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**Nation-Building in the Provinces: The Interplay between Local, Regional and National Identities in Central and Western Europe, 1870-1945.**

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**Citation**

Storm, H. J. (2012). Nation-Building in the Provinces: The Interplay between Local, Regional and National Identities in Central and Western Europe, 1870-1945. *European History Quarterly*, 42(4), 650-663. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/25875>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

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Post-print

Original published in:

*European History Quartely*, vol 42-4 (2012) p. 650-663.

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Review Article

**Nation-building in the provinces**

**The interplay between local, regional and national identities in Central and Western Europe, 1870-1945**

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Christopher J. Fischer, *Alsace to the Alsatians? Visions and Divisions of Alsatian Regionalism, 1870-1939*, Berghahn Books: New York & Oxford, 2010; 236 pp., 12 illus.; 9781845457242, \$ 90.00 (hbk)

Hansi, *My Alsace* (abridged English version by C.J. Moore), Floris Books: Edinburgh, 2010; 32 pp., 32 colour illus.; 9780863157677, £ 12.99 (hbk)

Caitlin E. Murdock, *Changing Places: Society, Culture and Territory in the Saxon-Bohemian Borderlands, 1870-1946*, University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 2010; 276 pp.; 9780472117222, \$ 75.00 (hbk)

Martina Steber, *Ethnische Gewissheiten. Die Ordnung des Regionalen im bayerischen Schwaben vom Kaiserreich bis zum NS-Regime*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Göttingen, 2010; 640 pp.; 9783525368473, € 90.95 (hbk)

Elizabeth Vlossak, *Marianne or Germania? Nationalizing Women in Alsace, 1870-1946*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2010; 330 pp., 4 illus.; 9780199561117, £ 60.00 (hbk)

Helena Waddy, *Oberammergau in the Nazi Era: The Fate of a Catholic Village in Hitler's Germany*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2010; 338 pp., 20 illus.; 9780195371277, £ 22.50 (hbk)

Twenty years have passed since the publication of two ground-breaking books that in a way inaugurated the study of regional identities in Europe: Celia Applegate's *A Nation of Provincials: The German Idea of Heimat* and Anne-Marie Thiesse's *Écrire la France. Le mouvement littéraire régionaliste de langue française entre la Belle Époque et la Libération*.<sup>1</sup> Although their background and approach were very different – Applegate focusing on nation-building in the Palatinate region and Thiesse applying Bourdieu's theories about the literary field to regionalist literature – both basically understood regional identities as being constructed, thus applying the new modernist interpretation of the nation as developed by Anderson, Gellner and Hobsbawm to regions.

Since the publication of these works, regionalism has primarily been studied within clear national historiographical traditions. For instance, Alon Confino and many German historians have followed Applegate's example by using a cultural approach to study the Heimat-movement in one region of the German Empire,<sup>2</sup> while in France most scholars have

focused on the political integration of various regions within the Third Republic. This was done from a regional perspective by Caroline Ford for Brittany and by Timothy Baycroft for French Flanders. The political aspects of French regionalism were also studied at a national level by Thiesse in her book on the role of the regions in national education and by Julian Wright in his study of the *Fédération Régionaliste Française*.<sup>3</sup>

Charlotte Tacke made clear that the distinction between a political concept of the nation (*Staatsnation*) in the French case and a more cultural definition of nationhood (*Kulturnation*) in Germany has been perpetuated in the national research preferences of historians.<sup>4</sup> This now also seems to be the case in the study of regionalism, since regionalism in France is primarily understood as a political phenomenon, while in Germany it is mainly studied as a cultural movement.<sup>5</sup> Similar distinctions are found elsewhere in Europe. Spain, Italy and Belgium seem primarily to follow the French model,<sup>6</sup> while in the Scandinavian countries, England and the Netherlands a cultural interpretation of regionalism seems to prevail.<sup>7</sup> In Eastern Europe, in turn, the focus is more on the interaction and rivalry between ethnic communities at a local level and the subsequent rise of national movements.<sup>8</sup>

In recent years, however, regionalism has been approached from many new angles as well. Obviously, ethnologists, who already have a well-established research tradition, continue to examine dialect, peasant culture and folklore, while in many cases incorporating the new findings of the study of regional identities. However, in the fields of environmental studies, historical preservation and geography more attention is also being paid to regional identities.<sup>9</sup> The role of religion and the impact of regionalism and nationalism on children have also been analysed.<sup>10</sup> And not only the territorial identity of rural regions has come under scrutiny, the same has happened with modern cities, such as Hamburg and Barcelona.<sup>11</sup> Following Anne-Marie Thiesse's pioneering study on French regionalist literature, the representation – and often even the invention – of regional identities in literature, art,

architecture and international exhibitions has been more closely studied.<sup>12</sup> More innovative probably are studies that focus on the role of tourism, consumption and marketing in the construction and diffusion of regional identities.<sup>13</sup>

As a consequence of this growing body of research, regionalism has become recognized as a transnational phenomenon.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, international comparative studies are still very rare.<sup>15</sup> So what do the books under review here contribute to the existing body of knowledge?

