

laity. Yet, if Buddhism everywhere had always existed in the creative tension between dispersion and centralization, Humphrey and Ujeed conclude that the history of Mergen has manifested a “very Buddhist way of being in time” (386).

The book draws on diverse theoretical and disciplinary approaches, ranging from anthropology to Buddhist Studies to insights from continental philosophers such as Deleuze, Derrida, and Latour. It will be useful in seminars on the anthropology of religion and Buddhist studies, as well as to scholars of Asia who wish to go beyond nation-based histories to consider perspectives from Mongolian, Chinese, and Tibetan studies in order to understand Inner Asia as a place of interconnected peoples, traditions, and political processes.

——— Anya Bernstein, Harvard University

Chiara de Cesari and Ann Rigney, eds., *Transnational Memory: Circulation, Articulation, Scales*. Media and Cultural Memory 19, Berlin, De Gruyter 2014, ISBN 978-3-11-035902-2, 99,95€.

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“Transnational Memory” opens new horizons for the field of memory studies. The book leaves no doubt about the need to decisively break with methodological nationalism and turn to polyphonic and multi-layered constellations of memory. It is a significant contribution to a third wave of memory studies and represents the field’s cutting edge in a globalized world.

The editors’ introduction postulates, “Globalized communication and time-space compression, post-coloniality, transnational capitalism, large-scale migration, and regional integration” (p. 2) have challenged the exclusive dominance of national frames for any construction of meaning and identity in contemporary time. De Cesari and Rigney compellingly question the historical pertinence of an overdetermined connection between nation and memory, and demonstrate that transcultural entanglements already permeated colonialism and slavery (7). But what guides most of this volume’s case studies is the globalized present, which necessitates a conceptualization of memory as dynamic, heterogeneous, multidirectional, and entangled.

Instead of mapping another set of now “transnational” *lieux de mémoire*, the articles approach memory primarily through a (socio-cultural) micro-prism. Most of the case studies focus on mnemonic discourse of recent years, notwithstanding the introduction’s historical contextualization and widely applicable conceptual statements. Readers from historical disciplines will find this feature puzzling. Flexible research designs here allow enquiries into examples that are important and dazzling, if at times “exotic” and narrowly tailored, but the links between them are not self-evident. The volume produces stimulating insights, for instance into non-territorial figurations of mnemonic groups

(Rothberg), or the evolution of memory about the European project (Rigney). The articles fortunately go well beyond the frequently studied cases of transnational memory in binational constellations. The volume's compilation of global examples also sheds new light on the crucial influence Holocaust memory has had on the emergence of a "global morality" that guides other mnemonic narratives such as those of slavery (Ebron), the Roma (Kapraliski), or Palestinians (Kennedy).

The book is divided into three parts—circulation, articulation, and scales—categories that do justice to the flexibility and complexity of transnational constellations of memory. However, these perspectives apply importantly to all of the case studies and hardly permit a clear differentiation between the volume's various explanatory ambitions. The challenge is to find an analytical meso-level between the introduction's bird's-eye perspective and the case studies' microcosms. Such an intermediary approach would link the individual findings back to the frame of transnational memory to fully exploit the potential of this reconceptualization. While the volume overcomes the previous challenge of memory studies—to avoid homogenizing analytical perspectives—we do not come away with a clear idea of what alternative forms of organizing a narrative and effectively linking specific findings might look like. Perhaps more conventional constellations such as local, global, or post-colonial could be brought back in to fulfill this need of differentiation, but this will ultimately depend on the empirical questions being asked.

In light of the strong conceptual introduction, readers may find the handcrafted theoretical approaches of the various articles hyperbolic, particularly since they vary greatly in their level of conceptualization. In the end, it remains unclear what, for instance, concepts like "public memory" (Ebron) or "rhizome" (Küchler) add conceptually to "transnational memory." Furthermore, through the lenses of the introduction, contributions on contemporary Roma identity (Kapraliski), the colonial past as conveyed by photographs (Legêne/Eickhoff), or handcrafted quilts on the Cook Islands (Küchler) hardly qualify as phenomena of memory. These are historical or present-day discourses without specific reference to a phenomenon being understood as "past."

Overall, the individually insightful chapters resemble a collage of studies for a readership that is potentially diverse but not clearly profiled. This openness has the merit of realizing the potential of memory studies under postmodern auspices, and it lays out the future research agenda—this volume marks a critical theoretical and empirical step for contemporary memory studies. It will be a benchmark for future studies to draw upon toward writing theoretically informed memory studies.

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