Stefan Berger, *Nations and Nationalism* 16.3 (July 2010), 548-49

autobiographical. What is most impressive about this book, however, is that the young scholars and PhD students included in the volume are able to hold their ground and deliver impressive articles equal to those included by the heavyweights of nationalism studies, like Breuilly, Gildea and Ranger. The editors Carvalho and Gemenne argue that the aim of the book was to demonstrate the importance of history for the construction of nationhood. In that, it has definitely succeeded.

For some, the book might in fact cover too much ground. A reader looking for an overarching argument or a unified approach, something somehow suggested in the title, will almost certainly be disappointed. It is not unusual for a publication like this to have a broad range of articles but the analyses here are surprisingly wide spread, not only geographically but also analytically. While some might consider this to be a weakness, it can also be interpreted as the greatest strength of the book. There is something for everyone, and for someone looking to get a good overview of recent developments in the study of nationalism, this is a great book to buy. As always with a hard cover, younger students of nationalism will have to hope for a paperback to come out soon.

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Christopher L. Hill, *National History and the World of Nations. Capital, State, and the Rhetoric of History in Japan, France and the United States*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008. xvi+351 pp, £13.99 (pbk).

In the last third of the Nineteenth century national history was given the task of stabilising communities which had come under intense pressure through the need of states to modernise and re align themselves with new forms of (global) capital accumulation. This, in a nutshell, is the central argument pursued by Christopher L. Hill in this fascinating *tour de force* of comparative history/literature. National history, in other words, was key to finding the nation's position within modernity, as it was capable of naturalising a historically grown order and make it seem inevitable.

Ranging widely across different genres, such as travel writing, historical novel and professional history writing as well as school history books, works of social thought and political economy, the book explores the narratives and rhetorical forms of national history. Hill perceives national history as a practice of writing that is visible in many genres. Throughout his case studies, he highlights how a combination of inversion and allegory seemed to be the most successful rhetorical strategies, as they were best suited to naturalise the changing regimes of territoriality. Insofar as he also discovers a variety of local variations he attributes them to the different impact of processes of nation state formation and capital accumulation (his two determining factors of a universal modernity) on local conditions.

Hill deliberately chooses a key European country, France, and contrasts it with two non European countries, Japan and the USA. In each of them a state existed before a widespread sense of nationality developed and each had recently experienced major political upheaval, which changed significantly the nature of the state: the Meiji Restoration in Japan, Civil War in the USA and the Paris Commune/fall of the Second

Empire in France. One of the central concerns of the book is how national history was used to deal with these ruptures.

Chapter one sets out the way in which the author sees the development of the modern world in the nineteenth century. Following Charles Tilly in defining modernity as dominated by the twin processes of nation state formation and the changing system of markets and capital accumulation, Hill outlines how an era of free trade imperialism gave way to formal colonisation and monopoly capitalism in the second half of the nineteenth century. He succinctly sets out the position of France, the USA and Japan within the framework of general developments. According to Hill a 'crisis mentality' existed in all three countries, which led to a 'shared alarmism' that in turn produced intense searches of the nation's true character in history.

Part one of the book (chapters 2 4) is about the demarcation of space through national history. Chapter two looks at Japanese histories of civilisation emerging in the 1870s and focusses on the works by Fukuzawa Yukichi and Taguchi Ukichi. Chapter three deals with narratives of national development in the settler society of the USA and highlights in particular works by Josiah Strong and Frederick Jackson Turner. Chapter four looks at the way in which France kept open the violation of its national historical territory after the Franco Prussian war and the loss of Alsace and Lorraine using in particular school textbooks and colonial literature.

Part two of the book (chapters 5 7) looks at the ways in which national histories in all three countries dealt specifically with political ruptures. Chapter five underlines how interpretations of the Meiji restoration in Japan by Suehiro Tetchô, Tokutomi Sohô and Mori Ôgai, among others, argued that the rupture propelled the nation out of its non national and non modern past. Chapter six outlines how works by Henry James, John Fiske and Woodrow Wilson were in the forefront of a discourse which argued that by adopting a sense of a shared national history the USA would find the most important means of forging a heterogeneous immigrant community into a nation. Chapter seven discusses in depth the many disputes over the French revolution and how they ultimately brought forth, for example in the writings of Victor Hugo and Ernest Renan, imaginings of the nation which went beyond mere political history. Overall, Hill stresses that in all three cases conflict and dissent are expelled from national history by means of using both allegory and motifs of rupture. Narratives about national pasts in all three countries set the scene for what is a possible, thinkable future and what is not.

A brief review like this cannot possibly do justice to the complexity of the arguments contained in detailed analysis of a great variety of texts in this book. The author dazzles his readers with a plethora of comparative insights, and this book is exemplary not only in its analytical rigour and interpretrative breadth but also in its treatment of very different texts that are rarely analysed together. One could have envisioned a firmer integration of the comparison according to particular themes and a more rigorous discussion of empire and its influence on nation building processes in the nineteenth century as well as greater attention to some of the longer term continuity of the prominence of national histories at different times and places ranging backwards to the middle ages and forwards into the twenty first century. But it would be childish to end this review on a critical note, for Hill's book represents overall a major achievement in providing us with a deeper understanding of how national histories operated under conditions of a universal modernity in the last third of the nineteenth century.

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