

## CONSTRUCTING NATIONALITIES IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE

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Edited by Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit

# CONSTRUCTING NATIONALITIES IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE



*Edited by*

Pieter M. Judson

*and*

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***Berghahn Books***

NEW YORK • OXFORD

Published in 2005 by  
**Berghahn Books**

www.berghahnbooks.com

© 2005, 2006, 2009 Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit

First paperback edition published in 2005, Reprinted in 2009  
Hardback reprinted in 2006

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**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe / Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L.  
Rozenblit, editors.

p. cm. — (Austrian and Habsburg studies ; 6)

ISBN 978-1-57181-175-2 (alk. paper : hbk) -- 978-1-57181-176-9 (alk. paper : pbk)

1. Nationalism—Europe, Central—History. 2. Europe, Central—Politics and  
government—19th century. 3. Europe, Central—Politics and government—20th  
century. I. Judson, Pieter M. II. Rozenblit, Marsha L., 1950– III. Series.

DAW1048.C66 2004

943'.0009'034—dc22

2004056045

**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

A catalogue record for this book is available from  
the British Library.

Printed on acid-free paper

*For our Teacher*

**ISTVÁN DEÁK**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The editors would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who made this volume possible. First of all we express our appreciation to the authors for their insightful articles. Their efforts have resulted in a volume of essays that makes a significant contribution to understanding how nationalities constructed themselves in East Central Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We thank Jason Kneas and Julia Skory of the University of Maryland Geography Department for the excellent quality maps they produced for this volume, and we thank Theresa Brown of the Swarthmore College Department of History for her help with the editing.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Professor Gary Cohen, Director of the Center for Austrian Studies at the University of Minnesota, for his scholarly work on these issues, work that called into question the nature of national identity in Central Europe long before it became fashionable; for his insightful comments, suggestions, and help to all of us over the years; and for his willingness to include this volume in this series in Austrian History sponsored by the CAS with Berghahn Books. We would also like to thank all the people at Berghahn Books who made this book a reality: to Marion Berghahn, who warmly supported this project, and to Maria Reyes who saw the volume through production.

Finally we want to thank our teacher, István Deák. The breadth of his scholarly interests, the high standards that his scholarly inquiry set for historians in the field, his concern for good and clear writing, and his generous intellectual support makes him the model academic historian. In great admiration, we dedicate this book to him.

P.M.J. and M.L.R.  
April 2004

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## PREFACE



*Gary B. Cohen*

The essays in this volume originated in papers delivered at a symposium of extraordinary interest held at Columbia University in March 2000, entitled “Dilemmas of East Central Europe: Nationalism, Dictatorship, and the Search for Identity.” The Harriman Institute and The Department of History of Columbia University together with the Center for Austrian Studies at the University of Minnesota sponsored this conference, which brought together a gifted group of scholars who are opening new vistas of modern Central and East-Central European history. Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit organized the symposium, and they made the subsequent selection of papers for this volume, offering suggestions for revisions, and editing the final versions that appear here.

The high quality and interest of the Columbia University symposium in March 2000 was a tribute to the Seth Low Professor of History at Columbia, István Deák, who taught all the presenters of papers, either as undergraduate or graduate students. The range and originality of their work testifies not only to the quality of the students drawn to Central and East Central European studies at Columbia in the last several decades but also to the stimulus, inspiration, and scholarly discipline which Professor Deák has provided during his long career in seminars, lecture courses, and direction of individual research. Professor Deák has been an extraordinary model and guide both to his students at Columbia and to many scholars elsewhere.

All the essays here, in various ways, address the development of popular nationalist loyalties, identities, and politics in Central and East-Central Europe since the eighteenth century. They bear witness to the great changes in historical research on nationalism and popular identities that have taken place in the last two or three decades. Previously, historians tended to study European national identities as the natural and inevitable outgrowth of longstanding popular cultural factors, largely accepting at face value nationalists’ claims about the origins of their group identities. In recent years, though, scholars have come to study national

loyalties as fundamentally dynamic phenomena that individuals and groups construct under specific historical circumstances, loyalties that can be transformed or exchanged or may be held in ambiguous relationships together with other allegiances. The essays in this volume demonstrate richly the imagination and creativity which historians have brought to bear in developing these new studies of the development of modern nationalist loyalties and solidarities.

Much the same imagination and creativity, combined with a healthy skepticism for much of the traditional conventional wisdom in Central and East Central European historiography, has characterized the scholarly work as well as the teaching of István Deák. His interests have ranged widely during the course of his long career as an historian. His first book, based on his doctoral dissertation, was *Weimar Germany's Left-Wing Intellectuals: A Political History of the Weltbühne and Its Circle* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968). Most recently, he has written on war crimes trials and processes in the twentieth century. Research and teaching on Habsburg Central Europe, however, has occupied most of Professor Deák's career. Perhaps the most salient quality of his work in this field has been the independence of his perspective—a profoundly thoughtful and informed skepticism that has given him the ability to raise critically important questions which widely held master narratives have excluded. This skepticism has endowed his writings with a distinctive freshness of outlook.

Prof. Deák's independence of view and healthy skepticism were apparent as early as 1967 at the famous conference on the Austro-Hungarian Compromise and its consequences held in Bloomington, Indiana. At that meeting, Deák presented a comment for a panel on the dominant nationalities of the Monarchy as integrating and disintegrating factors in the polity. He essentially threw the standard conceptualization of the critical nationality conflicts in the political history of the Monarchy back in the faces of the panelists, suggesting that,

... the subject of this debate is neither justified nor valid.... I would argue that there were no dominant nationalities in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. There were only dominant classes, estates, institutions, interest groups, and professions.

Conventional historiography was certainly sensitive to social differences and conflicts in the lands of the old Monarchy, but most older historians essentialized ethnic and national differences and let them cover over other factors.

