

Criticisms of the book are likely to arise from Schreiter's habit of overestimating the importance of her subject and overstating her possible conclusions. How many readers will agree with the following propositions: that initiatives in product design "normalized East-West relations, which eventually undermined the Cold War status quo and helped to pave the way for unification" (6)? Or that a shared taste for "conservative modernism . . . made the [1989] transition from reform to unity plausible and feasible in German minds" (9, 183)? Or that "the pan-German economic culture developed a vocabulary of transparency, humanity, and morality that shaped German efforts for peace in Europe in the 1980s" (186)? Or that shared notions of "design, taste, and consumption" helped prevent "great social upheavals or political disruptions in the fall of 1990" (189)? Many scholars will find these claims to be over-reaching.

Materially oriented scholars will doubt whether Schreiter's proposed "economic culture" of shared perceptions, norms, values, and tastes could ever bring the two German economies closer together. The real existing gaps between economic structures and performance in the neo-Stalinist East and the social-market West were enormous and obvious; they permeated daily life in the GDR. Those gaps are widely recognized as the root causes for the dead-end trajectory of the East German economy and state. These differences could not be bridged by the cultural constructs Schreiter identifies.

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Europa in der Tradition Habsburgs? Die Rezeption Kaiser Karls V. im Umfeld der Abendländischen Bewegung und der Paneuropa Union

**By Markus Pohl. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2020. Pp. 189.
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Writing about the Iraq War in 2003, Jürgen Habermas contrasted Europeans' well-founded wariness with the more "naïve optimism" displayed by American elites. What was distinctive about Europeans was that they had learned from their particularly conflict-ridden past: previous catastrophic wars had shown that the wiser course was usually to live with diversity rather than to seek change by force. It is unlikely that Germany's most prominent public intellectual would have much in common with the scattered assortment of mostly German-speaking intellectuals who dreamed of some kind of neo-Habsburgian Europe after 1945. But in his elucidation of a distinctive European identity, he echoed at least some of the arguments presented by those advocates of an Occidental (*abendländisch*) Europe featured in Markus Pohl's study.

These intellectuals included a few household names such as Joseph Roth and Carl Jacob Burckhardt but were mostly second-order writers who had some connection to the last crown prince of Austria-Hungary, Otto von Habsburg. Pohl is particularly interested in how these thinkers latched onto the figure of Charles V as the European statesman *par excellence*. They usually provided a grand sweep through centuries of European history, charting how a diverse European empire had splintered into national and religious enclaves once Martin Luther provoked a rupture in Western Christendom. According to this narrative,

the sectarian spirit spread, gathering momentum, until it wreaked the devastation experienced by Europeans of all faiths and nationalities in the mid-twentieth century. Thereafter chastened by their history, Europeans were willing to look beyond nationalist utopias but needed the kind of leadership that a figure such as Charles V had provided in another conflict-ridden age. Charles V was lionized by these authors, partially because he had sought to balance out differences between religiously fractious European communities, but also because he was still something of a crusader for Christianity, seeking to drive back a perceived threat from the Muslim East. For such thinkers, Otto von Habsburg, vestige of the pre-nationalist Holy Roman Empire, was the most plausible modern-day avatar for this imperial, European vision.

Such arguments for a Europe that looked to its own imperial and Christian past rather than seeking to mimic the political traditions of an American mass democracy have been familiar to historians since the pioneering works of Axel Schildt, Vanessa Conze, and others were published a couple of decades ago. What these works and Pohl's alongside them achieved was to show that many Germans and Austrians who had been skeptical of or hostile to democracy after 1918 experienced no Damascene conversion after 1945. Their acceptance of liberal democracy and of their nations' integration within a US-led West was conditional and, at least initially, based on a calculation that they were siding with the lesser evil. Readers will no doubt ask what new insights Pohl has to offer that go beyond what Conze and others have already revealed. Primarily, Pohl moves beyond the mid-twentieth century, suggesting that *abendlandisch* ideas had an afterlife within respectable European integrationist circles even after 1989. To make his case, he focuses on the prominence of Otto von Habsburg as President of the International Paneuropean Union between 1973 and 2004 and as a member of the European Parliament, representing Bavaria from 1979 till 1999. Pohl also identifies the supportive role played by leading German Christian Democratic politicians such as Helmut Kohl, who celebrated Habsburg as an exemplary European unifier who had fulfilled the Habsburgian mission of bringing together Europeans from diverse religious, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.

