

**DRAFT**

**Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration:  
Putting Identity in Its Place**

**Brian S. Osborne**  
Department of Geography  
Queen's University  
Kingston, Ontario  
[osborneb@qsilver.queensu.ca](mailto:osborneb@qsilver.queensu.ca)

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The central theme of this paper is the *invention* of Canada through strategies that have attempted to integrate a people separated by geography, history, ethnicity, and class by *constructing* a national identity that is self-consciously aware of *place*.<sup>1</sup> Nationalizing-states have long made use of many devices and agencies to create an emotional bonding with particular histories and geographies.<sup>2</sup> In particular, many *new* nations have had to confront the problems of incorporating peripheral domains and assimilating diverse peoples into the body-politic, and establishing a degree of national homogeneity—or at least a semblance of common central purpose. Technological, constitutional, institutional, and cultural mechanisms have been directed to the mission of establishing a monolithic identity and integrating peripheral loyalties. Others have attempted to nurture an identification with place and community through a variety of mediums: high art and literature; mass communications and kitsch; architecture and monuments; ceremonies, rituals, and myths. They attempt to create an “awareness of belonging” (Simmel, quoted in Werlen 1993:169) and, in some cases, the “politics of fantasy” (Ignatieff 1993).

For Canada, Mackenzie King’s cynical evaluation has come to be diagnostic of the national dilemma: too much geography and too little history; too much space and too little time.<sup>3</sup> When nineteenth and twentieth century migrations and ideological shifts are added to the problems of two founding nations and an expansive neighbour, the picture becomes even more complicated. Canadian nation-building has been an ongoing encounter with colonial, regional, fractional, and continental challenges to national unity. It has turned to several iconic metanarratives: the spirit of the land; the cult of the hero; the transformation of wilderness into home and commodity; an ethic of progress; the nurturing of democracy and social justice (Wright 1993; Pal 1993; Francis 1997; Mackey 1999). However, in recent years, the fundamentalist views of collective identities have been challenged by those arguing the “invention of tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and the construction of an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991).

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<sup>1</sup> . Conversely, as evidenced recently, symbolic places are often targeted deliberately in an attempt at destroying identities. Consider news coverage in recent months of Taliban destruction of a Buddhist staturary in Afghanistan, attacks on mosques in Kosovo and churches in Macedonia. “Identicide,” “topocide,” and “urbicide” are mirror-images of identity construction (Maharg 1999; Porteous 1989; Berman 1996). And as I write on 11 September 2001, New York’s World Trade Center and the Pentagon have been targeted as dominant symbols of United States’ national identity. In particular, the elision from the landscape of the WTC has ensured the site will enter the “shadow ground” of landscapes of violence and tragedy (Foote 1997; Neal 1998). And all are exemplars of the power of symbolic landscapes. Canadian examples would be Peggy’s Cove after the Swiss Air disaster, World War II Japanese Internment camps, and Batoche for the Métis.

<sup>2</sup> . Throughout, I use the term *nationalizing states* or *state-nationalisms* to emphasize state activities in nurturing emotive identities with the complexity and plurality of the modern state. Whereas ethnic nationalisms assume some mythic origin of a primordial identity, nation-states are often the product of an hegemonic intervention in the social construction of a collective identity, social memory, and social cohesion.

<sup>3</sup> . It may be argued that the prominence of the “Laurentian,” “National Dream,” “Empires of Communication,” and “Media-Message” themes in Canadian scholarship is a reflection of the essential verities of the Canadian experience. Certainly, Creighton, Berton, Innis, and McLuhan would agree (Berger 1976; Patterson 1990). They have all emphasized the paramount importance of transport and communications in the development of regional structures, national polity, and international linkages.

From this perspective, national identities are historical constructions that are constantly being reconstituted according to a presentist agenda. Rather than being primordial entities, national identities are generated by “symbolic processes that emerge and dissolve in particular contexts of action” (Handler 1992:30). It follows from this that we need to understand the ways in which nationalizing-states are continually re-imagining themselves as homogeneous units—and ask ourselves if this is appropriate for a contemporary society in its local and global contexts.

In particular, I want to look at the geography of identity. Peoples’ identification with particular places is essential for the cultivation of an awareness—an *a-where-ness*—of national identity: that is, nationalizing-states occupy imagined terrains that serve as mnemonic devices.<sup>4</sup> Commonly held sets of symbolic meanings about places have often been developed to reinforce peoples’ identification with specific social values. Carefully selected because of their emotive power, they become iconic and are empowered by the careful cultivation of associated mythologies. In this way, the familiar material world becomes studded with symbolically-loaded sites and events—as well as silences—that provide social continuity, contribute to the collective memory, and establish spatial and temporal reference points for society (Harootunian 1988; Fogelson 1989; Osborne 1994 1996).