In István Deák's writings on nineteenth century Austria and Hungary which have followed since 1967, he has typically presented fresh, probing perspectives, which have broken through conventional wisdom and long-held nationalist mythologies. This was clearly apparent in his book *The Lawful Revolution: Louis Kossuth and the Hungarians, 1848–1849* (New York, 1979), still one of the very finest accounts in any language of the political career of Louis Kossuth and the revolution and warfare of 1848–49 in Hungary.

Professor Deák's other great book on Austro-Hungarian history, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (New York and Oxford, 1990), was a bold foray in social and administrative his-

tory. In this study, he took an unfashionable path in studying one of the major institutions of the Habsburg state. In the army officer corps, he examined one of the most important institutions that worked for a broader unity and engendered some real Habsburg state loyalty and identity. In the process, he also helped remind us that there were important state institutions and administrative structures during the last decades of the Monarchy that continued to function better than many observers would allow and that left important legacies to the successor states. That so many of Prof. Deák's students, as represented in this volume, are doing similarly pathbreaking work represents perhaps the strongest evidence of his inspiration and continuing legacy. I am deeply grateful to the editors, Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit, and to Marion Berghahn and her colleagues at Berghahn Books for bringing this volume to publication.

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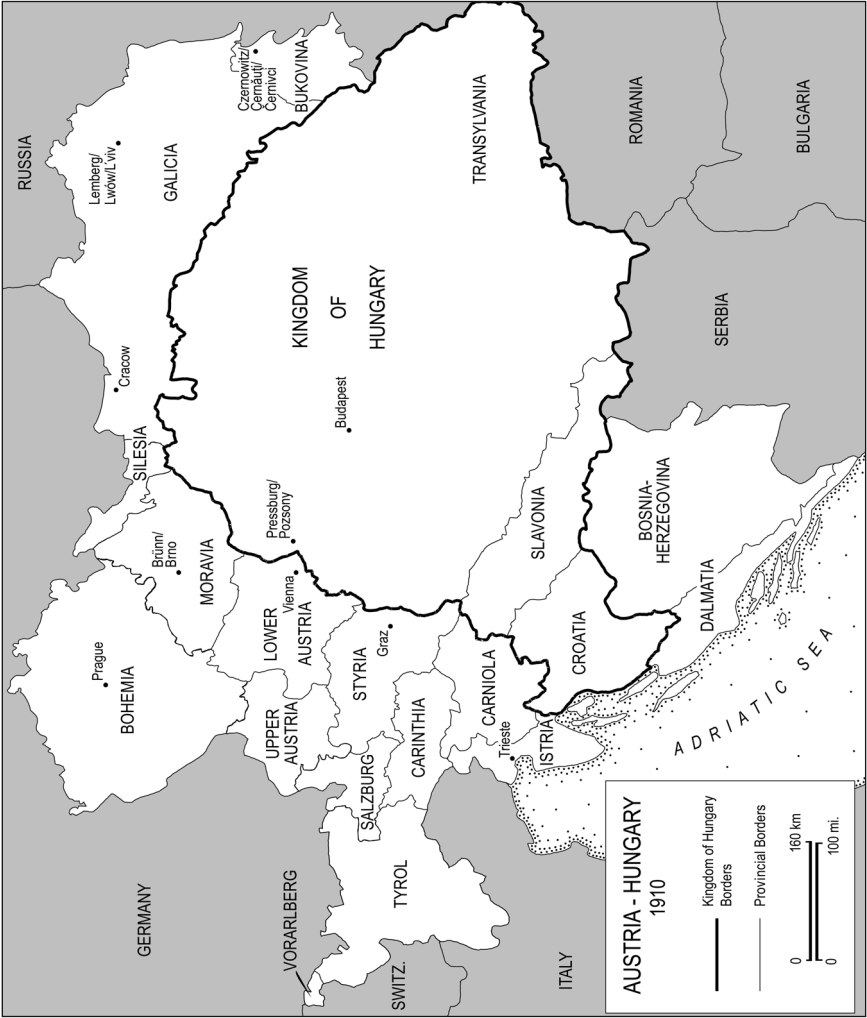
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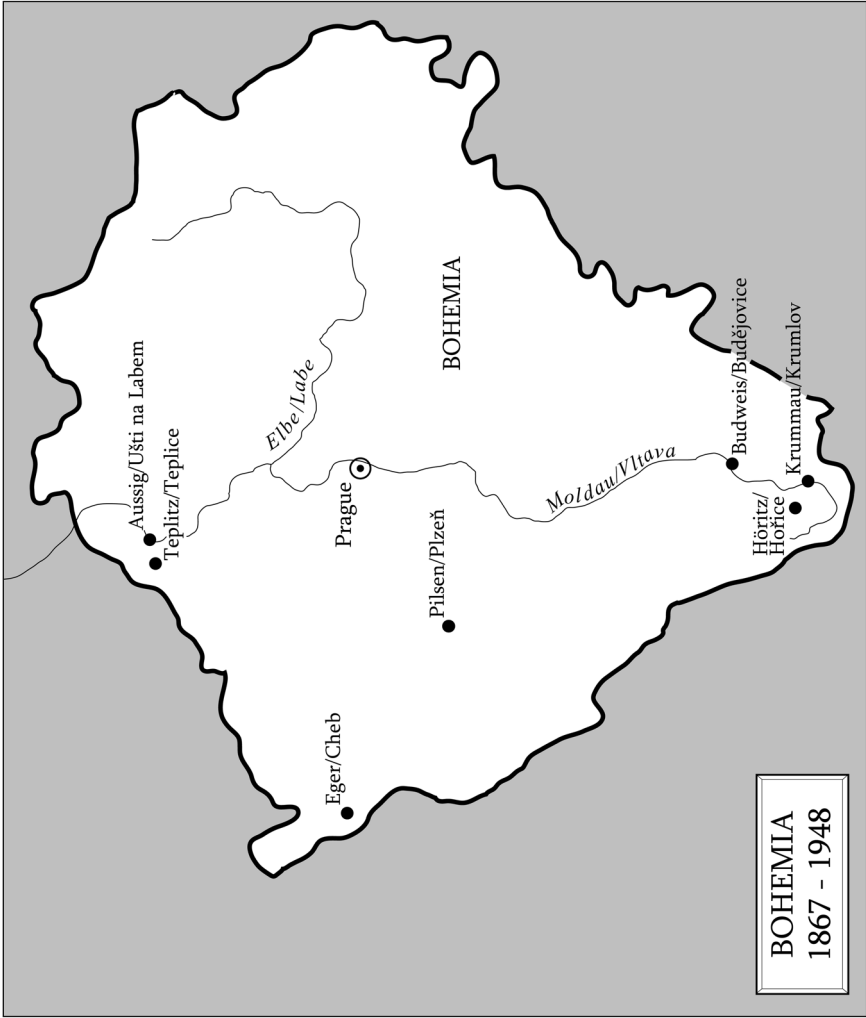
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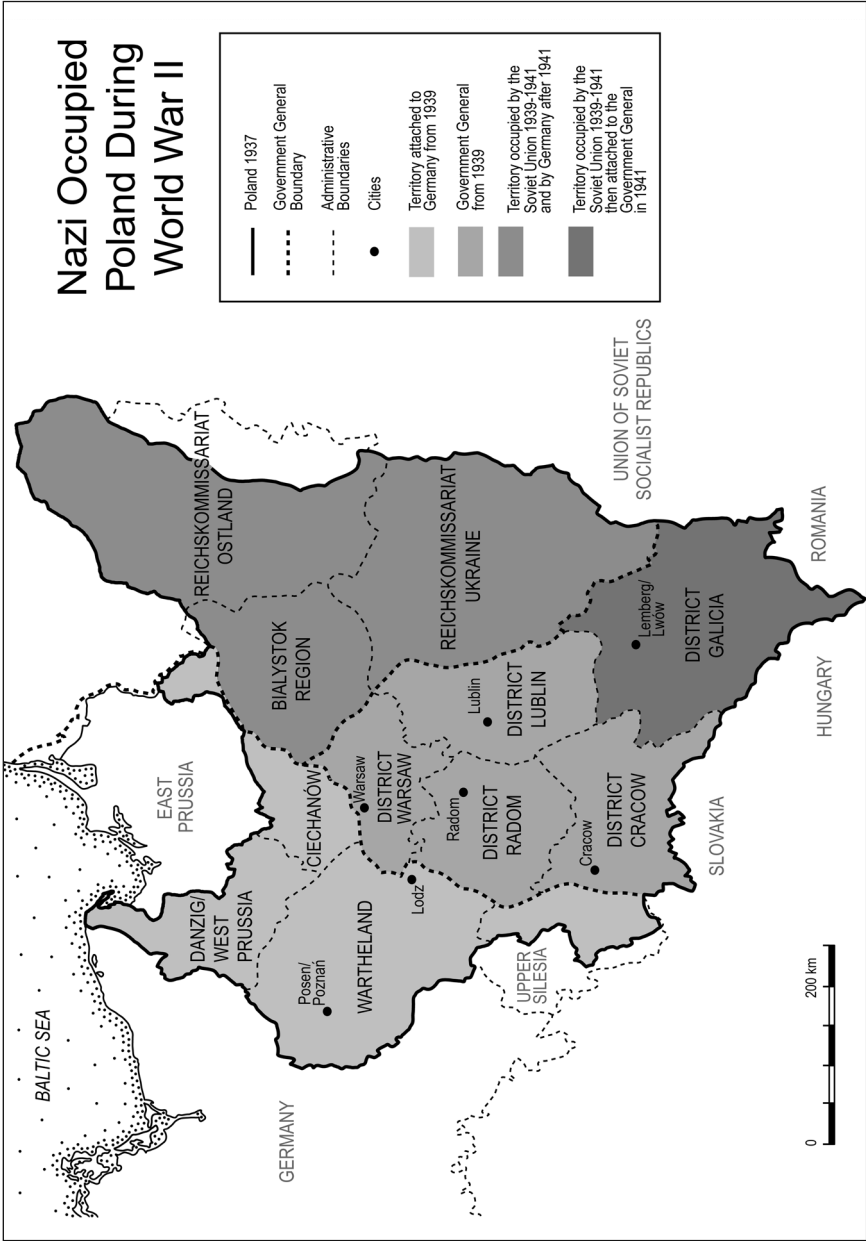
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# CONSTRUCTING NATIONALITIES IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE

