

EUROSOC—European Socialism Network*

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The history of socialism has, without a doubt, been met with renewed interest in France in recent years. Several publishers have republished nineteenth-century texts (by Proudhon, Saint-Simon, Marx, Jaurès, etc.) and, particularly in the fields of history, philosophy, and political science there have been a series of scholarly research projects following various approaches (including the history of the diversity of Europe's socialist movements). All this is testament to a renewal of scholarly approaches, moving away from the more ideological approaches that had previously been predominant. The fact that this renewed interest comes twenty years after the disappearance of “actually-existing socialism” shows how far approaches have changed from the studies that were being published thirty years ago.

Despite these developments, it is striking that in France, at least, there is no recent general study of the history of socialism. The last attempt of this type goes back to the 1970s, with Jacques Droz's monumental four-volume enterprise (*Histoire générale du socialisme*, Paris, PUF, 1972–1977), which encompassed all continents and historical periods and had a major international impact. Droz's efforts were marked by the circumstances of his time (the Union of the Left in France, the Cold War, the existence of a still-influential “actually-existing socialism”). Today this work still seems useful, in broad terms, but also somewhat behind the times in many regards as compared to the recent historiography, and especially that of the last decade. Contributions abroad, especially in English, show that a lively interest in these questions is again developing. One of the European Socialism Network's (EUROSOC) central aims is to build an international network that can take these questions properly into consideration and give greater visibility to such research.

The period of most central focus is that running from 1870 to 1914, which is relatively less studied as compared to the welter of studies on the prior period of “utopian” or “conceptual” socialisms. Yet as a transnational and global history, we consider this period a particularly fertile one that deserves being re-explored from various new angles.

Launched in February 2016 with a three-year plan, and financed and supported by Institut de recherches historiques du Septentrion (IRHIS) and the Normandy regional government, the EUROSOC project set itself several

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goals. The first of these was to establish a network of researchers on the history of socialism from 1870–1914, without excluding an interest in a broader chronology. From its early stages, the project has developed links with various university structures and foundations that share a strong interest in this subject. In addition to the colleagues from the University of Rouen and Le Havre, colleagues from foreign universities (Denmark, Italy, Germany, and China predominately) and from other French universities (Dijon, Strasbourg, EHESS, Paris 1, among others) participated in several meetings and seminar sessions. The Jean-Jaurès and Gabriel-Péri Foundations supported several initiatives. The Consortium Mondes Contemporains (Consortium Archives of the Contemporary Worlds) also intensively supported the project, particularly for the document digitization projects; we shall return to this point later. It is worth noting that the project was developed within the framework of a seminar for master's degree students called "French Revolution, Revolutions of the 19th–21st Centuries," co-organized by Michel Biard and Jean-Numa Ducange at the University of Rouen. Participants included Emmanuel Jousse¹—the author of a noteworthy thesis on the history of reformist socialism in France—and Julian Wright—co-editor of the journal *French History* and author of a recent book on the question of time in socialism.² The seminar also hosted a full-day session dedicated to historian Georges Haupt and his archives.³

The EUROSOC Notebook

Here, we shall underline several concrete expressions of this project. First, the EUROSOC online notebook has been regularly updated with high-quality posts, published almost every week, covering various aspects of the project: bibliography, historiography, news content (updates on publications of books in this field), brief reports on papers from study days, reports of research defenses (master's, doctoral theses), etc. Most of the posts are in French but a significant number of them were translated into English for the sake of internationalization. The general coordination of this notebook, which will soon lead to the creation of a richer and stronger website, was entrusted to Frank-Olivier Chauvin, a doctoral student since September 2016, advised by Michel Biard and Jean-Numa Ducange. He is researching revolutions and socialism in the Ottoman world, from the time of the French Revolution up until the 1920s. The website was conceived as a portal and a tool that links to a variety of resources that could be useful for the study of socialism: digitized archives, online articles and books, and updates on scholarship. The website is scheduled to be launched in 2019.

Master's Degrees and Doctorates

Several students were able to write their master's theses in connection with this project (among the most active were Alexandre Riou, working on the history of

Czech socialism, and Florent Godguin on Pierre Renaudel). Several doctoral students and doctors are already part of the project, including Andrea Benedetti, a doctoral student at the University of Strasbourg who has published several posts, and Elisa Marcobelli, who earned her PhD at the School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) and is now pursuing a post-doctorate at the University of Rouen, connected to a wider project on pacifism (PEACE). Lastly, it should be noted that Pierre Alayrac took part in our activities—Alayrac is the 2016 Jean-Jaurès Foundation award recipient and the author of a master's thesis on the 1896 London Congress, which he defended at the École Normale Supérieure under Blaise Wilfert-Portal's and Jean-Numa Ducange's supervision. His book was published by Presses Universitaires de Rennes in July 2018.⁴

Digitization

Two archives were digitized thanks to the EUROSOC funds. The first one was a part of the Pierre Renaudel fonds (kept at the Jean-Jaurès Foundation), which contains unpublished archives on the establishment of socialism in Normandy in the period between 1899 and 1905, particularly regarding the history of the French Socialist Party.⁵ The richness of this archive has already been emphasized and it is currently being used to great advantage by Florent Godguin, a history and geography teacher and collaborator in the EUROSOC project. This will soon lead to a university master's thesis.

