

is simultaneously a reserve, a national park, and a World Heritage site.

This is one of the most important current books in cultural heritage studies to date, a must-read so engrossing and compelling that it is truly a page-turner. Its greatest strength is the evidence each author provides of the value of ethnography in this field. If only UNESCO's World Heritage bureaucracy, the affiliated States Parties representatives, and national heritage authorities would read it and be moved to pursue greater equity for the local stakeholders whose needs are clearly legitimate yet rarely accommodated.

Thank You for Dying for Our Country: Commemorative Texts and Performances in Jerusalem. *Chaim Noy.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 274 pp.

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Visitor books are a frequent fixture at exhibits, museums, and historical sites. Some call out to visitors who use them to engage with the site, while others sit forlornly, underused and often ignored. Prized by curators and exhibit designers for the feedback that they provide, they have largely been overlooked as a source for scholarly analysis. Using the visitor book at the Ammunition Hill National Memorial Site in Jerusalem as a core text, Chaim Noy has written a theoretically rich ethnography that lies at the intersection of language and communication, literacy, and performance studies. He demonstrates that the ways in which individuals participate (and choose not to participate) with the book illuminate various modes of ethnonational identity.

Adding to the literature on the ethnography of reading as well as tourism and cultural heritage studies, Noy suggests that these types of books are critical texts for understanding the everyday semiotics of commemoration because their inherent interactive nature involves readers, writers, and interested observers. Throughout the introduction, he notes the lack of scholarly attention to visitor books and provides a model of how to think about the texts as performance spaces in which individuals interact not only with the narrative of the particular site but also with larger national discourses.

He begins by locating visitor books broadly within heritage and tourist locales and emphasizes their historical development. From there, he introduces Ammunition Hill as a memorial site in Jerusalem and describes the particular way in which the visitor book is positioned within the museum. Noy carefully discusses how the visitor book is situated in “cursive-scape” with other texts within the

exhibition space, including reproduced handwritten letters, journals, and placards. He argues that this type of involvement allows visitors to participate directly with the exhibit and ultimately helps them shape the thoughts and observations that they choose to inscribe in the visitor book.

Noy describes in detail the variety of interactions that visitors have with the book and the types of utterances that can be found in its pages, which contain everything from signatures to sustained commentary. He demonstrates how visitors use the book both to authenticate their own experiences and to converse with other visitors as fellow participants in national commemoration. Particularly interesting is his discussion of the forms of inscriptions—including the locations of the writing on the pages and the drawings and figures that often accompany the comments. These all contribute to the larger semiological landscape in which these commemorations are situated and index the specific interaction between the visitor and the book. He gives examples of cowriting, observing how visitors negotiate with each other about proper inscription practices. He rightfully links these episodes to larger language socialization practices, with a specific focus on the “commemorative register” (124), which has its own literacy conventions. Noy emphasizes the ways in which visitors pull upon larger religious, social, and political discourses to produce and interpret the inscriptions, and he draws attention to contestations to the national narrative, particularly among ultra-Orthodox visitors.

That is what can be gleaned from the visitor book in the public part of the museum. But there is another visitor book Noy reveals to the reader. It is housed in the museum's offices and is reserved for special visitors. This second, exclusive book performs a different role from the one on public display. Rather than being improvisational in nature, the entries in the exclusive book are more formulaic and reflect the network of personal relationships that reinforce the Israeli governing elite. Employees curate the entries in the second book by selecting visitors to sign it and by adding descriptive text to certain signatures and contributions. Whereas the public book allows for a space to both question and contest the received narrative of the site and history more generally, the entries in the exclusive book work to reinforce the hegemonic structures that guide memory and historical interpretation in Israel. As Noy emphasizes, while the two books appear to be the same, they could not be more different in terms of content, access, and purpose.

Throughout, Noy successfully argues that these books can be understood only through their interactive context, and that requires ethnographic analysis. A focus on performance, in which the author details not just the written entries but also the observed act of inscribing, allows Noy to connect the text to larger conceptions of gender, ethnicity, and collective memory. Particularly illuminating is his discussion of the ways in which entries by women

and men reinforce gender-normative ideologies in both form and content. While his focus on performance allows him to observe disinterest and nonparticipation, these are underexamined in the text, and the question remains as to why certain visitors are less disposed to write than others and what role such silence plays in commemoration. This is particularly important because Noy discusses the ways in which entries support and resist the received Zionist national narrative embedded in the site as a whole yet does not discuss the ways that nonparticipation can also be read as potentially oppositional or affirmative. In his text, Noy employs a number of theoretical frameworks, including the works of Mikhail Bakhtin, Pierre Bourdieu, Jan Blommaert, and Erving Goffman, among many others; however, the analysis would have been strengthened by a more focused selection and sustained engagement with fewer authors.

