as an 'antidote' to the Iron Curtain, see above all M. Kundera, 'The tragedy of Central Europe', *New York review of books* (26 Apr. 1984) and G. Konrad, *Anti-politics* (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1984).
- <sup>11</sup> A. Paasi, 'The institutionalisation of regions: a theoretical framework for understanding the emergence of regions and the constitution of regional identity', *Fennia* 164 (1986), p. 125.
- <sup>12</sup> R. Barthes, *Mythologies* (Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1957).
- <sup>13</sup> Magris, *Il mito absburgico nella letteratura austriaca moderna*, p. 15.
- <sup>14</sup> R. Musil, *The man without qualities* (New York, Capricorn, 1953), p. 31.
- <sup>15</sup> S. Zweig, *Die Welt von Gestern: the world of yesterday* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1964), p. 12.
- <sup>16</sup> Musil, *The man without qualities*, p. 31.
- <sup>17</sup> F. Werfel, *Aus der Dämmerung einer Welt* (1936), p. 14.
- <sup>18</sup> Le Rider, *Mittleeuropa*, p. 54.
- <sup>19</sup> A key component of the Habsburg myth was, in fact, its vision of modern history as the break-up of the universal, Latin and unitarian Europe, a parable of decline tracing a progression into chaos from Erasmus to Luther to Frederick II; from Napoleon to Bismarck to modern dictatorships – a vision also cultivated in the fiction of Galicjan authors such as Joseph Roth and Bruno Schulz.
- <sup>20</sup> Werfel, *Aus der Dämmerung einer Welt*, p. 19.

- <sup>21</sup> Magris, *Il mito asburgico nella letteratura austriaca moderna*, pp. 55, 70.
- <sup>22</sup> The Habsburg project of 'unity in diversity' is perhaps best embodied in the monumental work entitled *Der Osterreichisch-Ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild*, the first volume of which was published in 1886 and which was completed in the first decade of the 1900s. Within this encyclopedic endeavour, each province of the empire is the subject of historical, ethnographic, geographical and statistical monographs, highlighting their distinctive regional characteristics while also, however, stressing the 'common soul' bringing together the 'Emperor's peoples'.
- <sup>23</sup> See S. Estreicher, 'Galicja in the period of autonomy and self-government, 1848–1917', in *The Cambridge history of Poland: from Augustus II to Pilsudski (1697–1935)* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1951); R. Kann, *The multi-national empire: nationalism and national reform in the Habsburg monarchy, 1848–1918* (New York, Octagon, 1977); J. Shedel, 'Austria and its Polish subjects, 1866–1914: a relationship of interests', *Austrian history yearbook* **19/20** (1983), pp. 23–41; and P. Wandycz, 'The Poles in the Habsburg monarchy', in A. Markovits and F. Sysyn, eds, *Nationbuilding and the politics of nationalism: essays on Austrian Galicia* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1982).
- <sup>24</sup> Wandycz, 'The Poles in the Habsburg monarchy', p. 85.
- <sup>25</sup> Kann, *The multi-national empire*.
- <sup>26</sup> See e.g. Estreicher, 'Galicja in the period of autonomy and self-government, 1848–1917', as well as Wandycz, 'The Poles in the Habsburg monarchy'.
- <sup>27</sup> See Shedel, 'Austria and its Polish subjects, 1866–1914', and J. Buszko, *Galicja 1859–1914: Polski Piemont?* (Warsaw, PWN, 1989).
- <sup>28</sup> E. Wiegandt, *Austria Felix czyli o Micie Galicji w Polskiej Prozie Wspolczesnej* (Poznan, UAM, 1988).
- <sup>29</sup> On this point, see also B. Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism* (London, Verso, 1983), p. 56. Anderson notes, in fact, the peculiar 'togetherness' (he hesitates to call it an 'identity') inadvertently created by the bureaucracy of the Austro-Hungarian empire: a transnational 'imagined community' based in the 'interchangeability' of ('conscious', i.e. elite) imperial subjects, who came to see themselves as 'travelling companions' in their 'life under empire'.
- <sup>30</sup> It should be noted that the Galician adhesion to the Habsburg ideal was not unique; as numerous observers from Kann, *The multi-national Empire*, to Le Rider, *Mitteleuropa* and Magris, *Il mito asburgico nella letteratura austriaca moderna*, have stressed, the most fervent 'Austrians' were to be found precisely on the peripheries of the empire: in Bohemia, Galicja or on the shores of the Adriatic. We can recall here one of the characters in Josef Roth's *Die Kapuzinergruft* (Amsterdam, Allert de Lange, 1950) who aptly notes that 'it is only Slovaks and Galician Poles and Ruthenians, only marketeers from Boryslaw and horse-sellers from Baczka, only Muslims from Sarajevo and roast-chestnut vendors who still sing "God praise [the Emperor]"'. Because German students in Brno, dentists, pharmacists, barbers and photographers in Linz, Graz and Knittelfeld – all of these sworn Alp-dwellers now intone "Wacht am Rhein".'
