

Frank Jacob, Carsten Schapkow (ed.), Nationalism in a Transnational Age. Irrational Fears and the Strategic Abuse of Nationalist Pride, Berlin, Boston (De Gruyter Oldenbourg) 2021, 236 p., 7 fig., ISBN 978-3-11-072929-0, EUR 77,95.

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The edited volume »Nationalism in a Transnational Age. Irrational Fears and the Strategic Abuse of Nationalist Pride« by Frank Jacob and Carsten Schapkow tackles an important topic. Given the increasing success of right-wing parties who tend to harness nationalist agendas, it looks at continuities of the concept of »empire« and »otherness« and tries to explain how globalization stimulated new forms of nationalism. It does so in ten distinct chapters, divided into three different sections, each of them shedding light on a different element of nationalism. Since all chapters have been written by different authors and vary considerably in approach and quality, I will briefly discuss them in turn.

Chapter 1 »Nationalism in a Transnational Age: An Introduction« presents the overall topic of the book and briefly discusses its central concepts. Given the centrality of the term »transnational«, its discussion remains a bit sketchy. The following four chapters form Section I »Old Wine in New Bottles: About the Continuities of Nationalism and Empire in the 21st Century«. Chapter 2 »Turkish Nationalism: From Gallipoli to Contemporary Neo-Ottomanism« by Frank Jacob provides an account of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's rise to power, focusing particularly on his victory at Gallipoli, and how he became the figurehead of Turkish nationalism until the early 2000s. Despite the fact that the chapter reads in large stretches like a life-account of Atatürk, it convincingly shows how nationalism can be shaped »according to the agenda of ruling elites« (p. 17). However, it is less successful in doing so when discussing Erdogan's neo-Ottomanism.

Chapter 3 »Old Concepts in Changing Societies? Continuities and Transformation of Nationalism in East Germany, 1871–2019« by Sven Brajer and Johannes Schütz aims at tracing the emergence of nationalism across centuries in Eastern Germany. The authors explain the rise of right-wing parties by demonstrating that East Germany never entered a »transnational age«. The promise of re-nationalization and returning to national greatness propagated by extreme right actors thus falls on fertile ground. Following from this, chapter 4 »The Phantomic Nature of Missionary Nationalism in a Former Empire: The Case of Russia« by Alicja Curanović analyses to what extent the imperial approach (missionism/messianism) of the USSR still plays a role in contemporary Russia. The author convincingly employs content analysis of public statements by



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Russia's main foreign policy actors between 2000 and 2018. Contrary to some of the other chapters that do not specify sources and methodology, chapter 4 is well embedded in the literature and has an extensive methodology section.

Chapter 5 »New Transnational Pan-Africanism and Its Nationalist Limitations« by James Okolie-Osemene, the last chapter of Section I, uses constructivist theory as its framework of analysis, and employs event participation observation, a historical analytical approach, as well as theme mapping to explore how new Pan-African nationalism can address Africa's leadership question. The author explains the emergence and development of Pan-Africanism well, but falls short in clarifying how Africa's leadership question can be addressed.

Chapter 6 »Russia's Central Asia: Photographic Symbology of Nationhood« by Inessa Kouteinikova introduces Section II »The Fight For and the Creation of Identity: A Cultural Struggle Against the ›Other‹«. It uses comparative analysis to demonstrate how Russian colonial actors used photography to enhance imperial and global networks in Central Asia. The use of photography is well-thought and original. Unfortunately, some of the methodological choices are not made explicit enough. Chapter 7 »Georgia's Two Others: Nationalism and the Identity Struggle of a Post-Soviet Nation-State« by Irakli Chkhaidze analyses through discourse analysis the dynamic of the post-Soviet Georgian public discourse transformation. More specifically, it examines the different roles of the West in forming post-Soviet Georgian public discourses and the importance of attitudes to the West for developing a national identity. The author positions the chapter well within the field of identity and nationalism studies, using extracts from the data set to illustrate his point. Chapter 8 »New Media and the Narratives of National Identity and Nationalism: A Pakistani Case Study« by Muhammad A. Z. Mughal explores the expression of Pakistani national identity and nationalism in new media. The well-written study uses a qualitative research design, applying content analysis to internet sources.

Chapters 9 and 10 together make up Section III »Globalized Nationalisms and their National Frontiers«. Chapter 9 »Eco-Nationalism in the Soviet Union in the Late 1980s and Early 1990s: The Ukrainian Case« by Tetiana Perga discusses the emergence, achievements and transnational impact of eco-nationalism in Ukraine while it was part of the Soviet Union. It demonstrates how nationalist movements incorporated environmental and antinuclear aspects, especially after the Chernobyl disaster in 1986. Chapter 10 »Teaching History in Belarus: Between Globalization and Authoritarian Confinement, Between Europe and Russia« by Anna Zadora investigates discourses about the Second World War in Belarussian history school books. The chapter displays a somewhat superficial overview of Belarussian historiography up to the end of the 1990s before going into a very detailed analysis of recent history textbooks.



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This summary of the chapters points to one of the major flaws of this edited volume: its overall lack of structure and coherence. It is very evident that we are dealing with a collection of conference papers (indeed, the editors mention this in their introduction). While the editors tried to weave together the main threads in their introduction, the different chapters still vary too much to make for a coherent book. Maybe a well-written conclusion could have mediated this problem a bit. It would have furthermore been helpful, if the editors had made sure that all chapters follow a similar structure and speak to the same extent about the two core concepts: »nationalism« and »transnational age«. While this is somewhat the case for the first one, the definition of »transnational age« seems to differ among the various authors. Furthermore, there seems to be a bit of an imbalance both in terms of chapters per section (four in the first one, only two in the third) and in the selection of the case studies (Russia and post-Soviet states are disproportionately overrepresented with six out of nine).

For someone interested in a specific case study, this edited volume might be useful. Scholars looking for a comprehensive overview of the role of nationalism in a transnational age will most likely be disappointed by this lack of coherence.



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