## Introduction



*Pieter M. Judson*

Only a century separates us from the largely nonnational world that was Habsburg Central Europe, yet today it is almost impossible to imagine that world. So completely has the idea of nation come to dominate our ways of understanding modern society that it requires a superhuman effort on the part of scholars, politicians, activists, or informed observers to imagine a world not shaped by the overpowering categories of the nation-state and its global system. Despite—or perhaps because of—decades of scholarship, nationalism’s origins are almost always debated in terms that naturalize the prior existence of nationalism’s own object—the nation. The current popularity of constructivist explanations that acknowledge the importance of historical contingency and that gesture toward the “invention” of nations has not diminished the power of nationalist teleologies to shape histories of nationalism. The persistence of the nation as the prime mover in the telling of its own history is hardly surprising, and the historian of nationalism faces the ongoing challenge of writing critically about a phenomenon whose imagined origins only confirm the apparent naturalness of its being.<sup>1</sup>

The contributors to this volume have taken up the challenge to write about nationalism without accepting the historical necessity either of nations or of the nation-state. Their essays recapture the contours of a nonnationalized world, as they examine why and how this world produced nationalist ideologies and movements. The authors emphasize both the contingency and diversity of specific forms of national identity in order to avoid relying on ahistorical presumptions of eternal identities. More importantly, they explore the ways in which those new beliefs about nation coexisted with other traditional forms of self-identification, forms whose social power was often far more compelling than that of nationalism.