- <sup>31</sup> Wiegandt, *Austria Felix czyli o Micie Galicji w Polskiej Prozie Wspolczesnej*.
- <sup>32</sup> The distinction comes from Polish sociologist Stanislaw Ossowski, *Z zagadnien psychologii społecznej* (Warsaw, PWN, 1967), p. 210, who distinguishes between a 'private homeland' and an 'ideological homeland'. The first is the home of a 'patriotism' based within the direct, personal experience of a given territory; the second, of a patriotism based 'within a set of constructed beliefs and assumptions'; thus, within the imagined community of the modern nation-state.
- <sup>33</sup> See Wiegandt, *Austria Felix czyli o Micie Galicji w Polskiej Prozie Wspolczesnej*; also A.

- Applebaum, *Between East and West: across the borderlands of Europe* (New York, Pantheon, 1994).
- <sup>34</sup> As childhood is a time when one is 'closer to the origin – and thus closer to the Truth', as Cracow writer Stanislaw Lem would note in his *Wysoki Zamek* (Cracow, Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1966).
- <sup>35</sup> In Galician author Andrzej Kusniewicz's wonderful novel, *Stan niewazkosci* (Lodz, Wydawnictwo Lodzkiej Drukarni Dzielowej, 1997), the protagonists lose all traces of their identity with the formation of the independent Polish state which proceeds to narratively nationalize their homelands: 'I don't even know any more where I am from, where I was born.'
- <sup>36</sup> As J. Zulawski, *Z domu* (Warsaw, PWN, 1979) refers to it.
- <sup>37</sup> Ossowski, *Z zagadnien psychologii społecznej*, p. 210.
- <sup>38</sup> Anderson, *Imagined communities*, p. 19.
- <sup>39</sup> Wiegandt, *Austria Felix czyli o Micie Galicji w Polskiej Prozie Wspolczesnej*, p. 27.
- <sup>40</sup> Anderson, *Imagined communities*, p. 19; E. Hobsbawm, *Nations and nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 97.
- <sup>41</sup> B. Schulz, *Sanatorium pod Klepsydra* (Warsaw, Panstwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1994), p. 233.
- <sup>42</sup> Wiegandt, *Austria Felix czyli o Micie Galicji w Polskiej Prozie Wspolczesnej*, p. 33.
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39. See also Buszko, *Galicja 1859–1914*, R. Kann and Z. David, *The peoples of the eastern Habsburg lands, 1526–1918* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1984); H. Wereszycki, *Historia Polityczna Polski 1864–1918* (Wroctaw, Ossolineum, 1990).
- <sup>44</sup> J. Wittlin, *Sól Ziemi* (Warsaw, PWN, 1995), p. 42.
- <sup>45</sup> J. Chlebowczyk, *Procesy narodotworcze we wschodniej Europie srodkowej w dobie kapitalizmu* (Warsaw, PWN, 1975).
- <sup>46</sup> B. Schulz, *Z listow odnalezionych* (Warsaw, Chimera, 1993).
- <sup>47</sup> Wiegandt, *Austria Felix czyli o Micie Galicji w Polskiej Prozie Wspolczesnej*, p. 39.
- <sup>48</sup> The citation is from Kundera, 'The tragedy of Central Europe'; see also Magris, *Il mito absburgico nella letteratura austriaca moderna and danubio*; Le Rider, *Mitteleuropa*. On the role of the Jewish cultural and intellectual elite in fin-de-siècle Vienna, see C. Schorske, *Fin de siecle Vienna: politics and culture* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981); A. Janik and S. Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1973) as well as the volume (drawing on the exhibition of the same name) *Le vie del mondo: Berlino, Budapest, Praga, Vienna e Trieste: intellettuali ebrei e cultura europea dal 1880 al 1930* (Milan, Electa, 1998).
- <sup>49</sup> P. Magocsi, *Historical atlas of East Central Europe* (Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1993), p. 107.
- <sup>50</sup> See M. Rozenblit, 'The Jews of the Dual Monarchy', *Austrian history yearbook* **23** (1992), pp. 160–80, and A. Wandruszka and P. Urbanitsch, eds, *Die Volker des Reiches* (Vienna, 1980).