Martina Steber's book fits neatly into the German historiographical tradition of regionalist studies by focusing on the (cultural) *Heimat*-movement in one region. In this case, she looks at the Western, Swabian part of Bavaria. Nevertheless, it is a very thorough and comprehensive study of the development of all kinds of regionalist organisations from the late nineteenth century until the end of the Nazi-era. The author closely analyses the social background of the movement's membership, its relationship to all kinds of political authorities and the region-building consequences of the creation of a more active and democratic Kreistag (County Council) of Swabia and Neuburg. She further examines the ideological implications of the supposedly 'apolitical' *Heimat* ideals, which became quite obvious when the various regionalist associations were voluntarily 'brought into line' under the new Nazi-regime in 1933. However, from about 1936 it also became clear that regionalist goals were subordinate to the racial ideas, political centralisation and imperialistic designs of the Nazis. In the end, regionalism only retained a decorative function and was used mainly for mass entertainment – particularly by performing Swabian dances and songs. These aspects of Swabian folklore would remain popular after 1945, although the author does not refer to regionalism's continued existence.

One of the most fascinating parts of the book deals with the uncertain years at the end of the First World War when regionalist activists pleaded for the creation of a great Swabian State. Invoking Wilson's right of self-determination, the Ulmer regionalist Karl Magirus and a small group of followers hoped that parts of Austria and Switzerland, Alsace, Württemberg and Bavarian Swabia could be united into a new Swabian nation-state. When peace negotiations in Paris made clear that this was not a feasible goal, they shifted their attention to closer cooperation between the Swabian parts of Bavaria, Württemberg and Hohenzollern. Since many in Bavarian Swabia were suspicious of the authorities in Munich – first towards the unpopular monarchy and then the socialist revolutionaries led by Kurt Eisner – these ideas enjoyed surprising popularity if only for a brief period of time. Interestingly, the Nazis would build upon some of these ideas by creating a separate Swabian Gau.

Since the book is based on a dissertation, defended at the University of Augsburg, the references to primary sources (archives, newspapers and other publications) and secondary studies are very extensive (with a bibliography of over a hundred pages). Therefore, it is slightly disappointing that the author – who currently works at the German Historical Institute in London – does not make real comparisons with other regions. So in the end it is not very clear how the evolution of the regionalist movement in this particular part of Bavaria (that did not identify itself as Bavarian, nor was uniformly Catholic) relates to the rise and evolution of regionalism elsewhere. Nonetheless, she very convincingly shows how the regionalist associations played an important role in integrating this particular area into the larger German nation, while at the same time more clearly defining their own regional identity.

While Steber analyses the interactions between local, social, religious, political, Bavarian, Swabian and national identities in a relatively large area, Helena Waddy's book is at the same time more focused and more limited since she examines the 'fate of a Catholic village in Hitler's Germany'. However, Oberammergau in the Upper-Bavarian district of

Garmisch-Partenkirchen is not just any village since it is widely known for its Passion Play. In the early seventeenth century the village vowed to re-enact the suffering of Christ and since then the Passion Play has been performed every ten years involving almost the entire community. As a consequence, the village became a tourist attraction during the nineteenth century. By 1900, the Passion Play was attended by over 175.000 visitors many of whom were foreigners. The villagers thus had a strong sense of local identity, while associating themselves closely with Catholicism.

Although the focus of the book is on the Nazi era, the author provides a detailed analysis of the social and political developments in the village between 1900 and 1950. In the first chapters, she shows how the local inhabitants competed for the most prestigious roles in the Passion Play and for a position on its organizing committee, while at the same time sharing strong community bonds which effectively barred most outsiders. Migrants for example had to live in the village for twenty years before being allowed to participate in the play. The strong identification of the established population with the village, its Passion Play and Catholicism, according to the author, also formed an effective barrier to the spread of Nazism. When, after Hitler's rise to power in January 1933, many local notables became members of the NSDAP, they did so to protect their community and its ancestral traditions. However, the political transition was not totally smooth. Some local Nazis, led by the commander of the local SA *Motorsturm* chapter – who was a migrant – tried to impose themselves on the village by taking a much more radical stance than the insider Nazi-leaders who tried to follow a more peaceful and 'benign' course. This led to some violent clashes, but in the end the insiders prevailed.