The setting for these essays is Habsburg Central Europe; that is, those territories in Central Europe that until 1918 formed a part of, or had been influenced by their proximity to, the Habsburg dynastic holdings. This region offers the unique opportunity to investigate the rise of nationalism in territories and among populations that for the most part were not claimed by self-styled nation states until after 1918, much later than in much of the rest of Europe. Although several groups within the Empire in the nineteenth century claimed to have formed “nations” in both a traditional and modern sense of the term, the Habsburg state did not itself attempt a nationalization of its peoples in the ways that the self-proclaimed French, Italian, or German nation states had. At least until 1867 the Habsburg state functioned as a collectivity where patriotism or loyalty to the dynasty rather than an ideology of shared *nation-ness* bound subjects and later citizens to the greater polity. After 1867 this tradition lived on in the Austrian half of the Monarchy, known as Cisleithania, while the Kingdom of Hungary, or Transleithania, adopted the kind of aggressive nationalizing policies that characterized most other European states.

In the past decades, social scientists have increasingly interrogated the claims for fundamental *nation-ness* made for their citizens by the governments of France, Italy, or the German Empire. Eugen Weber’s classic *Peasants into Frenchmen* famously theorized the nineteenth-century French state’s need to create a French nation out of diverse peoples characterized by different languages, customs, and traditions who happened to live within the borders of France. Schools, increased transportation and trade, as well as military service all helped to create a larger sense of common French identity among these regional populations. Similarly, recent work on the notion of *Heimat* and on regionalism in the German Empire reveals that to a large degree, nationalism served as a critical instrument for establishing state hegemony over local society after the official unification of 1871. And what historian of nationalism is unfamiliar with the oft-quoted words of Massimo d’Azeglio, who admonished his colleagues in the first Italian Parliament: “Gentlemen, we have made Italy: now we must make Italians”? In each of these examples, historians tended to elide the work of *nation* building with the particular requirements of modern *state* building. The French state needed an educated citizenry, and a loyal army; the German and Italian states sought to forge a centrally unified society from a politically, economically, and socially fragmented Central Europe.<sup>2</sup>

The Cisleithanian half of the Habsburg Monarchy presents us with a powerful example of modern state building not linked to nation building. In the 1860s Austrian governments legislated a system of secular education that mandated eight years of schooling for Austria’s children. They built thousands of new schools, founding institutions to train the teachers who staffed them, men and women who themselves often brought their modernizing and their nationalist convictions to every corner of rural Austria. At the same time, the Cisleithanian state created a new system of administration that included a strong dose of communal self-rule for rural and urban communities of all sizes.<sup>3</sup> An explosion of new

roadways, canals, railway lines, and communications networks brought several traditionally more isolated regions into contact with the commercial and political centers of the Monarchy. Service in the military, as Michael Silber so aptly shows, had become itself an important mark of modern citizenship in Austria well before the French Revolution.<sup>4</sup> It is less clear whether the dynastic state and its ideologists worked to any significant degree to popularize forms of patriotic self-identification. This question gained retrospective relevance, after the rise of a mass politics organized around competing nationalist demands appeared to have taken over the workings of the Imperial Parliament in Vienna and many of the provincial diets in the 1880s. Recently, scholars including Daniel Unowsky have studied several less obvious ways in which the Habsburg state engaged in precisely this kind of ideological work, either by offering a patriotic alternative to nationalism, or by attempting to fold nationalist loyalties into a larger imperial one.<sup>5</sup>

Clearly, what made Cisleithania different is that any impetus towards the nationalization of society there was produced by social forces that rarely harmonized with the demands of this modernizing, centralizing state. Constitutional guarantees of the rights of language use in education, administration, and provincial government became the basis for politicians of all kinds to demand reform, and build interested local constituencies. In an era of growing mass politics that culminated in universal manhood suffrage for the Imperial Parliament in 1907, nationalist politicians attempted to mobilize ever-greater numbers into their movements. And by the 1890s, thanks to political agitation and to several key decisions of Austria's Supreme and Chief Administrative courts, language use in every aspect of public life had indeed become a fertile ground for reform politics.<sup>6</sup> It was nationalist movements "from below" that created nationalized populations, both by mobilizing people into politics dominated by nation, and by forcing unwilling governments to recognize nations as real corporate entities. While the state tried to avoid giving rights specifically to "nations," preferring to recognize the rights of "language groups," nationalist activists made sure that in public debate over issues such as the Imperial census results, linguistic issues were understood as national ones.

