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Book review: Joachim Baur Die Musealisierung der Migration. Einwanderungsmuseen und die Inszenierung der multikulturellen Nation. Bielefeld: Transcript 2009, 408 pp. ISBN 9783837612646

J. Olaf Kleist

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author examines the Jedwabne massacre of 1941 and the commemorative ceremonies held 60 years later (p. 124). Because of the implication of some members of the compromised Polish elites during the Second World War, the recent evocation of these tragic events could challenge the national identity and request a revision of national myths and taboos in contemporary Poland (p. 123). Cleverly, the President of Poland provided an efficient formula to explain how this tragedy could have occurred despite this nation's greatness: 'it was not the Polish state that violated the law but Poles who "committed crimes against Poland" and its history and "great tradition"' (p. 125).

In her study of Phoenix Park in Dublin (Chapter 9), Kate Moles aptly demonstrates that 'only one narrative of history can be displayed in processes of heritage' (p. 130). She argues that 'landscapes are made up of events, acts, times, places and people that have passed by and through them' (p. 131). Interviewing randomly some visitors at Phoenix Park, she tries to understand what is being remembered from two very important events that took place there: first, the murder of Lord Cavendish and his undersecretary in 1882 (commemorated only by a cross) and, second, the papal visit of John Paul II in 1979, who indeed was the first Pope to ever visit Ireland. We learn that there can be an 'official heritage' and an 'official narrative' of a given place, provided by a Visitors' Centre and through personal and regional stories (p. 138).

While it is not possible to comment on all remaining essays, I would just like to mention that Chapter 13 questions how the Yoruba communities living in England perceive the way their history is represented in western museums (p. 184).

I wanted to provide a brief description of some of the most interesting chapters from this very interesting book in order to give an idea of the diversity of topics discussed and the richness of the analysis made by almost every author. In my view, *Heritage and Identity: Engagement and Demission in the Contemporary World* is an important contribution to memory studies and will be especially helpful to graduate students in their quest for a theoretical framework. Most chapters present generously their conceptual framework and provide many accurate sentences and bibliographical references. Many of the essays will be inspiring and thought-provoking for museum experts, anthropologists and sociologists as well. Potential readers should understand that some of these case studies could be transposed into different contexts with some adjustments. In sum, *Heritage and Identity: Engagement and Demission in the Contemporary World* contains the innovative spirit that has characterized Routledge books for decades.

Joachim Baur

Die Musealisierung der Migration. Einwanderungsmuseen und die Inszenierung der multikulturellen Nation.

Bielefeld: Transcript 2009, 408 pp. ISBN 9783837612646.

Reviewed by: J. Olaf Kleist, *Freie Universität Berlin*

The construction and re-construction of identities in the process of remembering is at the centre of memory studies. A general assumption about memory proposes that its depiction of a homogenous past provides communality. Memories constitute social groups based on tradition, such as cultures or nations. In turn, it is suggested, these collectivities impart notions of identity to their members. Such models have been employed for studies and been conceptualized theoretically in numerous ways during the academic memory boom of the previous decades.

Increasingly, the viability of collective memories and identities as factors of social life has been challenged. While memory and identity are exclusive from within a group's perspective, individuals refer to a multitude of collective pasts. In principle, the multitude of collective memories, what

Halbwachs calls a 'milieu of memories', is normal, even necessary, and not problematic, except in circumstances where collective memories are in conflict with each other. This problem was first brought to our attention by post-colonial studies and termed as 'hybrid identity' in the early 1990s. This convergence of conflicting heritages proved not only relevant in former colonies but also highly significant in the case of migration. Immigrants are caught between memories of their origin countries and traditions of their host society. These observations questioned the usefulness of 'identity' as a cross-cultural concept and the veracity of collectively shared memories in diverse societies.

For a long time, the challenge of migration to concepts of remembering, on individual and social level, has been mostly ignored in memory studies. In classic theories such as Jan and Aleida Assman's 'Cultural Memory', immigrants appear as no more than sub-cultural and antagonistic groups with the potential of 'alienating' the host nation. Migration memories seem divisive rather than shared and inclusive. Alternatively, Pierre Nora's *lieux de memoire* have been employed in the last decade in an conceptual effort to either incorporate memories of migration into national history or to create 'realms' of migration memories. While the first attempt failed at least in traditional non-immigration countries such as France and Germany because of the lack of national migration memories, the latter creates a migration history that remains separated from the host country's national history. Most recently, transnational and transcultural aspects of remembering have entered the memory debate, offering perspectives for diaspora memories and memories of universal migration experiences. The identity dilemma, then, is seemingly resolved by removing collective memories of migration from the national context. However, diverging migration memory is a dilemma in itself given that immigration experiences are necessarily set in the national context of the host country.