Helena Waddy, who is a professor of History at the State University of New York at Geneseo, also makes clear how Hitler's regime ended in a giant experiment in social engineering, which effectively transformed the village from a supposedly 'racially pure'



idyllic community into a highly international, modern town. During the war, refugees from bombed German cities (many of whom were Protestants) were relocated to the village. Moreover, a Messerschmidt plant and Wernher von Braun's rocket-design team were transferred to the village. These facilities in turn attracted engineers, but also prisoners of war from France, Poland and the Soviet Union, foreign workers from Italy and forced labourers from the occupied countries. Although the great majority of these temporary inhabitants would leave the village in 1945, in the immediate aftermath of the war new waves of refugees, particularly displaced ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe, would have a lasting impact on the composition of the village's population.

This case study provides a fascinating picture of the rise, the formation and the impact of the Nazi-dictatorship on a Bavarian village. However, Waddy's central thesis that Catholicism and a strong local identity prevented a thorough Nazification of Oberammergau, is not entirely convincing. Adolf Hitler, for example, was hailed as a guest of honour at the special 1934 Passion Play, which was celebrating its third centennial. Moreover, many Catholics became members of the NSDAP and most villagers more or less enthusiastically supported the war effort. Moreover, by entirely focusing on the role of religion, the author largely ignores local and regional associations, especially those of a *völkisch*, regionalist or nationalist nature. As a consequence, it is not clear how the village became integrated into the regional and national community. It would be interesting to know to what extent the villagers identified themselves as Bavarians and Germans and how this changed during the Nazi era. The analysis could have also been further developed if the author had given more attention to some of the main actors. Only halfway through the book do some of the more important protagonists become discernable from the mass of background performers. Unfortunately, however, these characters never become fully developed since the author refrains from

providing more personal details, physical descriptions or more psychological portraits, which could have in fact enlivened the narrative.

The third author, Caitlin Murdock, applies a completely different approach to the study of a German border region. For her case study, Murdock selected the border region of northern Bohemia – also known as Sudetenland – and southern Saxony. Instead of focusing on a conflictive and unstable border, as most scholars in the field of border studies have done, the author decided to choose a border which had been stable since 1635 with the explicit aim of examining how the intensification of the state- and nation-building processes on both sides of the frontier affected the local communities. Although in each of the chapters, based on a great variety of sources in both German and Czech, she devotes attention to both sides of the border, in general the starting point is the situation in Saxony.

After the Prussian-Austrian War of 1866, the *Ausgleich* of 1867 and the creation of the German Empire in 1871, the Saxon-Bohemian border became the separation line between two large Central European Empires. However, during the subsequent decades the dividing effect of the new state-building processes was offset by rapid industrialization and the construction of better roads and new railways in Saxony and Bohemia, which substantially increased traffic, trade and (temporary) migration between both regions, and which ultimately led to the creation of a new and more cohesive cross-border community. Higher wages or lower prices in the neighbouring region provided strong incentives to cross the border for work or shopping, while mutual relations were also encouraged by tourism, entertainment (beer being cheaper in Bohemia) and marriages. Both the German and Austrian state – under pressure from the local inhabitants – even had to introduce special provisions allowing people in border districts to import small quantities of goods and food for private consumption without paying customs duties.

Until 1914, nation-building on both sides of the border was not so much stimulated by the state as by nationalist organizations and movements. The rising nationalistic climate, however, also affected the way foreigners were considered in Saxony. Thus, while in the 1870s and 1880s all non-Saxon citizens were still considered ‘foreign’, towards the end of the century ‘foreigners’ were increasingly those who were not ethnic Germans. Therefore, in local debates about migration workers – which in Saxony mainly came from adjacent territories in the south and east – German-speaking workers from Bohemia were not considered foreigners and new measures by the central government in Berlin to regulate foreign labour did not have much effect in the Saxon border communities. Czech and German nationalist groups in Bohemia, on the other hand, began to resent migration to Saxony since it seemed to weaken their cause within Austria.