Herein lies the charm of Pohl's approach. While most of the intellectuals featured, taken as individuals, may be idiosyncratic figures who were marginal to the major political currents in their nation-states, some of their arguments did find their way into the European mainstream by the end of the century. In order to make this point, Pohl draws attention to works such as *Christianity and Modernity: Values for Europe's Future*, written in 2014 by then-President of the European Council and recipient of the Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, Herman Van Rompuy. Pohl is therefore able to suggest a certain revenge of the repressed taking place. This is significant because it scrambles some of the neat categorizations that historians might like to make as they chart Germany's "long road West" (Heinrich August Winckler). The ecumenical postwar Christian democratic movement usually and rightly serves as a bridge in accounts of Germany's transition from dictatorship to becoming a more pluralist, secular, and multicultural Federal Republic. And, in this regard, Germany's history may appear emblematic of the broader story of Europe's successful democratization. Yet, as Pohl suggests when he focuses on German leaders such as Konrad Adenauer, who could be heard encouraging Francoist Spain to participate in the process of European integration, it may be just as accurate to see some Christian democrats not so much as forerunners of a contemporary liberal Europe as adherents of a counter-vision of Europe as a united Christian polity.

While Pohl's study invites further reflection on these interesting issues, the reader may remain unsure of how seriously to take both the Habsburg circle and those statesmen who provided them with soft support. Were warm words offered by political leaders at memorial events anything more than the equivalent of birthday toasts that one might make for an eccentric relative? Did the neo-Habsburgian intellectuals really envisage any kind of comeback for royals such as the Austrian crown prince or were they merely projecting an ideal type as a negative foil to all that they disliked about contemporary political life? There are moments when Pohl demonstrates how their arguments could address a wider public,

for instance when Habsburg and his associates focused on the figure of Charles IV (not Charles V), highlighting his record as an Emperor who lived in Prague and who could serve as a symbol of reconciliation between Czechs and Germans, not least those ethnic Germans who had fled westwards in 1945. But more generally, the book provides an intellectual history that is relatively modest in scope and based on a fairly narrow corpus of mostly German sources. As a result, although some Belgian figures such as Van Rompuy, Charles Terlinden, and Leo Tindemans also feature in the story, it is hard to gauge whether many non-Germans were particularly aware of this Habsburgian dream. This is a limitation of the study, as any Habsburg's plausibility as a European leader surely stood or fell with the extent that they could attract followers beyond any one national or linguistic community.

Pohl has nevertheless left us with a suggestive and valuable study that excavates a European discourse within which all kinds of especially religiously infused lost causes and counternarratives lived on. While these ideas and narratives may have become submerged during the first wave of enthusiasm for European enlargement in the 1990s, they have been grafted on to various projects for imagining an alternative Europe in recent decades. Pohl's study is therefore to be welcomed for reminding us how many multiple, often conflicting stories about Europe continue to be spun.

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Beyond MAUS: The Legacy of Holocaust Comics

**Edited by Ole Frahm, Hans-Joachim Hahn, and Markus Streb.
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Thirty years after the original publication of Art Spiegelman's collected *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* in 1992, the influence and impact of that graphic novel still reverberates. Within the comics community, *Maus* is one of, if not the, book that brought respectability to the comics medium. It told a mature story of a second-generation Holocaust survivor and the impact of his father's experiences in hiding and in Nazi concentration camps during the Second World War. As arguably the first modern representation of the Holocaust in graphic literature, *Maus* upended assumptions that comics and graphic narratives were "just" for children. Of course, this does not account for the use of the Holocaust as a plot device in horror and superhero comics of the Golden and Silver Ages, in Horst Rosenthal's *Mickey au Camp de Gurs* (1942), or of "Nazi Death Parade" published in *The Bloody Record of Nazi Atrocities* (Arco Publishing, 1944), many of which are discussed in the pages of this book. And with that distinction and the well-deserved attention *Maus* has received since its publication, comics scholars continue to grapple with how representation of the Holocaust in comics has indeed moved beyond that original graphic novel, if at all.

Given the significance of *Maus* in the field, it should come as no surprise that *Beyond MAUS* is not the first book to deal with this subject or even the first to bear this title. An issue of the *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* (Vol. 17, No. 1), edited by Ewa Stańczyk in 2018, reprinted verbatim as a hardcover volume by Routledge the following year, bore the similar title *Beyond Maus: Comic Books, Graphic Novels and the Holocaust*. Given its more robust page length,