In order to contain the emerging politicization of largely linguistic differences within society, the state became increasingly multinational in character, as opposed simply to being dynastic in character. This is most apparent in the provincial and local compromise agreements fostered by the state in Bukovina, Galicia, Moravia, and the city of Budweis, which were meant to diffuse the political explosiveness of nationalist conflict. The best known of these, the Moravian Compromise of 1905, tried to divide up the political institutions, the school system, and local administration according to nationality. Under the new laws, for example, Czechs would elect their own candidates to a special Czech curia in the diet. Their candidates would no longer run against German candidates. Yet such agreements produced several unintended consequences that increased the pace of nationalization rather than slowing it. By compelling people to register themselves

as either Czech or German, the Compromise law demanded that the Moravians become national, even if their own self-identification was organized around non-national principles such as “Moravian,” “Habsburg,” “Iglauer,” or “Catholic.” As Jeremy King has compellingly argued, by 1914, “‘Nations’ started becoming constituent members of Cisleithania, recognized by the law and proportionally equal before it in the exercise of significant political rights.” Crucially, it was the nationalist movements themselves that had forced an unwilling Cisleithanian state to nationalize many of its administrative and institutional structures. “In a trend with few European parallels,” writes King, “the state began to become multinational.”<sup>7</sup>

Clearly several elements of modernity had helped to produce the nationalist movements, including the rise of literacy, constitutional rule, infrastructural improvements, and mass politics. Nevertheless, of the many elements this nineteenth-century state might have required to help it carry out an ambitious policy of centralist modernization, nationalism among its citizens was certainly not one of them. At most, the Habsburg state depended on a modern version of the kind of dynastic patriotism that had traditionally cemented the relationship between ruler and ruled.

The century between the revolutions of 1848 and the population transfers (or “national cleansing”) of the mid-twentieth century saw the nationalization of culturally complex, multilingual societies throughout Europe. Cultural diversity and multilingualism did not necessarily disappear from the scene during this period, as we know from nationalists’ own frequent complaints about their tenacity. Nevertheless, public representations of those phenomena almost certainly vanished from the public eye. How had this happened? How did nationalist discourses, tropes, identities, visions, come to occupy the available ideological space in the public sphere? The “fact” of nationalization has variously been explained in terms of theories of modernization, state building, and nation building, each of which treats the process of nationalization as something inexorable, a necessary component to a society’s “achievement” of modernity. Social scientists agree that several kinds of contingent factors may shape these larger developments, yet their overall structural approaches have made them far less attentive to the “hard work” (ideological, political, and social) that nationalism required of its local proponents in order to succeed. Ultimately, only the combined efforts of particular individuals and groups working at every level of society could define and produce so-called national communities in Habsburg Central Europe.

Analyzing the hard work of the nationalists requires paying serious attention to the different local and regional contexts in which nationalist movements developed, something also missing in broader structural approaches. After all, activists shaped their strategies to make opportunistic use of every available local political and cultural space in which they might make their arguments. Too often, social scientists have treated categories such as language use or ethnicity as broad, unchanging, ahistoric facts, without seeing that the very processes of nationalization, combined with the opportunities offered by specific local political



structures, actually created those “facts.” Czech activists, for example, might not have defined their nation so fully around the issue of language use and focused their efforts so entirely on achieving linguistic rights, had not the constitutional guarantees in the 1867 constitution created a political opportunity for them. German nationalists in the Tyrol, for example, defined their particularly German identity in terms of their Catholic faith, their loyalty to the Empire, and the myth of Andreas Hofer’s opposition to foreign (French) invasion during the Napoleonic Wars. This understanding of what it meant to be German diverged sharply from that of Styrian German nationalists who celebrated their local identity in terms of their independence from the Catholic clergy. Similarly, Slovene-speaking liberals in the 1860s saw their best hope in an alliance with German Liberalism and German culture, while Slovene conservatives attacked the anticlericalism of this progressive conceptualization of nation.<sup>8</sup> In each of these cases the idea of “nation” gained some resonance only thanks to its articulation with particular concerns and values that characterized regional social life.

If we move away from the public realm of politics to examine the behavior of peasants or workers who lived in linguistically mixed regions, what evidence we have often points to the irrelevance of language use in constituting social identities. We rarely hear the voices of those who lived easily between so-called nations, yet their experience was hardly rare. Nationalists might demand education in the national language, often complaining about the denationalization of children sent to a school of a language other than their own. Parents in some rural communities of Bohemia and Moravia, however, felt differently. They regularly sent their children to neighboring villages (the so-called *Kindertausch*) as a way to ensure that they would learn a second language, a useful skill in a multilingual community! Slovene-speaking parents in Southern Styria often demanded German classes for their children, much to the dismay of Slovene nationalists, while German-speakers in the region intermarried and socialized easily with their Slovene neighbors, despite the hysterical warnings of German nationalists. Even after 1900, Czech nationalists in Prague found it necessary to threaten Czech-speaking parents with boycott by the larger community if they continued to send their children to the few remaining German-language schools. In Moravia after 1905, nationalists gained the right to reclaim children from the “wrong” school if they could prove that such children were not fluent in the language of instruction. Census results in several rural regions of the Monarchy demonstrate that national “side switching” took place regularly. None of these issues would have come before the courts, none of them would have exercised nationalist activists had the public truly been nationalized.<sup>9</sup>

Although nationalists in Cisleithania may have often challenged the constituted authorities, they made excellent use of the legal, ideological, and institutional tools that those self-same and unwitting authorities made available to them in order to pursue the nationalization of local populations. Their use of such legal strategies forced them to downplay and later to reject the very existence of those “in-between” people who might use more than one language, or

who chose not to align themselves with one nation or another. Their purpose was, of course, to coerce unwilling neighbors into the national community, and this too would produce devastating effects in the twentieth century.

