

Memorials in Times of Transition Edited by Susanne Buckley-Zistel and Stefanie Schafer. Cambridge (UK), Antwerp (Belgium) and Portland (USA): Intersentia Publishing, 2014. Pp. 245. US\$97 Hardcover.

Memorials have come to be widely used as mechanisms of 'symbolic reparation' within the broader scope of transitional justice processes. However, as Buckley-Zistel and Schafer point out in their introduction to this edited collection, not enough work has been done on either theoretical frameworks or evaluation in the field to understand how memorials operate in practice. This volume brings together work by transitional justice practitioners and academics from the fields of peace and conflict studies. The editors put forward this book as a contribution towards bringing analytical expertise from the field of memory studies together with on the ground experience of transitional justice. The aim is to work towards greater understanding of how memorials 'work' by offering a cross-section of qualitative case studies from a variety of different contexts.

The book is divided into three sections, although the divisions between the last two are largely arbitrary. The introduction offers a general background into the development of transitional justice as a dominant international discourse since the end of WW2, and provides a broad overview of memorial trends over the same timeframe. Chapters by Ereshnee Naidu and Judy Barsalou in the first section build on this background, exploring the strengths and weaknesses of memorials as transitional justice tools and what role experts and outsiders have to play in local commemoration projects. In terms of framing the rest of the book, Julia Viebach's chapter leads the way into the more directed case studies which form the rest of the volume. Viebach draws on research in in post-genocide Rwanda, suggesting that understanding the political or 'outside' perspective on memorials must always be balanced by recognition of the more personal and intimate role they play for those directly connected to them.

Buckley-Zistel and Schafer identify a division in memorial research which either considers a memorial's physicality (form and aesthetics) or political function, but rarely both. Although the remaining two sections of the book are divided along just such a split, the distinction is largely arbitrary, as all the authors address both sides of this particular coin. Each chapter is built around a particular case study, and the wide ranging geographical selection indicates the breadth of contexts covered by the term 'transitional justice'.

Many of the case studies in this volume draw on specific theoretical frameworks for their analysis, assisting the editors' aim of contributing towards a more thorough approach to evaluation of memorials in transitional justice contexts. For researchers in the field, this means the book not only offers interesting analysis, but potential theoretical tools that can be adapted for future work. Viebach draws on Scarry's concept of 'making the world' to consider the ways those intimately connected to memorials use them as a means of working through their grief or trauma, considering this in relation to the Greek notion of *aletheia*, which expresses concepts of truth-telling and remembering as a practice of justice. Buckley-Zistel uses Foucault's notion of heterotopia to consider memorials as 'other' spaces, set apart from the everyday, and which need to be evaluated in terms of not only their internal character but how they function in relation to their external context. Christian Braun draws on James Young's 'biography of a memorial' framework, looking at three phases of its conception, its finished form, and its life in the mind of the community over time. Elizabeth Strakosch's chapter considers memorials as 'technologies of temporality', problematising the uncritical application of transitional justice mechanisms in post-settler colonial contexts where conflict has been unacknowledged and where no structural redistribution of power has taken place.

A number of the authors make the point that an understanding of the local context is important for a reading of the meaning created by the form and spatiality of memorials. For example, Strakosch points out that the use of a post-modern aesthetic in Australia's Reconciliation Place, located in a highly symbolic space within the national capital, creates an impression that all perspectives on the past are equally valid; an approach which downplays Aboriginal peoples' experiences of injustices. The ethical challenge of addressing multiple sides in any conflict is a recurring theme through many of the case studies in this volume. For many survivors of conflict, it seems that part of the 'justice' of memorials is the way they make visible the events of the past, raising questions about their usefulness in assisting societies to mend social, cultural or political divisions which the memorials may in fact emphasise. Indeed, as Kristian Brown points out, transitional justice approaches generally tend to emphasise political or ethnic divisions. Brown's chapter on gendered memorials in Northern Ireland suggests that more vernacular memorials which focus on the everyday lived experience of conflict -- in this case for women -- draw on familiar tropes but at times subvert them, creating potential openings for identification across established boundaries. Similarly, Karoline Klep's chapter points to the importance of moving away from discourses of victimhood toward an emphasis on agency. By considering two different transitional justice inquiries in Chile and the ways they connect to two temporally related memorial projects, she opens up the question of the ongoing life of memory work, and the importance of assisting people in the present and future to understand the context surrounding the conflict being remembered.

In contrast, two case studies in the book's final section return to the question raised by Viebach, of how memorials can contribute to reconciliation if their primary purpose is to draw constant attention to past injustice. Braun argues that not enough work has been done to consider how memorials function in an ongoing way in deeply divided societies. His case study on the Srebrenica memorial suggests that, having been driven by political aims rather than the needs of survivors or the families of victims, it effectively reproduces the social divides of the war. Given the conflict unfolding in the Ukraine as the book went to print, the warning contained in Tatiana Zhurzhenko's case study is even more striking, as she suggests that political framing of the Holodomor or great famine of the 1930s as genocide of the Ukrainian peasants by Russia has been used to create ethnic divisions that may previously not have been important.

The collection has been well-selected to bring together a variety of perspectives on memorialisation practices and outcomes. While the text would benefit from more thorough proof-reading, the content makes a valuable and overdue contribution, bringing together two fields that have developed in parallel and with a lot to contribute to one another. The warning notes are timely, but are balanced by more optimistic suggestions that memorials can indeed operate as part of the transition justice toolkit, if they are given the opportunity to integrate into other processes, rather than being driven by political ends.

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