My concern here is to make connections between identity and the construction of these *meaning-full* places. Such places include landscapes, monuments, and sites where commemorations are performed, collective memory is reinforced, and national identity is constructed, both formally and informally. However much we intellectualize identity in terms of Quality of Life indicators and abstractions about social cohesion (Jensen 1988 1999; Vertovec 1999), people live in places and identify with them—or are alienated by them. These places become loaded with *landmarks* (Halbwachs 1992) and *lieux de mémoire* (Nora 1996) that are mnemonic devices for national narratives, shared values, and putative hopes for the future.<sup>5</sup> The imaginative use of symbols and myths, and of monuments, commemorations, and performances, have become the stuff of history, tradition, and heritage, all directed towards nurturing some form of identity.

This paper, therefore, will focus on the social construction of place to nurture identities. It will effect a critical survey of the role of bronze and granite, and bands and fireworks, in the choreography of state-building through nurturing a symbolic space of national identity and the *imagined* nation-state. In other words, this paper will more specifically

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<sup>4</sup> . Perhaps the classic definition of the classical rhetorical art and social practice of mnemonics is Yates’ *The Art of Memory*, which elucidates the various devices of mnemotechnics ([1996] 2001:1-4).

<sup>5</sup> . Just think about the place-focussed lyrics of most national anthems. The “land of my fathers” for Wales,” the Moldau for the Czechs, “our home and native land” for Canadians. Returning again to the “Events of 11 September,” there appeared to be an initial consensual preference for the place-allusions to “amber waves of grain...purple mountain majesties...from sea to shining sea” of *America the Beautiful* as the United States reacted to the attack on the *homeland*. It seemed to be days before official commemorations and sports events identified again with the more ideological allusions of the other national hymn of “My country, ‘tis of the, Sweet land of liberty,” and the more belligerent “rockets’ red glare, bombs bursting in air” of the *Star Spangled Banner*.

focus on the nurturing of a collective memory and social cohesion through the representation of national narratives in monumental forms, the construction and consecration of a symbolic topography, and the performance of identity through commemorative activity.

## Place and Identity

The central thesis is that human attachment to particular places requires understanding of peoples' traditional knowledge, cultural practice, forms of communication, and conventions for imagining the past. That is, *world-building*, *place-making*, and *constructing places* constitute basic tools of historical imagination through multiple acts of remembering, conjecture, and speculation. Basso argues that self-knowledge cannot be reconstructed without place-worlds:

If place-making is a way of constructing the past, a venerable means of *doing* human history, it is also a way of constructing social traditions and, in the process, personal and social identities. We *are*, in a sense, the place-worlds we imagine (Basso 1996:7).

Not merely neutral containers, geography, locale, setting, place—whatever you wish to call them—are complicit in strategies of cultural survival. Places are defined by tangible material realities that can be seen, touched, mapped, and located. For Angela Martin,

Identity is formed and continually reinforced via individual practice within culturally defined spaces...Sense of place, as a component of identity and psychic interiority, is a lived embodied felt quality of place that informs practice and is productive of particular expressions of place (Martin 1997:1).

Gillian Rose expresses the same point: “One way in which identity is connected to a particular place is by feeling that you belong to that place. It’s a place in which you feel comfortable, or at home, because part of how you define yourself is symbolized by certain qualities of that place” (Rose 1995:87-118).

However, there is no *inherent* identity to places: this is constructed by human behaviour *in reaction* to places. Quotidian practices of living and formalized rituals, commemorations, and preservation impart meaning to place and develop identities with places. Monuments, streets, neighbourhoods, buildings, churches, and parks are all material *things*, but they also evoke specific kinds of meanings and serve as spatial coordinates of identity (Lynch 1972). They are associated with specific kinds of activities. They are linked to society through repetitive prosaic practices, ritualized performance, and institutionalized commemoration. That is, there is an ongoing reciprocal relationship between people and the places they inhabit. People produce places, and yet they derive identities from them: “people are constituted through place”

(McDowell 1997).<sup>6</sup> However, there can be both positive and negative effects from this interaction of place and experience. That is, as situated experiences construct places, human reaction to them can reflect alienation, ambivalence, as well as attraction—again, the issue of “shadowed ground” of negative remembrances (Shields 1991; Cresswell 1996; Foote 1996; Neal 1998). Humans create “place-images” that become central to daily life and social practice. Material places and their representations are always ideological statements and constitute what Schein refers to as “discourse materialized” (Schein 1997). It follows, therefore, that as society evolves and changes, places themselves change as they become dynamic and reflexive sites of innovation (Massey 1995).