The essays in this volume make us aware just how complex, multidimensional, contradictory, and often unsuccessful, the nationalization process in Habsburg Central Europe could be. The authors document attempts and failures by nationalist politicians, organizations, and activists to teach Central Europeans a sense of national self-identification. At the same time, the authors in this volume demonstrate some limits to the effects of nationalist activism. Movements, activists, and politicians by themselves could never realize the kind of full nationalization of society they envisioned, for several reasons. As many of these essays suggest, competing constructions of the nation within movements and larger societies made it impossible to achieve broad consensus on just what the nation was, who constituted it, and what characterized it. In the century following 1848, nationalist activists within the same nation often promoted competing visions, posing many compelling alternative outcomes that were highly conceivable at the time, but were foreclosed by later accidents of history. Behind their repeated calls for national unity, rival factions *within* Czech, German, Italian, Polish, Slovene, Italian, and Ukrainian movements in Cisleithania continuously raised the stakes against each other, just as radical political commitment in Hungary was understood increasingly in terms of nationalist radicalism. The Young Czechs, for example, defeated the old Czechs decisively in the parliamentary elections of 1891 by making a virtue of their greater nationalist vigor. By the first decade of the twentieth century, however, they found themselves outflanked on this very issue by the even more nationally radical Czech National Socialists.<sup>10</sup> In Hungary, meanwhile, nationalist radicalism often stood in for a socially oriented populism, and politicians seeking to dethrone the liberal Hungarian political elite depicted themselves as more strongly committed to the nation.

Equally problematic to nationalists was their apparent inability to reach every part of the nation with their message. To remedy the apparent apathy among those who somehow remained impervious to their message, nationalists increasingly demanded that individuals make the nation the basis for decisions about all kinds of matters heretofore considered private—marriage, child rearing, and consumption habits. The nation was no longer simply a matter of politics and public life. Or rather, public life was now understood to extend into the family—what nineteenth-century liberal theorists had formerly considered to be a private sphere.<sup>11</sup> On balance, however, society could only disappoint those revolutionary radicals who dreamed of a nationalist paradise devoid of social relations that enabled groups to mix with each other, and characterized forever by the absence of the intrusive “Other.” The essays here remind us that despite the considerable influence nationalist movements exercised over the press or legislative debate, the realization of their most extreme fantasies of national purity could only be attempted using the dictatorial state powers characteristic of twentieth-century authoritarian regimes.

This volume focuses in particular on the nexus between political activism and ideological nationalization. The spaces that political structures made available to activists often defined the particular parameters of their activism, but activists' creative uses of such spaces were often truly breathtaking in their scope and ambition, to the point that even the a-national Cisleithanian state came to accept several of the nationalists' assumptions. The volume opens with Michael Silber's examination of an eighteenth-century debate over the relationship between particular cultural forms of self-identification, in this case Jewish identity, and the questions of state citizenship. Silber's essay on Jewish soldiers and the new requirements of citizenship imposed by Joseph II demonstrates the lengths to which the modernizing Austrian state would go to impose a new concept of equal citizenship on its diverse peoples, well before the revolutionary French Republic's *levée en masse*. Silber illustrates the ways in which a citizenship of equivalence swiftly became normalized in the 1780s, at least in the eyes of the state. Once the Emperor had determined he would extend military service to his Jewish subjects, he and his advisers quickly found themselves forced to remove other barriers to "interchangeability," barriers that no longer could be justified. If Jews were to serve in the military, then they must also be eligible for advancement. If Christians were to serve under Jewish officers in some cases, then the legalized privilege of the Christian in civil society must be ended. Without the acceptance of such notions of the fundamental interchangeability of citizens, the idea of nations can not take root. Silber suggests, however, that the modernizing regime's desire to forge a citizenship of "interchangeable individuals," such as that posited by Ernest Gellner for example, does not necessarily have to produce the modern idea of nationality, nor even the modern link between language or culture and nation. It might just as easily produce a state-based patriotism.<sup>12</sup>

Robert Nemes's piece examines the creation of early public political and national cultures in Central Europe, using the example of Hungary in 1848. Unlike their French counterparts, Central Europeans had little experience of mass political participation or activism before the mid-nineteenth century. During those first glorious March days in Buda-Pest, and indeed throughout the Empire, activists forged new institutions where they debated and hoped ultimately to influence public policy. Their preferred instrument for debating and spreading the new alternative forms of politics and self-identification, even in the era predating mass politics, was the traditional voluntary association. To this important location for a new kind of politics in 1848, Nemes adds another instrument of the emerging political culture, namely, the newly, more politically aggressive newspaper. Nemes analyzes the many ways that everyday practice contributed to the formation of new political cultures, from choice of dress, to forms of address, to physical gesture, to styles of rhetoric.

The greater availability of many of these forms of expression to a larger mass of people beyond the traditional political classes in Hungary also made these symbols into important popular elements of nationalist activism. In his analysis of the German Gymnastics Associations before 1871, Daniel McMillan too

demonstrates how in the absence of a political nation, German nationalists attempted to infuse all spheres of social life with their particular patriotic, nationalist, and political meanings. In both cases, the association became the preferred space within which the nation might be created, as well as the preferred instrument for its promotion and realization in society at large. Within the confines of the local club with its face-to-face relationships, the more abstract concept of nation could more easily be understood in terms of social commonalities. Here too, enlightenment concepts of the administrative equivalence of citizens were appropriated by civil society in the form of nationalism, and were promoted broadly from below. Whether club members engaged in gymnastics, debate, singing, or charity, they understood themselves to be equals when it came to their national commitment and activism. This is clear, for example, from the ideological differences that developed within the larger gymnastics movement analyzed by McMillan. He draws a distinction between those who understood the importance of gymnastics to the nation in biological terms, and those who conceived of its benefits in experiential and political terms. Speculating that the eventual victory of the former helped transform German nationalism by accomplishing its realignment with a politically conservative elite after 1871, McMillan nevertheless demonstrates that certain liberal beliefs about the relationship of the individual to authority were translated into the language of those who promoted a biological view. Liberal concepts about society and activism were thus not as far removed from a nationally conservative consensus as many historians may have believed.