- <sup>51</sup> See Le Rider, *Mitteleuropa*. The Shomer Israel movement, founded in Lvov in 1867, was the first registered Jewish political organization in Austria: see P. Wrobel, 'The Jews of Galicja under Austrian-Polish rule, 1869–1918', *Austrian history yearbook* **25** (1994), p. 115. The opposition between a 'good' Austria and a 'barbaric' Russia formed a common theme in Galician Jewish prose, as did the paternal figure of the benevolent Franz Josef who 'watched over' Galicja's Jewry. As J. Strykowski noted in his autobiographical novel *Austeria* (Warsaw, PWN, 1966), p. 45: 'This is Austria, and not Chisinau [the site of a horrifying pogrom in 1903, dictated by Nicholas II]. And thank God, such things will never happen here as long as the Emperor looks over us. There isn't a Jew who does not wish him long life and health. And the Rabbis pray for him, so that his interests are prosperous, and that all his family live long as well. The poor Empress . . . well, there is no Empress. All his army, his police, his ministers, everyone who serves him. Pity only that he's not a Jew.'

- <sup>52</sup> For an overview of the Galician Jewish experience in late Habsburg Austria, see L. Prager, 'Galicysko-żydowska historia w zwierniadle trzech biografii: Mordechaj Gebirtig, Ignacy Schipper i Dow Saddan', in J. Chłopecki and H. Madurowicz-Urbanska, eds, *Galicja i jej Dziedzictwo*, **II** (Rzeszów, WSP, 1995) and Wróbel, 'The Jews of Galicja under Austrian-Polish Rule, 1869–1918'.
- <sup>53</sup> T. Konwicki, *The Polish complex* (London, Penguin, 1982), p. 100.
- <sup>54</sup> W. Odojewski, *Zasypte wszystko, zawieje . . .* (Warsaw, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1995), p. 335.
- <sup>55</sup> G. Stourzh, 'The multinational empire revisited: reflections on late imperial Austria', *Austrian history yearbook* **22** (1991), p. 18.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19. It is also important to note that, previously, imperial authorities considered nationality not 'an attribute of individuals but of communities' – on this point see Hobsbawm, *Nations and nationalism since 1780*, p. 97.
- <sup>57</sup> Le Rider, *Mittleuropa*; J. Roth, *Ebrei erranti* (Milan, Adelphi, 1985).
- <sup>58</sup> Stourzh, 'The multinational empire revisited'.
- <sup>59</sup> The venerable Habsburg census would begin to include a linguistic questionnaire only in 1880, and it is language which would serve as the criterion of 'national belonging': according to the 1880 census, Poles made up 51% of the Galician population, while Ukrainians/Ruthenians accounted for 43%. As Wereszycki (*Historia Polityczna Polski 1864–1918*, p. 141) notes, however, the 'Polish' figure included the bulk of Galicja's significant Jewish population who, for the purposes of the census (in which nationality was determined by language – Polish, German or Ukrainian) identified as 'Poles'.
- <sup>60</sup> Hobsbawm, *Nations and nationalism since 1780*, p. 7; K. Renner, *Staat und Nation* (1899), cited in Hobsbawm.
- <sup>61</sup> For more on the concept of the 'purification of space', see D. Sibley, *Geographies of exclusion: society and difference in the West* (London, Routledge, 1995).
- <sup>62</sup> See C. Raffestin, D. Lopreno and Y. Pasteur, *Géopolitique et histoire* (Lausanne, Payot, 1995); for a thorough discussion of the Nazi project for a new ordering of the spaces of the East, see D. Dwork and R.J. van Pelt's excellent work *Auschwitz: 1270 to the present* (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1996).
- <sup>63</sup> B. Kordan, 'Making borders stick: population transfer and resettlement in the trans-Curzon territories, 1944–1949', *International migration review* **31** (1997), pp. 704–20.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>65</sup> Magocsi, *Historical atlas of East Central Europe*, p. 164.
- <sup>66</sup> Kordan, 'Making borders stick'. See also the detailed discussion of these events in Bialasiewicz and O'Loughlin, 'Re-ordering Europe's eastern frontier'.
- <sup>67</sup> M. Czuma and L. Mazan, *Austriackie Gadanie czyli Encyklopedia Galicyjska* (Kraków, Anabasis, 1998), pp. 239, 262.
- <sup>68</sup> 'Fit for imperial ministers', as advertisements for the Hawelka restaurant in Kraków's main square announce.
- <sup>69</sup> Among all the officially registered local non-governmental organizations in the 'Galician' territories in 1997, over 100 incorporated the name into their title; one example is the *Stowarzyszenie Agroturystyczne Galicyjskie Gospodarstwo Goscinne* (the Agrotourism Association of Galician Farmers), seeking to promote a 'unique Galician tourist experience'.
- <sup>70</sup> Including the Huta Im. T. Sendzimira steel mill, a principal supporter of the aforementioned *Encyklopedia Galicyjska* that advertises in its pages as 'building progress and civilisation from iron and steel – as in the good old days'. It should be noted, however, that the steel mill, located in the socialist new town of Nowa Huta on the outskirts of Kraków, had long been the symbol first of communist-era industrial development – and later of the Solidarity opposition's struggles

- against the regime. Its resignification as a Galician icon is thus particularly curious.