The term long used by geographers for culturally loaded geographies is *landscape*. As assemblages of humanly produced material forms, they constitute cultural records arranged palimpsest-like through time and space that may be interrogated as artefacts and symbolically loaded signifiers of meanings (Sauer [1925] 1963; Meinig 1979; Cosgrove, [1984] 1998). From the initial, anthropology-driven, Sauerian perspective of landscape as an assemblage of material culture-traits and complexes, the focus has shifted to a more nuanced decoding of the symbolic meaning. In expanding on his own views of the *idea of landscape*, one of the most influential exponents of this approach argues, “that landscape constitutes a discourse through which identifiable social groups historically have framed themselves and their relations with both the land and with other human groups, and that this discourse is related epistemically and technically to ways of seeing” (Cosgrove 1998:xiv).

But clearly, places are constituted by more than materiality. While they function as settings for social and economic reproduction, they also provide the action-space/stage/theatre where group-identity is acted out within the group, with other groups, and with government and other institutions. That is, through daily living—and dying—in particular places, the abstraction of space is transformed into a social and psychic geography. Both a cognitively derived *knowing* about place and an intuitive *sense* of place are profoundly integrated into peoples’ identity. As Pred has it, “historically contingent processes” contribute to “specific biographies of places” (Pred 1986). Tilley makes much the same point:

Places, like persons, have biographies in as much as they are formed, used, and transformed in relation to practice....stories acquire part of their mythic value and historical relevance if they are rooted in the concrete details of locales in the landscape, acquiring material reference points that can be visited, seen and touched (Tilley 1994:33).

That is, *abstract space* is transformed into *particular place* by the processes by which people create material and social realms through living somewhere.

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<sup>6</sup> . Again, the destruction of the WTC in Manhattan impacted on people in ways other than fear and profound grief at the immensity of the human losses. A constantly repeated refrain was the disorientation and bewilderment of the sudden elision of visible landmarks and the disruption of routine.

Certainly, we fully appreciate how place is important to non-western, pre-modern societies in the cultural ecological approach to subsistence strategies, social organization, and ideology. Central to this understanding are the complex array of symbolic relationships with physical surroundings, what Basso calls “the ideational resources with which they constitute their surroundings and invest them with value and significance” (Basso 1996:66). Sack also argues that this inter-threading of place and self can be very intense:

many premodern and preliterate societies are bound to the land in the sense that they and the place seem to be virtually one. This is encouraged by the use of landscape as part of memory in an oral society that must remember everything about itself and its practices. Hence place, of necessity must be more intimately a part of its culture. It is enhanced by the tendency in these cultures to blur distinctions between the natural and the cultural, and the living and the dead. Place is often inhabited by the spirits of the ancestors, or the place may have been given to the people by the gods (Sack 1997:136).

Turning to Basso again, he proposes that “[k]nowledge of places is therefore closely linked to knowledge of the self, to grasping one’s position in the larger scheme of things, including one’s own community, and securing a confident sense of who one is as a person” (Basso 1966:34). In this way, specific *ethnohistories* are integrated into specific *ethnogeographies*. The continuity of peoples’ connections with their lived-in worlds reinforces their identification with time and place and each other. Dislocation from such places erodes the material and spiritual connectedness of peoples. Not surprisingly, the struggle to maintain such connections—materially or abstractly—is a central component of many peoples’ strategies of survival.

However strong a sense of place has been in pre-modern societies, it may be argued that modernity has challenged shared identities and attendant social cohesion. Karl Deutsch turned to Tönnies’ classical constructs of *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (society) in his analysis of the implications for national identity of the transition from traditional to modern (Deutsch 1953; Tönnies 1957). In the local and immediate world of *Gemeinschaft*, lived-in place is closely integrated into a people’s sense of belonging, distinctiveness, and identity. When these long-standing localisms are replaced by the centralizing, homogenizing, and alienating processes of state-politics and modern communications, a more instrumentalist *Gesellschaft* requires that people become part of a bureaucratic abstraction, the state, with all of its integrative mechanisms.

But what would have Tönnies have had to say about the insecurities of post-modernity—or at least the destabilizing experiences of post-industrialism, late-capitalism, globalization? As Sack puts it,

[w]e live in a dynamic and complex culture in which experiences, memories, and stories are not necessarily shared by others, so that one person's associations with place, though intense, may not be culturally reinforced. We also encourage a view of ourselves in the world that is more abstract and detached. When this is coupled with a dynamic and mobile social system, places become thinned out and merge with space (Sack 1997:138).