By way of a conclusion, Noy reflects on his own ethnographic observations and thinks critically about what his own presence at the site has done to alter and affect participation with the public visitor book. He also foregrounds the alterations he makes in his representation of it, reminding us that we, like the visitors, are also reading a book that is both situated and mediated. Ultimately, this is a timely meditation on ethnographic practice as a whole, and Noy reminds us about the challenging yet critical role of the ethnographer as an embodied witness to human interaction and engagement.

Palestinian Commemoration in Israel: Calendars, Monuments, and Martyrs. *Tamir Sorek.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015. 328 pp.

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Israelis celebrate 1948 as the War of Independence and a redemptive turning point in their history; for Palestinians, 1948 is the Nakba (“the catastrophe”): the lodestar that shines darkly over their ongoing dispossession and displacement. For the 1.7 million Palestinian citizens of Israel—the 156,000 Palestinians who remained within the State of Israel’s newly established borders and their descendants—reclaiming this collective history involves the difficult and delicate task of forging a counterhegemonic memory without challenging the legitimacy of the state. Within that state, they are treated as second-class citizens who live separate but unequal lives as virtual foreigners, while they are also viewed with suspicion by Palestinians living in exile and under Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza. How have they reconciled their Palestinian identity and Israeli citizenship? How do they

commemorate their dead and assert their national past without jeopardizing their present?

Israeli sociologist Tamir Sorek’s *Palestinian Commemoration in Israel* offers insightful and carefully researched answers to these questions. Sorek argues that Palestinian commemoration in Israel, unlike that of Palestinians seeking liberation from Israeli occupation beyond the Green Line, has been shaped by the struggle for equality within the Jewish state and the desire for integration. Memorials and commemorations usually serve to consolidate collective national consciousness. In the Palestinian context, they also serve to perpetuate deep divisions.

Sorek begins by tracing the origins of the “symbolic cartography” (32) of Palestinian martyrology in Israel back to the British Mandate. Drawing primarily on the Arabic press from the 1920s to the 1940s, he examines the role played by early nationalist martyrs like Amin al-Husayni, Izz ad-Din al-Qassam, and the leaders of the 1929 Buraq Revolt in shaping Palestinian particularism. Subsequent chapters focus on the four pivotal events that now structure the political calendar of Palestinian commemoration in Israel: the Nakba, the 1956 Kafr Qasim Massacre, the 1976 Land Day protest, and al-Aqsa Day, which commemorates the 12 Palestinian citizens of Israel killed in October 2000. Sorek sheds light on how military rule until 1967, state and civic surveillance, discriminatory laws, educational curricula, and political summer camps have produced a distinctive memorial practice that fitfully negotiates nationalist and civic goals. His analysis pays close attention to the sectarian divisions and ideological differences—among Palestinian Israeli nationalists, Islamists, Communists, and secularists—that have shaped commemorative politics. He also examines the particular way that Palestinian collective memory in Israel has been constructed against Jewish Israeli memory, epitomized in slogans like “Their Independence—Our Nakba” (79).

As Sorek observes in his introduction, Israel’s ongoing expropriation of Palestinian land has made the “lines of protest over past and present dispossessions ... especially blurred” (7). Yet for the most part he treats these events in the “canonic political calendar” (46) as history rather than as part of an unfolding colonial present, and more might have been done to situate particular commemorations ethnographically. In March 2016, residents of Umm el-Hieran, an unrecognized Palestinian Bedouin village in the Negev desert, commemorated Land Day by protesting state plans to evict 160,000 Bedouins and confiscate 800,000 dunums (equal to 80,000 hectares) of their land, drawing explicit parallels with events in the Galilee 40 years earlier. Such strategic application of commemorative practices underscores their contemporary significance in ongoing struggles against injustice. Sorek’s analysis might also have been enriched by connecting these formal calendar events to everyday forms of commemoration among Palestinians