Although Germany and Austria were allies, the intensification of state- and nation-building during the First World War began driving Saxony and Bohemia apart. The border was better guarded, citizenship suddenly became more important as men were drafted into the army, economic relations were disrupted; and shortages led states to control resources, production and welfare provisions more closely. Moreover, the hardships of the war and the final defeat badly affected the reputation of the Empires. In Austria national communities became the principle alternative for the failed Habsburg regime. Thus national affiliation became more important than ever and while Czech nationalists claimed the entire Bohemian lands for the new state of Czechoslovakia, German nationalists had few viable options. In the Fall of 1918, with socialist revolutions threatening to take over power in Saxony and other parts of Germany, paradoxically German-Bohemian industrialists – who recognized that they could not compete with German industry – preferred the inclusion of Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia, while German-speaking socialists hoped to join a greater Germany, a solution that was obviously blocked by the victorious Western powers.

The importance of the border seems to have increased during the Interwar period. Cross-border traffic and trade were disrupted due to the economic upheavals caused by hyperinflation and the Great Depression. Saxons began to view their former 'German brothers' increasingly as 'Czechs' and the border started to be considered a protective barrier against foreign competition and possible threats. The Nazi-era with its pan-German rhetoric did not improve the situation, because economic protectionism effectively impeded improving relations between Saxons and their ethnic German neighbours. Moreover, the annexation of Sudetenland in 1938 brought concrete disadvantages to its German speaking inhabitants. They were drafted into the army, while their Czech neighbours were exempted. Meanwhile Czech-speaking labourers moved to the *Sudetengau* for work thereby upsetting the delicate population balance.

The book, which is based on a dissertation at Stanford University, offers a very detailed analysis of the developments in the Saxon-Bohemian border region. However, in the end, it does not present a very clear picture. The situation was, of course, very complex and certain developments had various contradicting consequences. For instance, price differences led consumers to favour an open border, but shopkeepers who lost clients pleaded for protectionist measures. This complexity is in part the result of the choices made by the author, who looks at a broad area on both sides of the 300 kilometre border. Instead of focusing on a particular stretch, she gives examples from a large number of villages, towns, sub-regions and even further lying cities such as the Saxon capital of Dresden. This way, her picture becomes more nuanced, but maybe also more blurred. Unfortunately, in the end the different lines of argumentation are not drawn together in a well-knit conclusion. Instead the book ends with a short epilogue which briefly discusses the expulsion of ethnic Germans from Czechoslovakia in 1946 and more recent developments.

A region that recently has attracted quite some scholarly attention is Alsace. It became a part of France during the seventeenth century, although its population for the most part continued to speak a German dialect. The province constitutes an even more fascinating case for the study of regional identities since between 1871 and 1944 it changed hands four times. It was added to the German Empire in 1871 and returned to France in 1919; in 1940 Nazi-Germany reannexed the region, but it became French again after its liberation by the Allies in 1944. The two books on regionalist sentiments in Alsace discussed here clearly belong to the French historiographical tradition. This is most obvious with Christopher Fisher's study of Alsatian regionalism – the result of a doctorate at the University of North Carolina – which focuses almost exclusively on the political aspects. Although the subtitle *Visions and Divisions of Alsatian Regionalism, 1870-1939* suggests that the entire period between the Franco-Prussian War and the beginning of the Second World War is studied, the author focuses mainly on the period between the rise of regionalism around 1890 and the 1920s.

Fisher's *Alsace to the Alsatians* is a detailed and nuanced analysis of the various regional movements. Basically there were four different currents, which came into being in the late nineteenth century, but that did not change very much after Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France. The two mainstream groups accepted the existing situation, especially in the long periods when the relations between the region and the national government were not too strained, providing more proof that regionalism in general was not inherently opposed to the wider nation-building project by the existing state, be it the German Empire or the French Third Republic. Thus, a large group, led by the playwright Gustave Stoskopf, tried to develop or to 'protect' a separate Alsatian identity by promoting the use of the local dialect in literature and the theatre. Another influential group consisted of French speaking activists who established the Musée Alsatienne. By focusing on folklore and the supposed timeless essence of the region, they hoped to protect it from being Germanized while fostering the

traditional bonds with France. In the long run they accepted the annexation to Germany, although the adverse situation during the First World War did change their favourable attitude. A third, more peripheral group could be identified as German nationalist and favoured a thorough Germanization of the Alsace, while another small group continued to plea for a return of Alsace to France.

