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Monika Baár. *Historians and Nationalism: East Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century*. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP, 2010. Bibliography. Index. xi + 340 pp. \$110.00 (cloth).

Monika Baár wrote a PhD dissertation on five nineteenth-century East Central European historians from Poland, the Czech lands, Hungary, Romania, and Lithuania; this book, drawn from that work, presents and compares them to their Western European counterparts. The author does not deal with history but only with the five historians and their way of negotiating their nations' histories into the history of Europe. Baár eschews the temptation to argue with her protagonists even when they are clearly in the wrong (František Palacký's defense of Vacláv Hanka's forgeries).

In addition to Palacký, she writes of Michály Horváth of Hungary, Joachim Lelewel of Poland, Mihail Kogălniceanu of Romania, and Simonas Daukantas of Lithuania. After presenting their biographies, she outlines the basic tenets of nineteenth-century historical writing and positions her historians within them. Nation-building, emancipation from foreign rule, and democratization of the historical narrative were paramount in narrative history at that time. Baár then evaluates "her" historians' indebtedness to Herder and the Scottish Enlightenment. I agree with her that Herder's influence on East Central European thinkers has been overestimated (112); indeed, it may be a *propter-hoc* creation of German-influenced historiographers. Chapters on language and on the foundational myths discussed throughout Europe at that time follow. Baár points out that the inferiority complex of the smaller Eastern European nations regarding their languages was a mirror image of what the Romans once felt with regard to the Greeks, or the French with regard to Latin. She points out that "her" historians had a "Westernizing" wish for their nations, but also claimed that these nations were Western (291). Interestingly, historian Jan Kieniewicz reconciled these seemingly contradictory claims by arguing that East Central Europe, while "Western" in orientation (i.e., derived from Graeco-Roman social culture and Western Christianity), created its own model of being Western.

The author then considers the interpretation of feudalism in East Central Europe and the "golden age" of the five nations as presented by the five historians. Finally, she outlines perceptions of the Other and attitudes to European civilization. The last two chapters are the weakest; they follow too closely the taxonomies of modern historical scholarship whereby all countries must be fitted into the Procrustean bed of a post-Hegelian "development pattern." Thus in discussing the "golden age" that the historians supposedly imagined, the author blurs the distinction between Daukantas's fanciful dreams of an essentially mute ancient Lithuania and the flourishing philosophical debates of fourteenth-century Bohemia, not to speak of the massive body of religious and political literature produced during Poland's golden age in the sixteenth century by Catholics and Calvinists alike (Andrzej Frycz-Modrzewski, Andrzej Wolan, Rotundus, Stanisław Orzechowski, Krzysztof Warszawicki). In the chapter "Perceptions of Others," the author notes that such binary oppositions as Christian/pagan and Hellene/Barbarian were used "asymmetrically," i.e., "the qualities which the five communities represented by these historians ascribe to one another are not reciprocal" (256). That is indeed correct, but the absence of valuation she attempts sometimes reflects the prevailing ideological engagement and its rooted *idées reçues*, rather than absolute objectivity: the Protestant Czechs' "struggle with the Germans" (236) is seen in a sympathetic light, whereas Catholic Poland, the author indirectly suggests, fell due to the anarchy and inefficiency of the Polish system of government (234–35). In the designation of the Jesuits as "Others" alongside Jews and women (270–72), one likewise hears echoes of that old Protestant prejudice against Catholicism and its role in European nation-building.

While comparing "her" historians to their Western European counterparts, the author shows the futility of dividing Europe into West and East, culturally speaking. After reading her book, one tends to conclude that there were no fundamental differences in the ways of approaching national history between historians in France or Germany on the one hand, and those she describes on the other. The professionalism and tendency toward institutionalization of historical research progressed along the same route. However, while Western European historians profited

from an uninterrupted accumulation of scholastic infrastructure, the East Central Europeans had to build that infrastructure themselves. To those scholars who still believe that East Central Europe has been more nationalistic than Western Europe, Baár's book might be an eye-opener. She points out that "[t]he state-building project invariably entail[s] an element of exclusion" (293). While this element was made invisible in Europe's dominant countries, which wrote their own histories in a world whose discourse they controlled, its presence in the colonized East was foregrounded by foreign historians.

There are corrections to be made. The author does not make the fine distinctions between the historians that had at their disposal a well-developed language and literature, and those who had to create their country's literary language themselves. The incommensurability between the rich tradition of history writings in some countries and the lack of such tradition in others is not sufficiently foregrounded. The author knows more about the former Hapsburg lands (Hungary, Romania, Czechia) than about North Central Europe. Using secondary sources sometimes leads to amusing lapses, e.g., when she attributes to King Bathory the famous statement of King Sigismund Augustus that he is not "the king of his subjects' consciences" (234). The noble democracy in Poland was not "Slavophile in orientation" (106): the Polish republican system developed in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries through the sequence of laws passed by the Polish Sejm, from the Krewa union (1385) through *Neminem captivabimus* (1430) to *Nihil novi* (1505). It was in the interest of the absolutist powers that conquered Poland in late eighteenth century to wipe out the memory of these developments (symbolically, upon taking hold of Warsaw the Prussians melted the Polish crown jewels).

The above imperfections pale when juxtaposed with the pioneering nature of this work and the highly professional manner in which the author deconstructs the mythologies of a mute and backward "other Europe." This book should become a primer for anyone teaching European history on a college level.

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Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius. *The German Myth of the East: 1800 to the Present*. New York: Oxford UP, 2009. Bibliography. Index. xii + 292 pp. \$55.00 (cloth).

Liulevicius has produced an interesting study of the perception of the "East" by Germans over the past two centuries. In the introduction Liulevicius contends with the difficult issue of defining the terms "myth," "German," and particularly "East," the most nebulous of them. In particular, the term by no means exclusively referred to Russia or Poland but could even be applied to the eastern German territories themselves. Liulevicius argues that the term most accurately describes a "state of being" rather than an actual "location" (3). Although the majority of the study is devoted the period after 1800, in Chapter 2 ("Older Legacies Before 1800") Liulevicius surveys the Germans' complex relationship with the East in the preceding centuries, because images and terms from that era would be put to use in the modern period. In his survey of early German relations to the East, Liulevicius expressly rejects the notion that there was any sort of primal *Drang nach Osten* [Drive to the East] in German history (9, 12, 20) or that the course of that history inevitably led to the Nazis (4). He stresses that German relations with the East were quite often varied in nature and were by no means an uninterrupted series of events. In particular, he notes that German attitudes toward the East were not exclusively imperialistic, as in the case of Herder's thoughts on the Slavs (53–59) or the Polish enthusiasm (*Polenbegeisterung*) of the 1830s (72–75). He also stresses that such well-known events as the Baltic Crusades were not exclusively German phenomena but were generally European in nature (21). Likewise, the German settlement of eastern territories was more about peopling empty spaces than any urge