McMillan's analysis of early debates about the character of national belonging (biological or experiential) alerts us to several important themes raised by the authors of the next essays. These reveal the fundamental diversity within nationalist activism in the late nineteenth century, as early associational efforts produced larger and more influential political and social movements. While the nation, as subject of debate or object of political activism, was by this point a recognizable presence in educated society, it clearly remained the property of social minorities who attempted, with varying degrees of success, to make it universal by nationalizing their compatriots. Many of these efforts were made possible only with the institutional reforms in the Habsburg Monarchy that began in 1848–49 and were taken up again in 1861. Nationalist movements made increasing use of the constitutional and legal tools the reformed system afforded them, despite [or because of!] the fact that the system's creators displayed very little interest in nations or nationalism. The very laws that created communal autonomy and those that legislated the equality of language use on a local and regional basis in schools and public services opened up potential spaces for popular political activism.<sup>13</sup> Czech nationalist activists in Cisleithania developed these opportunities immediately, followed later by Polish, German, Slovene, Italian, Croatian, and Ukrainian nationalist activists. Yet, as the essays here remind us, none of these movements in fact constituted an ideologically unified, coherent phenomenon, and none followed a clear developmental trajectory. None could agree internally on the precise defi-

nition of the nation, and none could easily mediate between promoting a broad nationalist agenda and integrating newly enfranchised groups into its ranks.

Controversies around self-definition were themselves rooted in the social conflicts created by a new mass politics, as increasingly varied social groups gained access to the political system. As several of the contributors show, nationalist organizations tried to contain the growing potential for disagreement within the nation, but often at a cost to their own political effectiveness. While several of the authors here document the numerical successes of nationalist movements, they also suggest the utter inability of nationalists to achieve the kind of universal relevance for their particular views. Nationalist movements often spent as much time fighting internal battles as they did fighting each other. Groups as varied as the nobility, the gentry, the Imperial bureaucracy, the urban middle classes, and the urban and rural *Mittelstand* jostled each other to assert particular formulations of the national interest, and thus to universalize their particular needs. As nationalism became the currency for most political debate in both Cisleithania and Transleithania, it served as an effective tool for anyone interested in scoring political points. Nationalism not only polarized political society, it also divided the very groups it claimed were united nations.

In his essay on the Bohemian nobility, Eagle Glassheim analyzes the ways that this traditionally influential social group reinvented itself—not without some difficulty—in order to maintain its privileged role in Bohemian, Cisleithanian, and later Czechoslovakian politics. Progressive reform of the electoral system and the rise of mass politics threatened to marginalize the nobility's formidable political influence at several levels of government. Glassheim charts the ways that the nobles, both individually and as a group, aligned themselves loosely with one nationalist party or another in Bohemia. The nobility fought to promote a particular kind of nationalist vision that would help it to maintain its independent privileged position in society, by securing its influence within the broad Czech and German nationalist coalitions. Ideally, this independent role would allow the nobility to maintain its traditionally close relationship to the Imperial dynasty by exercising a moderating influence on the occasionally radical excesses of Czech and German nationalists. At the same time, this vision attempted to justify the nobility's key independent position in Bohemian affairs in more modern ideological terms, rather than in terms of traditional feudal privilege. This noble activism created considerable potential for conflict within both the Czech and German nationalist movements, exacerbating tension between moderates and radicals. The latter elements asserted a vision of the nation far too socially egalitarian for the nobility, while the moderates in the nationalist movements increasingly came to value the nobility as a key ally.

The malleable nature of nationalist ideology and its potential service to very different kinds of political goals also informed the way local communities understood new symbols, cults, rituals, and celebrations organized around the idea of the nation. Pieter M. Judson examines the nationalist movements' discovery of leisure-time activities such as tourism around 1900, and their increasing spon-

sorship of local festivals, as potential instruments for promoting nationalist causes. As nationalist activists sought new and more effective strategies for nationalizing populations, they turned increasingly to the notionally private realm of consumption as a way of reaching more potential converts to nationalism. This form of activism went well beyond economic boycotts that demanded people do their shopping or their hiring among one nation or another. One German nationalist guide to the Trentino, for example, even demanded that nationally conscious tourists patronize German-owned establishments only, listing those hoteliers and restaurateurs whose German commitment was deemed acceptable.<sup>14</sup> Yet beyond the rhetoric, Czech or German nationalists who fostered tourism to the so-called language frontier at the turn of the century could not control the ways in which individual tourists actually experienced those regions. Nationalist pride was one thing, but German-speaking travelers to the South Tyrol (in the tradition of Goethe) often sought precisely to experience the exoticism of an Italian milieu. Similarly, Czech- or German-speaking travelers to the Bohemian Woods often came more for the fresh air and beautiful views than to contribute to the nationalist conflict in the region. Nor could nationalists control the ways in which local villagers themselves ultimately understood the significance of their own cultural performances for tourists. Nationalists might promote a nationalist tourism, but did it help to nationalize the locals, or did it simply earn them more money?

Nationalists found it just as difficult to control the meanings they hoped to attach to historically important individuals such as Jan Hus or Joseph II. In their essay, Cynthia Paces and Nancy M. Wingfield explore the multiple meanings attached to these figures by the Czech and German nationalist movements in the nineteenth century. In particular, the choice of Hus as national symbol caused considerable discord among Czech nationalists, between secular and more religiously Catholic Czechs. Such conflict could in turn create considerable division within a supposedly unified national society. After 1918, the more secular Czech nationalists who ruled the new Czechoslovakia tended to equate all public symbols of Catholicism with the old Empire, with its dynasty, and also with the concept of an alien German rule. They promoted a cult of Jan Hus precisely because of his historic challenges to the religious authority of Rome. For many devout Catholic Czechs (not to mention Slovaks), however, religious icons such as the Marian column in Prague or local statues of St. John Nepomuk held an important religious significance that bore no political connection to the old Empire or to German nationalism. In addition, Catholics tended to view Hus as a heretic. This conflict produced concerted battles among different groups of Czech nationalists over the use of public space both in Prague and in cities and towns throughout Bohemia.