The best known representative of the last group is Hansi, which was the pen-name of Jean-Jacques Waltz. In 1912 and 1913 he published two books with beautiful drawings in which he mocked the Germans entitled *The History of Alsace, Recounted to the Small Children of Alsace and Lorraine by Uncle Hansi* and *My Village: Those Who Do Not Forget; Images and Commentary by Uncle Hansi*. A selection of his drawings and (French) comments has now been published in an English translation by Floris Books. Although it could serve as a beautiful visual and textual primary source for educational purposes, the disadvantage of this edition is that it does not become clear which part of the French originals have been selected. The political message of Hansi's satirical pictures is also analysed by Fischer; especially the depiction of historical and political events and the negative stereotypes of the Germans as opposed to the flattering images of the French. However, he does not pay much attention to the Alsatian self-image as represented in Hansi's drawings, which clearly show an idealised traditional rural society, in which middle-class values were dominant and a strict division between gender roles reinforced the message that the Alsations essentially formed an orderly and harmonious community.

Although Fischer is familiar with the major research studies that focus on French and German regionalism,<sup>16</sup> he implicitly treats Alsace as if it were an isolated case by explaining the development of the various regional movements as almost exclusively based on the exceptional circumstances of the region. The suspicious attitude of both the German and French government towards the inhabitants of the province created a feeling of unease among

the Alsatians, as if they were being colonised, which led to an increase in regionalist sentiments. However, the evolution of Alsatian regionalism shows many parallels with the rise and consolidation of regionalist feelings elsewhere. Alsatian regionalism, like regionalist movements elsewhere, only rose to prominence in the 1890s.<sup>17</sup> In 1911, when Home Rule for Ireland was a burning issue in the United Kingdom, Alsace-Lorraine received a greater measure of regional autonomy in the German Empire, with (Spanish) Catalonia following in 1914. After 1919, Alsatian regionalists adopted the new terminology of the League of Nations and began to refer to themselves as a national minority. Moreover, like in other regions such as Brittany, French and Belgian Flanders, the Spanish Basque Country, Catalonia and Silesia, Catholics played a leading role in the mainstream regionalist movements. We may thus conclude that, although the situation of the region was very exceptional, the development of Alsatian regionalism seems to fit quite neatly within a wider European pattern.

Elizabeth Vlossak's *Marianne or Germania? Nationalizing Women in Alsace, 1870-1846* is a much less conventional work than Fischer's book. By focusing more on individual Alsatians, and particularly women, she succeeds in providing a very insightful picture of what it meant to be transferred from one country to another. One of the main conclusions of her investigations is that both the German and the French nation-building efforts met with serious obstacles because nationalism was 'hot' in this contested province. German and French nationhood was 'consciously registered' and never easily internalized by becoming 'banal', as occurred in most of the other French and German regions.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, like Fisher the author argues that Alsatians developed a strong sense of regional identity largely in response for being the battleground of French and German nationalism.

Thus, like in Fischer's book, and in fact all the other studies reviewed here, Vlossak explains the rise and evolution of Alsatian regionalism almost exclusively from developments within the region itself (including its national and international context). However, it has

become obvious that regionalism also – and maybe primarily – was a transnational process and that the rise or even invention of more clearly defined regional identities basically occurred everywhere in Europe from about 1890. The nation-building process did not only become more intense in a contested province like the Alsace, but all over the continent. This was caused both by an almost automatic process of improving transportation facilities, the population's increased levels of education, the modernization of the economy, and active nation-building policies taken by various state authorities and national and regional elites – who became increasingly worried about the loyalty of the new or future voters – which became visible in the ever growing number of national monuments, statues of national heroes, commemorations, among other things. However, the national identity that had to be transmitted to the peripheral rural areas was ill-suited for this task as it was still largely determined by the high culture of the large urban centres. Thus until the end of the nineteenth century statues were only erected for famous (former) members of the national elite such as kings, politicians, generals, artists, writers and scientists. Therefore, regionalism can be seen as a process that helped nationalism to adapt itself to the new situation and which consisted primarily of a widening of the existing national identity by including the popular culture of the provinces. And this process occurred almost simultaneously on a national and regional level. Thus, artefacts of a regionally diverse peasant culture became worthy objects that were exposed both in new regional and national museums. There was also a widespread new appreciation for dialects and other expressions of a presumably authentic vernacular low culture, which became clear for example when villas were now modelled on farmsteads. This regionalist revival possibly even began at international exhibitions.<sup>19</sup>

Although Vlossak does not pay much attention to the more cultural or (trans-) national aspects of this process, her detailed examinations of how both the German and French nation-building process – and especially their more political and legal aspects – affected Alsatian



women is very insightful. Vlossak, by providing a close analysis of the diaries of a Jewish woman from Colmar written during the First World War, shows how the anti-French rhetoric and suspicious attitude of the authorities and individual Germans slowly alienated the diary's author and many other Alsations from Germany. And although most inhabitants of the province had come to accept the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine to the German Empire, at the end of the war the majority enthusiastically welcomed the French. However, since such extensive autobiographical sources are relatively few, during most of her study Vlossak draws a more general picture, focussing on how women dealt with the changing circumstances.