He goes on to offer some strategies for surviving in a *placeless* and *spaced-out* world: “[e]thnic allegiances to place and militant nationalisms are often reactions to this cold and disorienting quality of modernity” (Sack 1997). There are others, of course, but this is the theme being pursued here.

### **"Constructing" National Identity**

According to Anthony Smith, nationalism continues to be “the most compelling identity myth in the modern world” (Smith 1991:1-18). This being the case, Walker Connor has argued for the better understanding of the “emotive and psychological” underpinnings that comprise the “non-rational core” of national identity (Connor 1994). In the same vein, Zelinsky posits that “modern states could neither exist nor operate effectively without an adequate body of symbol and myth, whatever other excuses they may have for their creation” (Zelinsky 1989:13). As Walzer put it, “[t]he state is invisible; it must be personified before it can be seen, symbolized before it can be loved, imagined before it can be conceived “ (Walzer 1967 in Zelinsky 1988).

The diagnostic components of nation-state formation are political independence, the growth of state power, the development of military might, and the consolidation of territory (Giddens 1987; Mann 1993). All of these contribute to the functional organization of people *in* a state, but the formation of a state-nationalism requires the nurturing of ideas and myths as the “emotional and sentimental glue” that binds the people *to* the state (Holsti 1996). In particular, attention is directed to the nurturing of a sense of a common history and heritage that is shared by people who have never seen or heard of one another. National cohesion, in other words, requires a sense of collective awareness and identity that is promoted through a shared sense of historical experience. What we are talking about, therefore, is the choreographing of the power of imagination by locating it in an invented history, and grounding it in an imagined geography. The orchestration of such collective remembering and, if necessary, collective amnesia, constitutes the crucial underpinning of national-state identities.

This begs the question of whether these strategies are necessary in a *civil/liberal* national-state (Beiner 1999; Breuilly 1993; Gellner 1994; Greenfeld 1992; Hobsbawm 1990; Hutchinson 1994; Ignatieff 1993; Poole 1999; Smith 1991 1995 1999). Civil, plural, and liberal nationalisms are often thought to be rationale and inclusive, whereas ethnic nationalism privileges a more emotional and exclusionary celebration of group identity. Yet, many civil/liberal states have pursued a *nationalizing* agenda by nurturing an emotional attachment to the *idea* of the state. They have

attempted to subdue complex realities of plurality and diversity by constructing iconic landscapes and mythic narratives intended to nurture a cohesive collective memory. In this way, the putative values of a particular national formation are rendered as a “symbolic space.” The concept of “symbolic space” is central to Anderson’s “imagined community” and has been rendered variously by Lefebvre as “representational space” ([1971] 1991), by Daniels as “patriotic landscapes” (1993), by Sullivan as “landscapes of sovereignty” (1998), and by Häkli as “discursive landscapes” (1999). That is, the cultivation of a collective memory grounded in a mythic past, reified in the present, and projected into the future. To this end, national mythologies and symbols are cultivated to encourage identification with the state and reinforce its continuity and ubiquity. Through various devices, otherwise detached individuals are implored to recognize one another as being members of a larger group sharing a common historical metanarrative. In this way, states created a common heritage or identity for new generations on the foundations of a “should have been past”—rather than an actual history (Zelinsky 1988). Nation-state building, has always been ardently *historical* with an emphasis on reconstructing and preserving the past, to encourage the present, to build and secure the future—and this has often required the use and misuse of history and heritage (Lowenthal 1996). Indeed, the idea that national identities and memories are constructed and reconstructed is not new: “Getting its history wrong is crucial for the creation of a nation,” Renan comforted French nationalists in 1882 (Renan 1990, [1882]).

Of course, people are not mere passive agents in this process. The very diversity of society ensures that however didactic the performances of state-nation identity, they will always be “polysemic” (Jensen 1990; Rodman 1992). That is, even though monuments, commemorations, and rituals are intended to be “state reinforcing” (Mann 1994) or “state creating” (Breuilly 1993), they will always have multiple meanings, some of which are other than those intended. As Hall has argued, the “preferred reading” accepts the dominant norms, values, and ideas that represent the current distribution of power; an “oppositional reading” challenges the dominant ideology; a “negotiated reading” is situated within the dominant ideology, but applies more local or particular inflections to accommodate specific situations (Hall 1980:134). What is important point in all of this, however, is that people are seldom merely passive recipients, and that their reaction to the whole range of mnemonic devices for national cohesion often reveals more about the present than it does of the past.