While the theoretical debate about memory and migration continues, this seemingly conflicting pair has been a politically successful working unit in 'classic immigration countries' such as Australia, Canada and the USA since the 1980s. Specific immigration museums have been established there and exhibit histories of migration in national perspectives. Joachim Baur presents, evaluates and compares three of these museums in his new book *Die Musealisierung der Migration: Einwanderungsmuseen und die Inszenierung der multikulturellen Nation* (The Musealization of Migration: Immigration Museums and the Staging of the Multicultural Nation). He analyses Ellis Island Museum in New York (est. 1990), Pier 21 Museum in Halifax, Nova Scotia (1999) and the Immigration Museum in Melbourne (1998). The book, based on a recent PhD dissertation, is the first monograph that compares memories of migration internationally. Contrary to much of the recent debate about migration in memory studies, Baur regards these memories not as necessary adversaries of the imagination of the nation but rather critically as contemporary narratives of the nation in a globalized world.

The study begins with a reflection about the role of the institution 'museum' in society. With a concise and critical summary of current debates about the history of museums as producers of 'meaning', Baur presents himself at the start as a well versed scholar of museum studies. With focus on his topic, he sees the converging developments of *new museology*, social and migration history as well as multiculturalism, though stretched over 20 years, as the foundation on which migration museums were built. In the light of the parallel demise of traditional nationalist narratives he reminds the reader of the relevance of the museum for the imagination of the nation. Accordingly, he suggests a reading of the museum's representation of migration as a re-enactment of the nation.

Over the next three chapters Baur fleshes out his thesis with detailed studies about the three museums respectively. He considerably advances existing research and an understanding about each of the institutions. This is especially true in the case of Pier 21 and the Immigration Museum, which had seen no systematic and independent scrutiny before. Each chapter is divided into two parts. In the first the author conveys the process of and political conflicts about the creation of the

museum. In the second part of each chapter he offers a close reading and detailed interpretation of the museum's permanent exhibitions. The space allocated for each case study seems unbalanced at first sight. The chapter on Ellis Island equals in length both chapters on the other museums combined. However, Baur explains, this reflects their size, importance and the amounts of source material available. The reader is well served with this decision, being rewarded with a detailed description that is never perfunctory or overtly absorbed but focused on the subject at hand. At the same time, the twofold analysis of the politics of memory and of the production of meaning from the past offers more than the author promises in the beginning and evaluates in his conclusion.

Baur contributes convincingly to a re-evaluation of migration memories in the context of museum representations. He shows that all three museums stand for a multicultural vision of the nation, offering identification with both the migrant and the country, with only small derivations from case to case. Broadly, Ellis Island celebrates the process of migrants' Americanization, Pier 21 offers identification with migrant experiences, while the Immigration Museum combines migrants' and Australian perspectives. Overall, the author criticizes the fact that migrants are presented in static, often cultural categories and in heroic images, instead of showing the complexities of their social roles, including class and gender. In turn, the nation appears often as overtly focused on European immigration. Also, the host society is presented as the lucky conclusion rather than one point in complex journeys, experiences and decisions on the migrant's part, and of selection, discrimination and expectations on the part of the receiving country.

Baur offers an imperative and powerful critique of the immigration museums on their own terms. He points out their shortcomings in presentations of the migrant and failures in explaining complexities of an immigrant society. Moreover, from a memory studies point of view, he incorporates and conceptualizes migration issues into the politics of the past and into debates about national belonging. Memories of migration are a shared characteristic of (almost) all citizens and may be discussed in the light of their contributions to inclusion and social cohesion. However, Baur is highly critical of this national unity created from migration diversity, proposing a transnational perspective instead. While the museum's multicultural exhibitions strive for a nationally unified diversity of identities, Baur sees migrant memories as being contained by and subsumed under national identity. The author's and the museums' common ground lies in the interest in 'meanings' of memories, constituent of *new museology*, which renders the issues and topics at hand into elements of identity politics.

