

Le Zentrum et les Nationaux-Libéraux ont aussi tenté de contrer la propagande du S.P.D. contre la hausse des prix en adoptant un programme de réformes notamment en faveur des employés. Pour faire un bout de chemin ensemble lors de deux phases de montée des prix, les deux formations en arrivent même à mettre un bémol aux affrontements confessionnels.

Au total un livre novateur, apportant des informations originales, donc à lire sans hésitation.

Alfred WAHL, Metz

Jakob VOGEL, *Nationen im Gleichschritt. Der Kult der »Nationen in Waffen« in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1871–1914*, Göttingen (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht) 1997, 404 p. (Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft, 118).

The principal criticism of *Nationen im Gleichschritt* is its title, which gives an entirely misleading impression of its contents. The subtitle implies that what is to follow is a comparison of the terms and conditions of service of the two armies, and of the militarising effects which conscription had on their parent societies. What is actually on offer is much more narrow: an exhaustive account of military parades and what they tell us about various approaches to militarism.

The immediate impact of such events was visual and aural. Three rather small black and white photographs hardly do justice to the abundance of illustrative material, and certainly do not convey the panache and allure of full dress ceremonial. Apart from a reference to the trial French uniforms proposed by Edouard Detaille and paraded in 1912, Jakob Vogel shuns all discussion both of military dress and, more importantly given his principal themes, its dual role – that of marking out of the distinction between the soldier and the civilian on the one hand, while enhancing the attractiveness of the former for the latter on the other. As important as the visual spectacle was the measured cadence of infantry bands and the jingle of harness which accompanied those of the cavalry. Obviously *Nationen im Gleichschritt* cannot reproduce the sounds of »Marche Lorraine« or »Preußens Gloria«, but Vogel might nonetheless have told us which marches were played when, so using the musical programme as an illustration of some of the themes which he explores in otherwise exhaustive terms. *Nationen im Gleichschritt* is scholarly and cogent, but it is a book which turns back onto itself, narrowing its scope, rather than pushing outwards and onwards.

This is not to say that it does not address big themes. Its principal conclusion is that both France and Germany staged military festivals whose natures converged between 1871 and 1914. Therefore, although such parades are central to the idea of German militarism, Germany was not unique: Vogel rejects the notion of a German *Sonderweg*. Each state reached this congruence by a different route. German parades centred around the monarch, and in origin were more private expressions of the bond between crown and army than between army and people. Republican France on the other hand saw its parades as symbols of the links between the army and the nation. Although the political right objected in 1880 to the choice of 14 July as the date for the principal event, even its reservations were moderated by the positive effects for French nationalism which the parade itself generated. A less divisive solution was to look forward, and Vogel points up the comparative modernity of French parades, with the technology of twentieth-century warfare more in evidence than in Germany, and with the achievements of empire represented by the incorporation of colonial troops.

Although Germany had the advantage of victory in 1870–71, the Franco-Prussian war did not provide as consistent a focus for celebration as might have been expected. Part of the problem was the need to distinguish between the past achievements of Prussia and the present status of united Germany. But even more important were the ambitions of Wilhelm II. Sedan day faded as a focus for commemoration after his accession to the throne. He was



anxious not to venerate the achievements of the immediate past generation but to vaunt the Hohenzollerns as a dynasty. His desire to build the monarchy on populist foundations was manifest in his decision to forsake his grandfather's carriage for a horse, and to ride into Berlin at the head of his troops.

The opposition of the left to occasions which were covert instruments of national integration and of militant nationalism was surprisingly limited. In neither country did the socialists reject the obligations of universal military service and national self-defence. Vogel draws a distinction between the German emphasis on the »Volk in Waffen« and the French »nation en armes«, but the point in both cases was that through the great military parades civilians as well as soldiers were marked by military values. Symbolic of this permeation was the increasing involvement of youth movements and veterans' organisations in the years immediately preceding 1914. Thus the significance of the parades lay less in national differences and more in the widespread acceptance of military values which underpinned the recognition of military obligations in 1914.

Hew STRACHAN, Glasgow

Anne HOGENHUIS-SELIVERSTOFF, *Une alliance franco-russe. La France, la Russie et l'Europe au tournant du siècle dernier*, Bruxelles (Bruylant) 1997, 216 p. (Histoires).

For some seventy years after the outbreak of the First World War the Franco-Russian Alliance of 1892-94 had a bad press. It became a central plank of the revisionist arguments in the war guilt debate surrounding the origins of the Great War. If Germany could show that she was not solely responsible for the outbreak of the war, as article 231 of the Versailles treaty stipulated, then she could contest the moral basis for the payment of reparations. The Franco-Russian alliance seemed an excellent scapegoat on to whom some of the blame for the war could be shifted. In particular the alliance was presented as intended to secur *revanche* for France over Germany and the return of the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. For the revolutionary Soviet governments, intent on bolstering their own legitimacy by undermining that of their Tsarist predecessors, the alliance was portrayed as an aggressive pact which the autocratic Tsarist regime signed up to in exchange for the French loans. The depiction of the alliance had the added advantage for the Soviets of justifying why they should not reimburse the French after the war for the loans contracted by the defunct Imperial regime. In the eyes of thousands of small French investors the alliance was perceived as the object of their financial losses. All in all these jaundiced portrayals explain the somewhat negative historiography of the Franco-Russian alliance, particularly in the inter-war years. Thus the specialist of Franco-Soviet relations Anne Hogenhuis-Seliverstoff justifies her short but compelling study of the alliance, adding for good measure that Europe at the end of the twentieth century resembles more and more that of the end of the nineteenth century with a powerful reunified Germany able to exercise influence over the Balkans and Eastern Europe now that Moscow's influence has evaporated. Now, though, the author argues, roles are reversed with France being the established power and post communist Russia in search of prestige and a diplomatic presence.

In many ways this is a very traditional diplomatic history of how the alliance came about between the 1880s and 1894 in which we learn of what one diplomat or courtier said or wrote to another. But much of that is already known, as are the main reasons for the *rapprochement* between two politically very different states. Where the work's originality lies is in the descriptions of the Russian community in Paris composed of anarchists, artists and aristocrats and their role in impeding or encouraging a Franco-Russian *entente*. Here the author has used the *Préfecture de Paris* archives to glean what the French police made of the Paris Russians and how this surveillance information and subsequent arrest of Russian