This was particularly problematic, as Paces and Wingfield point out, after 1918 when the new self-styled Czechoslovak nation state determined to rid its public spaces of all symbols of what it considered to be an imperial or German past. It also set up severe clashes with its own German-speaking minority. This

latter group, while being technically citizens of the new state, was implicitly defined by such actions (toppling of statues) as an alien nation. The ongoing clashes over the symbolic uses of public space analyzed by Paces and Wingfield also suggest the degree of anxiety about their own identity that plagued the nationalist rulers of the successor states. They might present their new states to the world as modern and united nation-states, yet their use of force to nationalize public space reflects their continued use of discourses of national victimization long after the fall of the Empire. In the case of Czechoslovakia, such discourses would eventually help to produce the brutal policy that required the expulsion of as many national “Others” as possible after the Second World War.

Claire E. Nolte analyzes the difficulty of forging a real social political unity around as slippery a concept as national identity, or in her case, “Slav identity,” on an interregional, indeed on an international level. Her essay traces the attempts by Czech nationalists to use the growing *Sokol* gymnastic movement as a vehicle to revive Slav cooperation within the Monarchy and in Europe after 1900. Conflicts between Czech nationalists and Polish nationalists over Russian or Ukrainian participation, for example, all but doomed attempts to project the *Sokol* as a mass movement of united Slavdom. They failed despite the superficial but aesthetically impressive images of mass unity projected at the Prague *Slet* of 1912. Nolte’s essay conveys the significant triumphs of a movement that mobilized thousands of Czech speakers into its ranks, but also hints at the degree of dilution of ideological commitment inherent in such a remarkable expansion.

Daniel Unowsky reminds the reader that the nationalists were certainly not the only activists in Cisleithania to deploy political symbols, create festivals, or stage manage aesthetically impressive images of mass unity in order to encourage a sense of political community. His analysis of the Imperial Jubilee celebrations of 1898 traces the ways in which the Habsburg court asserted several patriotic and a-nationalist visions for Cisleithania, visions that made dynastic loyalty the cornerstone of a vigorous Austrian patriotism. While the symbolic role assigned to Emperor-King Franz Joseph changed from 1848 until 1916, the court produced Jubilee events in 1898 and 1908 in which a range of cultural, religious, social, political, and nationalist groups throughout the Monarchy vied to participate. Some historians (writing from the vantage point of a nationalized world) have faulted the Monarchy for not developing a more compelling ideology of its own to serve as a form of self-identification for its citizens. Seen in the context of a not-yet-nationalized world, the court’s efforts elaborated by Unowsky appear compelling. They are not necessarily the functional equivalent of nationalist rituals and symbols, but their collective effects may actually have been more far-reaching than those of the nationalists’ efforts. Recent work on the Tyrol, for example, suggests that these efforts to promote patriotism bore fruit in their ability to shape local understandings of nation. The German nation in Tyrol came to be defined by its very loyalty to dynasty and Church, and this produced a distinctive form of German nationalism that actually reinforced the very patriotism Unowsky’s Court officials sought to produce.<sup>15</sup>

The next two essays examine complex issues of identification—of both the self and those ascribed externally—in a wartime context that juxtaposes an a-national state with an increasingly nationalized society. Both Alon Rachamimov and Marsha Rozenblit document the degree to which those who worked to nationalize Habsburg society had achieved an uneven degree of success by 1918. The authors remind the reader of the multiplicity of loyalties—class, religion, locality, family, state, and even nation—that often coexisted uneasily within the same individual. Each uses the particular stresses caused by the war as a lens to examine questions of self-identification and loyalty among populations particularly hard-hit: for Rachamimov, Austro-Hungarian POWs in Russia; for Rozenblit, Jews in Cisleithania. Both also demonstrate from very different perspectives that the classic notion of a collapsing Monarchy, brought down by long-term nationalist rebellion, is misleading at best. In the case of the POWs, Rachamimov finds that the state itself, repeating the truisms of some nationalist activists, was all too eager to find sedition among certain linguistic groups—Czechs and Slovenes—more readily than among German-, Magyar-, or Polish-speaking POWs. This despite the evidence produced by Rachamimov that demonstrates that members of those groups in fact displayed a far greater sense of loyalty to the state than the government recognized. Thanks largely to the superior system of censorship developed by Austro-Hungarian officials—one envied and eventually copied by the Germans—Rachamimov is able to trace the ways in which comparable utterances by POWs of different language were evaluated for their loyalty. In many cases, these evaluations rested far more on prior assumptions of a group's relative degree of loyalty or disloyalty to the state than on some objective reading of the letters themselves.

Rozenblit analyzes Austrian Jewish experiences of identity that included loyalty to a Habsburg state that protected them from anti-Semitism, loyalties to particular national cultures, as well as loyalty to their own Jewish sense of identity. The war brought very different Jewish worlds together, as refugees fled Galicia and Bukovina to cities like Vienna or Prague. The encounter highlighted cultural differences at the same time as it underscored common Jewish interests in the perpetuation of the Monarchy. At the same time, the end of the war and the demise of the Imperial state brought catastrophe for many Jews who suddenly found themselves trapped in the new self-styled nation states that defined citizenship on the basis of national belonging. As the quintessential a-nationals, Jews often found themselves lost in a newly nationalized world where the civil rights of the individual that underlay constitutional rulings in Cisleithania gave way to a more organically defined citizenship that defined rights on the basis of ascribed group identities. Jews responded to this catastrophe by turning to Zionism or Jewish nationalism or by hoping that the new states would somehow find a place for them despite the frightening growth of exclusionary anti-Semitism.

Rozenblit points directly to the kinds of social and cultural upheaval engendered by the disappearance of the a-national imperial state structure at the end of the First World War. The narratives promoted in the interwar period by all national