The other digitized archive corresponds to EUROSOC's international vocation: the archive of the Romanian historian Georges Haupt. It contains numerous original documents from the Socialist International (The Second International before 1914) and notably a part of the correspondence of the International Socialist Bureau that Haupt recovered from Camille Huysmans. Its scholarly dissemination is ongoing, notably thanks to Lucie Guesnier, doctor from the University of Paris 1 and author of a noteworthy thesis on the history of Romanian socialism before the First World War.⁶

Translation

We have successfully completed translation projects thanks to the collaboration and active participation of our colleagues from the Institute of Marxism of the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. A letter written by Hardling and addressed to Huysmans about the early developments of socialism in China—in English in the Haupt fonds—was translated into Chinese and published in the Yearbook of Socialism (Shanghai), in 2016, as part of the partnership established by EUROSOC. This letter was partially quoted by Haupt himself in *La Deuxième Internationale et l'Orient (The Second International and the East)*, co-written with Madeleine Rebérioux in 1967, but never published in its

entirety. Further, Ma Liya, a colleague of the Academy, published a very interesting article in the journal *Austriaca* (edited by Rouen University Press) about the reception of Otto Bauer's theory in China.⁷

The Acquisition of Works

The fund also allowed for the acquisition of rare journals and books related to the history of socialism. Examples include several volumes of the Historical Materialism collection published by Brill and recent copies of the journal *Beiträge Zur Marx-Engels Forschung*, which is devoted to Marx and Marxism and contains important historical material on the history of the archival centers related to the socialist movement.

Future Developments

Now drawing close to the 2019 endpoint of its original three-year plan, the EUROSOC project seeks to lay down a lasting structure that will allow it to respond to several continuing demands: namely, establishing a network of researchers, achieving scholarly visibility, and strengthening cooperation with foreign universities. Digitization of documents will continue in order to make the best use of regional and international resources that are difficult for researchers to access.

Regarding regional resources specifically, we are collecting materials in various archival centers in Normandy in order to be able to digitize short printed texts and newspapers produced by socialists in this region.

The EUROSOC project seeks to continue its activities in the same areas, while also diversifying the locations where its seminars take place across many other sites. The 2018–2019 seminar reflects the themes that researchers within the project and beyond are now addressing.

Three study days will be held at the ENS École normale supérieure (rue d'Ulm) (ENS), the University of Strasbourg, and the University of Leipzig in autumn and winter of 2018. They will be inserted within the framework of a transnational political history, with particular attention to the history of socialism between 1870 and 1918. The first of these meetings, which will be held in partnership with the ENS, will focus on one of the major tools of transnational political exchange in nineteenth-century Europe: the translation of political texts, whose translation was designed to influence the debates that traversed the political terrain in any given place and moment. The workshops, organized together with the universities of Strasbourg and Leipzig, will return to a theme very dear to EUROSOC, namely international socialism. The debates in Strasbourg will focus on international socialist institutions such as the International Socialist Bureau and the Second International. In Leipzig, they will instead focus on following the paths of those socialist actors intellectually

or even materially involved in multiple national contexts, from Ludwik Kròlikowski to César de Paepe and Antonio Labriola. They will also analyze certain cases where socialism had to deal with questions linked to borders, as in the paper by Mohieddine Hadhri (Tunis University) on “European Social-Democracy Faced with Colonial Expansion in North Africa, 1881–1914” and that by Lucas Poy (Buenos Aires University) on European migrants and the Argentine Socialist Party between 1890 and 1914.

This will also require stronger cooperation with archival centers. In March 2019, at the end of the project, EUROSOC will organize a conference on pacifism and socialism, seeking to answer the question, “What is peace, for socialists?” It will delve specifically into the period between 1870 and 1918, while also looking at the decades that preceded and followed this era. This conference will underline the project’s relevance at many different levels, and will also involve historians from multiple countries. While the project will formally reach its conclusion in 2019, it will continue through the collaboration of its various partners. The aim, here, is to make more visible the research on the history of international socialism as a political and ideological current crucial to understanding the contemporary world. One further goal is to publish a multi-stream volume on the transnational history of socialism that will reflect new approaches and the research that is underway today.

NOTES

* <https://eurosoc.hypotheses.org/>

1. Emmanuel Jousse, *Les hommes révolus. Les origines intellectuelles du réformisme en France* (Paris, 2017).
2. Julian Wright, *Socialism and the Experience of Time: Idealism and the Present in Modern France* (Oxford, United Kingdom, 2017).
3. <https://webtv.univ-rouen.fr/channels/#autour-de-georges-haupt-et-de-ses-archives-le-socialisme-europeen-et-linternationale>
4. Pierre Alayrac, *L’Internationale au milieu du gué: de l’internationalisme socialiste au congrès de Londres* (Rennes, France, 1896).
5. Thierry Merel, « La Fondation Jean-Jaurès et le fonds Pierre Renaudel », <https://jean-jaures.org/blog/la-fondation-jean-jaures-et-le-fonds-renaudel>, 29 avril 2016, (26 August 2018)
6. See the programm (7 december 2016) on the website of GRHIS (Groupe de recherche d’histoire): <http://grhis.univ-rouen.fr/grhis/?event=autour-de-georges-haupt-et-de-ses-archives-le-socialisme-europeen-et-linternationale> (26 August 2018)
7. Liya Ma, “La redécouverte d’Otto Bauer en Chine,” *Austriaca* 80: 2017.