

**Eade, John and Mario Katić (eds.). 2018. *Military Pilgrimage and Battlefield Tourism. Commemorating the Dead*. London, New York: Routledge. 164 pp. Hb.: £84.00. ISBN: 9781472483621.**

This edited volume, published as part of the *Routledge Studies in Pilgrimage, Religious Travel and Tourism* series, focuses on the analysis of professional military pilgrimage in the context of commemorative practices on battlefields scattered throughout the world. It comprises nine chapters that ‘explore the varied ways in which memory, material culture and rituals are performed at particular places’ (p. i). Given its spatial scope, the volume also raises the question of whether Western definitions of pilgrimage and tourism, as well as sacred and secular, can be applicable transculturally.

The book consists of two major parts, preceded by a foreword (*Chapter 1*) in which the editors provide a brief overview of relevant past research and key concepts regarding pilgrimage, commemoration, memory, and the ambivalence of the sacred. The first part concentrates on military pilgrimage commemoration and reconciliation, and it is opened by John Eade’s contribution (*Chapter 2*) in which he deals with social and personal post-conflict healing in the context of the world-renowned pilgrimage site, Lourdes, where social unity is constructed through discourses emanating from formal institutions (civil, military, and religious). In *Chapter 3*, Kyoko Murakami observes reconciliation as a psychological process on the example of the Anglo-Japanese case regarding the so-called “Iruka boys” – British prisoners of war who were forced labourers in Japanese copper mines during the Second World War. Thanks to the efforts of local villagers, a wartime cemetery was relocated, and a memorial was built; from the 1990s, a group of activists invited surviving “Iruka Boys” to visit the site, thus creating a place of pilgrimage on which wartime experiences from both parties were interchanged. Eventually, the cemetery site transcended its original context and became a place where local history is unearthed, a place that promotes intercultural dialogue and peace. Biljana Skimić’s contribution titled *KFOR soldiers as pilgrims in Kosovo* (*Chapter 4*) depicts the development of a Marian shrine that reflects political change brought about by the establishment of military pilgrimage by a NATO-led international peacekeeping force. Subsequently, this complex process transformed multi-confessional (though primary Catholic) site barely relevant outside the Yugoslav context into an international Catholic pilgrimage location. *Chapter 5* deals with the experiences of Canadian Armed Forces members who participated in the 2014 Nijmegen March – a 160-kilometre-long walk between battlefields and memorial sites from both the First and Second World Wars, which takes place annually in the Netherlands. Although it is considered as an athletic event that hosts thousands of civilians, the author – Canadian army chaplain Michael Peterson – based on the dialogue with many participants raises the question whether it could be perceived as a pilgrimage.

The second part of the volume revolves around military pilgrimages, battlefield tourism and contestation. Mario Katić’s contribution (*Chapter 6*) explores the so-called “prayer hike” to Bobovac, the site of a medieval Bosnian royal fortified city, which Bosnian Croats members of the Armed Forces of Bosna and Herzegovina have been undertaking annually since 2002. The author argues that this institutionalised and politically

motivated Catholic military pilgrimage has a number of meanings for different national-religious groups in the search for their identity, which are drawn from narratives emanating from different interpretation of the past. Rohan Bastin and Premakumara de Silva's contribution in *Chapter 7* focuses on the one-sided perspective of the 25-year-long Sri Lankan conflict and its aftermath through the promotion of "military tourism" by the victorious Sinhala state. By observing the removal of monuments and the re-adaptation of battlefield sites in places for mass visits, the authors stress the state's primacy over the public narratives and practices concerning memory. Although the current engagement of tourists can be seen in the light of state-effected rituals, they are not denying its religious dimension but emphasising the lack of healing process in such practices. In *Chapter 8*, Kamila Baraniecka-Olszewska analyses very interesting re-enactments of the military endeavours of Polish soldiers that fought in the Second World War, more precisely in the Battle of Monte Casino (Italy) and Battle of Arnhem (the Netherlands). Exploring the thin line between pilgrimage and a specific type of military tourism, the author notes that groups involved are surpassing the mere impersonation since they are cultivating some of the values associated with those who fought seven decades ago. Although they are not soldiers, their conduct is conditioned by a military codex, they feel a personal connection with veteran units, and they strive to honour them in accordance with military protocol. The author argues that the significance lies in the site itself, and one of her conclusions is that the reconstructed event falls out of the realm of sacred, unlike journeys to the battle sites, i.e., 'the re-enactment of particular events inspires fewer feelings than a pilgrimage to the site of a given battle' (p. 143).

In his afterword (*Chapter 9*), Robert Hayden emphasises the fact that this volume raises more general issues than those stated by the editors in the introduction – the question of how one should observe military pilgrimages and battlefield commemoration: as sacred, secular or somewhere in between; the question about the relationship between commemoration and social memory formation/reproduction processes, and under what circumstances the former affect reconciliation for both protagonists of the conflict and their descendants. Additionally, Hayden is introducing examples depicting US perspective regarding the subject of the volume, such as Gettysburg or commemorations of the 9/11 attacks, the latter in the context of sacred-secular spaces.

*Military Pilgrimage and Battlefield Tourism* serves as an excellent starting point, as well as reference material for future research, understanding and interpretation of contemporary pilgrimages and commemorative practices worldwide.

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