Vlossak makes clear that the nation-building process affected women in a less direct manner than men, since most girls did not attend school for as long and they did not have to serve in the army. Besides, girls were nationalised in a different way. They were taught to be future housewives and mothers. This nationalization process, according to the author, was continued in women's supplements in newspapers and magazines. By learning all kinds of domestic virtues, the readers became part of 'the imagined community of German *Hausfrauen*'.<sup>20</sup> However, because the German feminist movement strongly identified with German nationalism (and its anti-French tenets), most Alsatian women's organizations preferred to stress their regional or confessional character.

The most interesting part of the book deals with the impact of the wars. Alsatian men fought four times on the losing side: in 1870, in 1914, in 1939-40 and finally in 1944-45. Each time, and particularly after the First and Second World Wars, it was difficult to publicly commemorate the war, since the Alsations had actually been on the 'wrong' side. However, particularly during the first German 'occupation' French propaganda had disseminated the belief or myth that Alsatian women had sustained French traditions in the intimacy of their own homes and thus had actively resisted Germanization (while the Alsatian men in many cases had only served the French cause by 'cowardly' deserting the German army).

Nonetheless, Alsatian women were not rewarded for their supposedly brave behaviour. Since the legal status of women in the French Civil Code was inferior to that in Germany, women lost many of their rights and were even excluded from suffrage (which was now granted to women in the Weimar Republic but not in France). Alsatian women thus were discriminated against when at the end of 1918 the French government decided to issue new identity cards to Alsatians based on national descent. French or native Alsatian women who had married a German were considered to have adopted the nationality of their husbands and thus became foreigners. Some were even expelled to Germany because of the wartime behaviour of their spouse. Something similar happened after liberation in 1944. When collaborators were punished, women who were accused of ‘horizontal collaboration’ were often treated more harshly than men. Thus, in many instances, women had less to gain from their (new) fatherland than men. At the end of chapter five, the author therefore concludes: ‘For the women of Alsace, the only constants during these turbulent times... were family, religion and the region itself’.

In the end, we can conclude that all the studies under review here draw a much more complex picture of the nation-building process in the provinces. We have seen, for example, that women were nationalized in a different way than men, that regional identities were not unequivocal and like national identities were interpreted in various ways by differing (ideological) groups, that inhabitants of border regions or villages could invoke their national identity to protect their own local or regional interests and that cultural movements that aimed to protect the regional heritage always had an implicit political agenda as well. It has thus become clear that local and regional identities interfered in many different ways with the internalization of national identities and that henceforth it seems reasonable to study regionalism as a movement in which cultural and political aspects are intimately intertwined.

These books on various parts of France and Germany also reinforce the conclusion that the process of reconciling regional diversity into a more encompassing reformed national identity clearly was a transnational phenomenon that occurred when Europe began to enter the age of the masses. Because of the apparent urgency to integrate the lower classes into the nation, the identity of the nation was democratized and decentralized. Instead of merely reflecting the high culture of the elite of the mayor cities, the traditional popular culture of the countryside became an integral part of the national heritage. And this process was stimulated both by members of the national elites who understood that the integration of a wider strata of the population was needed in order to guarantee political stability in the long run and by activists from the region who wanted a more dignified place for their own cultural achievements. Although other responses to the rise of mass politics were possible – such as a more aggressive and imperialistic exalted nationalism – the new culture of regionalism was a direct consequence of this new phase of the nation-building process.

As has become manifest in this review most studies still focus on one region, which in general is studied in isolation, thus implicitly constructing a new *Sonderweg* by suggesting that the main actors who shaped the new regional identities came from the area itself, while they were reacting to the particular circumstances in which their homeland found itself. The challenge now will be to bring together this growing number of new regional *Sonderwege* by trying to detect similarities, transnational phases, common rhetorical strategies and underlying patterns.

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<sup>1</sup> Celia Applegate, *A Nation of Provincials. The German Idea of Heimat* (Berkeley 1990); Anne-Marie Thiesse, *Écrire la France. Le Mouvement littéraire régionaliste de langue française entre la Belle Époque et la Libération* (Paris 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Alon Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918* (Chapel Hill 1997). See also Dietmar von Reeken, *Heimatabewegung, Kulturpolitik und Nationalsozialismus: Die Geschichte der „Ostfriesische Landschaft“* (Aurich 1995) and Thomas Kühne, 'Die Region als Konstrukt. Regionalgeschichte als Kulturgeschichte' in: James Retallack ed., *Sachsen in Deutschland. Politik, Kultur und Gesellschaft 1830-1918* (Bielefeld 2000) 253-264.