- <sup>71</sup> J. Chłopecki and H. Madurowicz-Urbanska, eds, *Galicia i jej Dziedzictwo* 8 vols, (Rzeszów, WSP, 1994–6).
- <sup>72</sup> K. Sowa, 'Słowo wstępne', in J. Chłopecki and H. Madurowicz-Urbanska, eds, *Galicia i jej Dziedzictwo*, I (Rzeszów, WSP, 1994), p. 6.
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* See also Wiegandt, *Austria Felix czyli o Micie Galicji w Polskiej Prozie Współczesnej*, and J. Wyrozumski, 'Przedmowa', in Chłopecki and Madurowicz-Urbanska, *Galicia i jej Dziedzictwo*, I.
- <sup>74</sup> M. Keith and S. Pile, 'Introduction part 2: the place of politics', in Keith and Pile, *Place and the politics of identity* (London, Routledge, 1993).
- <sup>75</sup> A. Paasi, *Territories, boundaries and consciousness: the changing geographies of the Finnish–Russian border* (London, Wiley, 1996), p. 35.
- <sup>76</sup> Paasi, 'The institutionalisation of regions: a theoretical framework for understanding the emergence of regions and the constitution of regional identity', and *Territories, boundaries and consciousness*.
- <sup>77</sup> D. Cosgrove and M. Domosh, 'Author and authority: writing the new cultural geography', In J. Duncan and D. Ley, eds, *Place/culture/representation* (London, Routledge, 1993).
- <sup>78</sup> Kwasniewski, leader of the post-communist Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), re-elected as president again in 2000, received essentially no electoral support in the territories of the former Galicia.
- <sup>79</sup> Cited in B. Jalowiecki, 'Przestrzeń historyczna, regionalizm, regionalizacja', in B. Jalowiecki, ed., *Oblicza Polskich Regionów* (Warsaw, Europejski Instytut Rozwoju Regionalnego i Lokalnego, 1996), p. 47.
- <sup>80</sup> Comments cited in R. Szul, 'Galicia: teatr czy rzeczywistość?', in Jalowiecki, *Oblicza Polskich Regionów*, p. 234.
- <sup>81</sup> A number of associations active in promoting dialogue and exchanges with the lands of eastern Galicia (now western Ukraine) operate in Kraków, from the *Fundacja Sv. Włodzimierza Cbrzciciela Rusi Kijowskiej*, which promotes Ukrainian culture in Poland and publishes an almanac entitled *Between neighbours* under the auspices of the Jagiellonian University, to the *Związek Wysiedlonych*, which acts to disseminate historical documents and raise awareness about the post-Second World War resettlement activities on both sides of the border and organizes exchanges and trips for those resettled and their families to 'home places' now in the Ukraine.
- <sup>82</sup> The notion comes from N. Smith, 'Geography, difference, and the politics of scale', in J. Doherty, E. Graham and M. Malek, eds, *Postmodernism and the social sciences* (London, Macmillan, 1992).
- <sup>83</sup> The 'reality' of these new economic territorialities has been canonized by none other than Friedrich Ratzel's home institution, the Institut für Landerkunde in Leipzig, which in 1998 published an economic geography of the 'Mitteleuropean West–East axis: Saxony, Silesia, Galicia', detailing the economic structure and makeup of each of these 'regional units', elaborating the emergent linkages between them, along a stipulated 'West–East axis' ordering the post-1989 Mitteleuropean space. The Galician 'region', following the Institute's geography, comprises both its now-Polish territories as well as those portions of the ex-Habsburg province lying across the Ukrainian border.
- <sup>84</sup> On the increasingly prohibitive border regimes, see K. Wolczuk, 'Polish–Ukrainian borderlands and nation-states', paper presented at a seminar on 'Fuzzy statehood', Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 8 Dec. 2000, and M. Kisielowska-Lipman, 'Polish eastern borderlands in turmoil?', presented at the same seminar.

- <sup>85</sup> For an elaboration of this distinction, see Paasi, 'The institutionalisation of regions and Territories, boundaries and consciousness.
- <sup>86</sup> See G. Dematteis, *Le metafore della terra* (Milan, Feltrinelli, 1985). Dematteis also stresses, however, that all such representations are necessarily *selective*: codifying collective decisions regarding what it is that the region 'is' – both to the regional population itself and to the external world (although these two do not necessarily coincide, and discordant visions of the region may – and often do – exist).
- <sup>87</sup> See the discussion in J. Habermas, 'Why Europe needs a constitution', *New Left review* **11** (2001), pp. 5–26.
- <sup>88</sup> Le Rider, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 54.