

the depth and breadth of vision Hall exhibited in his career on and off the bench (p. 255). As it stands, the biography devotes too much text to Hall's early career as a lawyer and perhaps not enough to his tenure on the Supreme Court and Health Services Commission. These points of critique aside, Vaughan has written a compelling and scholarly study of one of the most important Canadian jurists of the twentieth century. Although Emmett Hall has drawn an earlier biographical effort, Vaughan's book will no doubt stand as the definitive work.

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WALKOWITZ, Daniel, and Lisa Maya KNAUER (eds.) — *Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation in Public Space*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004. Pp. 326.

Public places are closely connected to collective memory and group identities. Communities often imagine national values reflected in public places. Washington's National Mall, indeed the whole of Pierre L'Enfant's plan for the city, was an elaborate project intended to vest official public memories and identities in the streetscape of the city. Streets, intersections, squares, parks are all the sites of major demonstrations and confrontations that can lead to the transformation of political cultures, as marginalized groups make claims to public legitimacy. Sydney's "Mardi Gras" march, to take but one very recent example, commemorates the struggle for gay and lesbian rights in Australia. Mimicking the Gay Pride movement around the western world, it vests historic sites of political struggle — public places — with political memory. But this is, in many ways, simply a modern version of an ancient practice of claiming space as part of political transformations. The parades, festivals, and commemorations of the French Revolution are well studied. There is a literature on mediaeval commemoration, and classicists and Egyptologists can similarly point to the interplay of memory and space in ancient societies.

Memory and the Impact of Political Transformation in Public Space continues the exploration of how major political upheavals affect public histories. The cases studied range across 12 countries as diverse as Sri Lanka, South Africa, Israel, China, and Chile. Yet these examples show recurring themes and concerns, revealing that, at a basic level, issues of history and memory transcend specific national cultures. The diversity is, of course, deliberate. As the editors claim, this study is not one of American memory, but an effort to "de-centre" the United States in American studies of public memory. Yet, at the same time, the editors make it clear that theirs is very much an American study. It was written in the shadow of the terrorist attacks of September 2001 and, as the editors note in their introduction, this moment in American history cannot help but inform how Americans see these issues.

This collection of essays aims high. It intends to expand the scope of what is considered public history, examining not only public histories told in monuments and museums, but also through cityscapes, songs, and parades. Its strength is this willing-

ness to expand the understanding of public history and public space. Music, for instance, is a form of shared memory. T. M. Scruggs investigates how music — not just song lyrics, but musical form — changed alongside the political transformations of pre- and post-Sandinista Nicaragua. Broadcast over the national airwaves, music itself becomes a form of public space connected to the shaping of national memories. It is a lesson any student of Canadian broadcast history no doubt recognizes.

All the while, the authors remind us that, for every monument raised, for every memory commemorated, many others remain muted. This is an ambitious project to see memory where it is and where it is not. Cynthia Paces's contribution, to take one example, examines how the struggles of Czech nationalists and Catholics over the meaning of replacing Prague's Marian Column, which once stood in the city's Old Town Square, reflect the country's twentieth-century political transformations from Habsburg territory to post-Versailles Czechoslovakia, through Nazi and Soviet domination, and into the post-communist Czech Republic. The square was never empty, neither of memory nor of monuments, but the struggles to shape the square's meaning through a central monument reveal much about the changing political culture of the country and its capital city.

Taken together, the contributions make an interesting, but somewhat unconvincing whole. Some of what fails to convince stems from a historian's particular concerns. The contributors are drawn together from a number of social science disciplines. However, at least half list themselves as historians, so it would seem fair to dwell, for a moment, on historical method. Despite being a book about the past, drawing on ideas of history and collective memory, this collection is exceptionally present-minded. Few of the articles deal with long-term transformations in public space. Few of the individual articles actually deal with the past, other than in descriptive terms. These are not articles about the past so much as they are about using the past in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. One paper, for instance, is written almost entirely from a reading of recent newspapers. A glance through the notes of the contributions shows remarkably little archival research, but many secondary sources. This is troubling for a historian. It makes an implicit suggestion that the interplay between memory and public space is a recent phenomenon, but there is a long history of constructing memories in public space. Maurice Halbwachs even devoted a study to the creation of the memories and places of early Christianity. Yet, while the collective bibliography at the end of the book lists certain key theoretical titles, *La topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte* is one of many obvious omissions.

However, the most troubling aspect is that few of these contributions make a real effort to grasp the issues of history and memory distinguished from each other. Events in the past are simply memory, or history, or both. The past here is something to be described. Although Pierre Nora's writings claiming the death of a culture of memory and drawing clear distinctions between history and memory are cited, neither the contributors nor the editors take up his claims about the distinctions between the two. In the end, this is what fails to convince: although many of the authors use recent jargon and occasionally cite the classic literature, there is little here to suggest a new or nuanced understanding of public memory. Although some of the individual

cases stand on their own quite nicely, they mostly tread over well-known ideas in a wide variety of territories. Certainly this overview does not justly render many of the individual contributions, but the grand ambition of the project requires a longer view to be convincing.

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