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<sup>3</sup> Caroline Ford, *Creating the Nation in Provincial France: Religion and Political Identity in Brittany* (Princeton 1993); Timothy Baycroft, *Culture, Identity and Nationalism: French Flanders in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Century* (Woodbridge 2004); Anne-Marie Thiesse, *Ils apprenait la France. L'Exaltation des régions dans le discours patriotique* (Paris 1997) and Julian Wright, *The Regionalist Movement in France 1890-1914: Jean Charles-Brun and French Political Thought* (Oxford 2003).

<sup>4</sup> Charlotte Tacke, 'National Symbols in France and Germany in the Nineteenth Century' in: Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, Michael Müller and Stuart Woolf eds., *Regional and National Identities in Europe in the XIXth and XXth Centuries* (The Hague 1998) 411-413.

<sup>5</sup> It should be acknowledged that regions have also been studied from a political perspective, however in this case the focus has been on the tension between small states and the new German Empire around the unification of Germany. See for example, Abigail Green, *Fatherlands: State-Building and Nationhood in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge 2001) and Siegfried Weichlein, *Nation und Region. Integrationsprozesse im Bismarckreich* (Düsseldorf 2004).

<sup>6</sup> See for example: Daniele Conversi, *The Basques, the Catalans and Spain: Alternative Routes to Nationalist Mobilisation* (Reno 1997); Xosé-Manoel Núñez, 'The Region as Essence of the Fatherland: Regionalist Variants of Spanish Nationalism (1840-1936)', *European History Quarterly* (2001) 483-518; Carl Levy ed., *Italian Regionalism: History, Identity and Politics* (Oxford 1996); Stefano Cavazza, *Piccole Patrie. Feste popolari tra regione e nazione durante il fascismo* (Bologna 1997); Lode Wils, *Van de Belgische naar de Vlaamse natie: Een geschiedenis van de Vlaamse Beweging* (Leuven 2009) and Maarten Van Ginderachter, *Le chant du coq. Nation et nationalisme en Wallonie depuis 1880* (Ghent 2005).

<sup>7</sup> See for example: Michael Jones and Kenneth R. Olwig, eds., *Nordic Landscapes: Region and Belonging on the Northern Edge of Europe* (Minneapolis 2008); Robert Colls, ed., *Northumbria. History and Identity 547-2000* (Chichester 2007) and Daniël Broersma, *Het wonderland achter de horizon. Groninger regionaal besef in nationaal verband 1903-1963* (Assen 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Keely Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland 1848-1914* (Ithaca 2001); Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948* (Princeton 2002) and Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge MA 2007).

<sup>9</sup> See for example William H. Rollins, *A Greener Vision of Home. Cultural Politics and Environmental Reform in the German Heimatschutz Movement 1904-1918* (Ann Arbor 1997); Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts. Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill 1998); Thomas M. Lekan, *Imagining the Nation in Nature: Landscape Preservation and German Identity, 1885-1945* (Cambridge 2004); Danny Trom, 'Natur und nationale Identität. Der Streit um den Schutz der "Natur" um die Jahrhundertwende in Deutschland und Frankreich' in: E. François, H. Siegrist and J. Vogel, eds., *Nation und Emotion. Deutschland und Frankreich im Vergleich 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen 1995) 147-168; Nicolás Ortega Cantero, ed., *Paisaje, memoria histórica e identidad nacional* (Madrid 2005).

<sup>10</sup> James E. Bjork, *Neither German Nor Pole: Catholicism and National Indifference in a Central European Borderland* (Ann Arbor 2008) and Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands 1900-1948* (Ithaca 2008).

<sup>11</sup> Jennifer Jenkins, *Provincial Modernity: Local Culture and Liberal Politics in Fin-de-Siècle Hamburg* (Ithaca 2003); Stéphane Michonneau, *Barcelona. Mémoire et identité, 1830-1930* (Rennes 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Examples are: Linda van Santvoort, Jan de Maeyer and Tom Verschaffel, eds., *Sources of Regionalism in the Nineteenth Century: Art, Architecture and Literature* (Leuven 2008); Herbert Van Uffelen, Dirk de Geest, Christine Hermann and Hilde Moors, eds., *Heimatliteratur 1900-1950 – regional, national, international* Wiener Schriften zur niederländischen Sprache und Kultur (Vienna 2009); Neil McWilliam, *Monumental Intolerance: Jean Baffier a Nationalist Sculptor in Fin-de-Siècle France* (University Park 2000); Eric Storm, 'Painting Regional Identities: Nationalism in the Arts, France, Germany and Spain, 1890-1914', *European History Quarterly* (2009) 557-582; Daniel le Couédic, *Les Architectes et l'idée bretonne 1904-1945. D'un renouveau des arts à la renaissance d'une identité* (Saint-Brieuc 1995); François Loyer and Bernard Toulhier, eds., *Le Régionalisme, architecture et identité* (Paris 2001) and Shanny Peer, *France on Display: Peasants, Provincials, and Folklore in the 1937 Paris World's Fair* (New York 1998).

