

the North but elsewhere. Such an analysis may also suggest that even if moderates like Ho and Giap had controlled the helm of North Vietnam, the combination of American leaders' belief in the domino theory, their confidence in US material superiority, communist Vietnamese leaders' belief in the belligerent nature of imperialists, and their confidence in Vietnamese moral and psychological superiority might be sufficient to turn the local conflict in Vietnam into a major international war, which might then be even more unwinnable for the United States. Still, Nguyen's book correctly suggests that the war that Le Duan drove would have been far different, more tragic, and more gruesome than the counterfactual one led by Ho Chi Minh or Vo Nguyen Giap.

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### DISSONANT HERITAGES

Ari Kelman: *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013. Pp. xiii, 363.)

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This is an important book about the content and consequences of memorialization. It is also a clear example of what has been called “dissonant heritage” by J. E. Tunbridge and G. J. Ashworth (*Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict* [Belhaven, 1996]), although Kelman does not explore this wider context of his work on the Sand Creek Massacre and its aftermath. There is a great strength that flows from a clear narrative of this complex and difficult story, but there is also a weakness, as the stories of places like Sand Creek have been (and are still being) written in other places outside the United States.

The essence of Kelman's account of the process of creating a memorial to the infamous 1864 massacre of more than 150 Cheyenne and Arapaho people, living on the banks of Sand Creek in present day Colorado, has been played out at many places around the globe, but most prominently in the nations that were created by settler societies in North America, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand. The business of revealing the hidden histories of indigenous–European interactions, so frequently marked by raw emotions of fear, anger, and shame, provides very great challenges to settler nations, and to the histories that have thus far sustained them. Those hidden histories are also the seedbeds of new narratives that can do much to reconcile the citizens of settler nations and to make a start toward healing deep wounds but, as we have seen in Australia, they also have the clear capacity to divide. In the last decade the “history wars” have been

fought between protagonists and antagonists of these new histories of the frontier (so-called black armband histories), with the work of Keith Windschuttle (*The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, vol. 1, *Van Diemen's Land, 1803–1847* [Macleay, 2002]) being something of a lightning rod. One important locus of conflict is the evaluation of historical evidence, particularly the reliability of oral histories, with Windschuttle and others claiming that they can facilitate the fabrication of history. Perhaps the most important outcome has been the recognition that there is no single national story and that indigenous people can (and do) contest the past as well as the future. There are striking similarities between the Australian experience and Kelman's account of how "dissonant heritages" took shape at Sand Creek.

*A Misplaced Massacre* begins in 2007 at the end of the Sand Creek story, when the National Parks Service opened the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site. Kelman evocatively describes the impetus for the memorial as being part of a project of what he calls a "patriotic alchemy," where memorials are believed to have the capacity to heal the wounds created by conflict through acts of collective remembrance by victims and perpetrators (usually on the initiative of the latter). Yet at Sand Creek and other places memorials also have the capacity to achieve the reverse, if only because such places can strongly support other opposed agendas, such as those stressing indigenous interests and perspectives different from those of the Park Service. Much of Kelman's story relates to the struggles between indigenous groups and others with an interest in the place—ranging from looters attempting to discover the battlefield, historians (both amateur and professional), archaeologists, the National Parks Service, and a fascinatingly diverse range of politicians (local, state, and federal), the leaders of the tribal groups, community members, and local bigwigs. It is a crowded field! Points of conflict were numerous, and the potential for sensitivities to be trampled proved to be high—most memorably the serious differences of opinion about the precise location of the massacre site where memory, conflicting written documentary sources, and archaeological explorations all collided. The whole mixture proved to be highly combustible.

Kelman manages to present all of this diversity in a balanced and reasonable way, but he does not disguise his essential sympathy with the people most directly touched by the memorial, and the difficult process of achieving an outcome that was acceptable to them. This cannot have been easy as the passions raised by the massacre and subsequent relations between indigenous peoples and governments were strong and enduring. Indeed the account of the massacre itself, while shocking, is made all the more affecting by being referred to, either at length or in smaller asides, right the way through the book. Past and present are thus firmly entwined in this discussion of an "indelible infamy."

However there is another element to the Sand Creek story that for a non-American was particularly powerful, and it relates to the date of the massacre. In 1864 the Civil War was still raging—a war that recast the United

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States. But the freedoms so hard won in that conflict also, in Kelman's words, "delivered the Indian Wars"; it "was a moment of national redemption for some Americans, but of dispossession and subjugation for others" (279). There has been much wonderful writing about the Civil War, but Kelman's excellent and sensitive discussion is a major contribution to a passage of American history we still have so much to learn from.

I began this review by sketching something of the wider context of "dissonant heritage" and the challenges that it makes not just to historians and heritage managers, but to us all. However, Kelman's book is not about comparison or generalization. It is about the specifics of place and personality, and this is where its power and truth lie. While the story of Sand Creek is (unfortunately) not unique, Kelman's book is a powerful account of how history (no matter how it is written) really matters. It is important that stories such as this are told, and that we all bear witness that the events of 1864 continue to resonate so powerfully.

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