Partially, Baur's interpretation reflects a core dilemma of the museums representing both migration and the nation in terms of identity. Partially, the apparent conflict between migration and the nation is a result of his methodology. Alternatively, the museums' arrangements of migration history could also be considered as a presented past from which the audience is supposed to learn rather than to identify with. The migration museum would then appear as a political 'contact zone', located in a political field of migrant incorporation rather than of identities. Baur alludes to this interpretation, especially in the sections about the establishment of the museums and the concurrent politics of memory. Unfortunately, he downplays the significance of the broader social and political contexts in which the debates and the museums are located. Such a perspective might have also revealed greater differences in the comparison of the museums' exhibitions and of the countries' political cultures more broadly.

Nevertheless, Baur's methodological approach is an important, highly instructive and critical reflection of immigration museums' intentions and their treatment of migration memories. Moreover, *Die Musealisierung der Migration* is an essential starting point to the debate about the migration-memory nexus, which has become increasingly significant in Europe. Baur demonstrates that migration pasts are neither a necessary challenge to national history and identity nor are they in need of being relegated to a transnational sphere (though, he would like to see the latter). Baur has

successfully brought migration memories into the realm of national politics by arguing that they can be incorporated into narratives of the nation. That this process of incorporation is not without conflicts and contradictions has been made evident for museums and is true beyond. The social conditions and consequences of migration memories differ by epoch, society and politics, and future research will have to explore the impact of memory and migration upon each other in different contexts. Baur provides an essential contribution to the discussion to come about the merits and limits of the politics of migration memories. The greatest downside of the book is that it is not available in English.

M.R. Bennett and P.M.S. Hacker

History of Cognitive Neuroscience.

West Sussex: Wiley, 2008. 312 pp. ISBN 9781405181822

Reviewed by: Michael H. Connors, *Macquarie University, Australia*

Cognitive neuroscience is the branch of neuroscience that studies the neuroanatomical structures underlying cognition. In *History of Cognitive Neuroscience*, Max Bennett – a neuroscientist – and Peter Hacker – a philosopher – have teamed up to write a history of the field. The history of cognitive neuroscience is discussed in various chapters spanning perception, attention, memory, language, emotion and motor action. The authors cover the important discoveries that have shaped our understanding of these areas. They interlace this with an ambitious philosophical critique of the field, which they believe is riddled with conceptual misunderstandings and flaws.

A central focus of the book is thus to clarify the philosophical underpinnings of cognitive neuroscience and there is as much content in the book devoted to philosophy as there is to history and neuroscience. The authors expound a very particular brand of philosophy, which they have described in their earlier work, *Philosophical Foundations of Neuroscience* (Bennett and Hacker, 2003). Their approach is perhaps best seen as an extension of Wittgenstein's philosophy of mind and ordinary language philosophy (a school of philosophy from Oxford in the 1960s that holds that the everyday use of language, properly analysed, can give insight into the world it describes). Their book re-examines the history of cognitive neuroscience through this lens.

In the chapter on memory, for example, Bennett and Hacker first discuss prominent discoveries in the neuroscience of memory since the 1950s. They focus, in particular, on Milner's study of the patient H.M.; Kandel's study of the gill withdrawal reflex in the sea slug *Aplysia*; O'Keefe's discovery that certain neurons in the hippocampi of rats are associated with particular locations; and research on long-term potentiation (a cellular mechanism thought likely to underlie memory) from Lomo's work in 1966 to contemporary findings. These discoveries are described in detail, though other aspects of memory, such as cognitive models, are not covered as comprehensively.

In the second, longer part of this chapter, Bennett and Hacker discuss the philosophical assumptions in the study of memory. In particular, they argue that it is conceptually wrong to refer to the brain as storing information, as many theorists do. There are two main reasons for this. First, they distinguish between concepts of retention and storage, and argue that while we may *retain* information, it is a misconception to think that we *store* information about the world in our brains. They argue that this idea of storage in the brain presupposes that people could access these stores. Since brains are made up of neurons, this is conceptually incoherent because people cannot store or access stores in this form. It also does not make sense, the authors argue, to suggest that these stores exist in a cognitive form because this similarly does not explain how these representations could acquire their meaning and be interpreted by the brain.