<sup>13</sup> Manuel Schramm, *Konsum und regionale Identität in Sachsen 1880-2000. Die Regionalisierung von Konsumgütern im Spannungsfeld von Nationalisierung und Globalisierung* (Stuttgart 2003); Kolleen M. Guy, *When Champagne became French: Wine and the Making of National Identity* (Baltimore 2007); Philip Whalen, 'Burgundian Regionalism and French Republican Commercial Culture at the 1937 Paris International Exposition', *Cultural Analysis* 6 (2007) 31-69; Katherina Haldane Grenier, *Tourism and Identity in Scotland, 1770-1914: Creating Caledonia* (Aldershot 2005); Joshua Hagen, *Preservation, Tourism and Nationalism: The Jewel of the German Past* (Aldershot 2006); Luca Pes, 'L'invenzione della cucina veneziana. Consumi, turismo

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e identità cittadina', *Memoria e Ricerca* (2006) 47-62 and Patrick Young, 'Fashioning Heritage: Regional Costume and Tourism in Brittany, 1890-1937', *Journal of Social History* (2009) 631-656.

<sup>14</sup> See the historiographical overviews of Celia Applegate, 'A Europe of Regions: Reflections on the Historiography of Sub-National Places in Modern Times', *American Historical Review* (1999) 1157-1183, Eric Storm, 'Regionalism in History, 1890-1945: The Cultural Approach', *European History Quarterly* (2003) 251-265 and Xosé-Manoel Núñez, 'Historiographical Approaches to Sub-National Identities in Europe: A Reappraisal and Some Suggestions' in: Joost Augusteyn and Eric Storm, eds., *Nation and Region: Nation-Building, Regional Identities and Separatism in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Basingstoke forthcoming).

<sup>15</sup> Apart from the systematic comparative study by Eric Storm, *The Culture of Regionalism: Art, Architecture and International Exhibitions in France, Germany and Spain, 1890-1939* (Manchester 2010), there are only some edited volumes in which almost all articles still deal with one regional or national case, such as Philipp Ther and Holm Sundhausen, eds., *Regionale Bewegungen und Regionalismen in europäischen Zwischenräumen seit der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Marburg 2003); Xosé M. Núñez Seixas, ed., *Ayer 64 La construcción de la identidad regional en Europa y España (siglos XIX y XX)* (2006); Maiken Umbach, ed., *European Review of History* XV, 3, *Municipalism, Regionalism, Nationalism: Hybrid Identity Formations and the Making of Modern Europe* (2008).

<sup>16</sup> He briefly discusses the findings of Applegate and Confino for the German case and also, among others, refers to the studies of Thiesse, Ford, Wright and Ford for France.

<sup>17</sup> I have tried to analyze some factors that led to the transnational rise of regionalism around 1890 in more detail in: Eric Storm, 'The Brith of Regionalism and the Crisis of Reason: France, Germany and Spain' in: Joost Augusteyn and Eric Storm, eds., *Nation and Region: Nation-Building, Regional Identities and Separatism in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Basingstoke forthcoming).

<sup>18</sup> Vlossak refers to Michael Billig's influential study *Banal Nationalism* (London 1995).

<sup>19</sup> See for example Bjarne Stoklund, 'How the Peasant House Became a National Symbol. A Chapter in the History of Museums and Nation-Building', *Ethnologia Europaea*, XXIX (1999) 5-18; Martin Wörner, *Vergnügen und Belehren. Volkskultur auf den Weltausstellungen 1850-1900* (Münster 1999) and Ad de Jong, *De dirigenten van de herinnering. Musealisering en nationalisering van de volkscultuur in Nederland, 1815-1940* (Nijmegen 2001).

<sup>20</sup> Here the author refers to Nancy R. Reagin, 'The Imagined Hausfrau: National Identity, Domesticity, and Colonialism in Imperial Germany', *Journal of Modern History* (2001) 54-86.