### **“Collecting” Memory**

From an unitary perspective of the nationalizing-state, the *idea* of the nation-state has to be reified through symbolic identification with an *imagined community* occupying a *particular place*, and nurtured through the construction of a *social* or *collective memory* (Connerton 1989; Coser 1992; Fentress and Wickham 1992; Halbwachs 1925 [1971] 1994 [1971] 1980; Hutton 1993; Le Goff 1992; Matthieu 1995; Nora 1984 1996; Shaw and Chase 1989) which is defined as follows:



Collective memory is an elaborate network of social mores, values, and ideals that marks out the dimensions of our imaginations according to the attitudes of the social groups to which we relate. It is through the interconnections among these shared images that the social frameworks (*cadres sociaux*) of our collective memory are formed, and it is within such settings that individual memories must be sustained if they are to survive (Hutton 1993:78).

From this perspective, the past is not *preserved* but is *socially constructed* through archives, museums, school curricula, monuments, and public displays (Anderson 1991;1994; Ben-Amos and Weissberg 1999; Bodnar 1992; Gillis 1994; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Hutchinson 1987; Kammen 1991; McClintock 1995; Samuel 1994 1998; Spillman 1997; Zelinsky 1989). National holidays, political extravaganzas, sporting events, and the rites-of-passage of the great, are all opportunities for the expression of a state-scripted national solidarity.<sup>7</sup> Mass participation in such “high holidays of mass communication”—directly or vicariously through the press, radio, film—allowed societies to share a “collective heartbeat” and strengthen their collective memory (Dayan and Katz 1992). But rather than the past being *preserved* as some objective record, it is always being *reconstructed* in the context of the present, and never disassociated from considerations of power (Halbwachs 1992:40). Indeed, Gillis has argued that a state “bureaucracy of memory” orchestrates a “sense of sameness over time and space” by advancing systems of remembering and forgetting that are socially constructed and which favour *elite* memory over *popular* memory (Gillis 1994:3-6). For Bodnar, the “dogmatic formalism” of *official* memory is advanced by elites who are committed to social unity, the continuity of particular institutions, and cultivation of loyalty to them; on the other hand, *vernacular memory* represents an array of diverse and ever-changing interests that threaten the attempted universality of the official expression of identity and memory (Bodnar 1994:75). In the production of these collective memories, national history is rendered as a mythic narrative acted out on, bounded by, and bonded with, particular places.

### **Narratives and Chronicles**

History, memory, and identity are constantly being re-negotiated to cultivate a people’s identification with the nationalizing-state through foundation myths, heroic narratives, the personification of assumed national qualities—and the identification with particular places. Ideally, the national metanarrative should reconcile social fragments with representations of order and harmony in the imagined community of the nationalizing-state. Francis declares that our narratives “produce the language that we use to describe ourselves as a community” and warns that “if we are not telling ourselves the

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<sup>7</sup>. With “royal marriages” being such a problematic rite for British royalty, “royal funerals” appear to have taken over as devices for nostalgic cohesion. Remember Princess Diana’s? Look out for that of the popular “Queen Mum”!

right narratives, then we cannot imagine ourselves acting together to resolve our problems” (Francis 1998:475).<sup>8</sup>

Such approaches to collective memory, national identity, and social cohesion all require a symbolically loaded chronicle. According to Friedman, “identity is literally unthinkable without narrative”:

People know who they are through the stories they tell about themselves and others. As ever-changing phenomena, identities are themselves narratives of formation, sequences moving through space and time as they undergo development, evolution, and revolution...narrative texts—whether verbal or visual, oral or written, fictional or referential, imaginary of historical—constitute primary documents of cultural expressivity (Friedman 1998:8-9).

Such “narrative poetics” influence identity through the stories communities and individuals tell about how they came to be. Always spatially grounded, they are associated with specific locales that become imbued with historically produced cultural meanings—the *genius loci*, spirit of place. For Massey, places become bonded to people by lived/experienced narratives: “identity of places is very much bound up with the *histories* which are told them, *how* these stories are told, and which history turns out to be dominant (Massey 1995). This relates to Fredric Jameson’s usage of the “political unconsciousness” being embedded in “narrative” as a “socially symbolic act” (1981). For Raymond Williams, such lived narratives engender “structures of feeling” that bind people to their worlds by their grounding in place (Harvey 1996:23-45). As Bhabha’s provocative title, *Nation and Narration*, implies, historical and mythic narratives provide a temporal template for national identities (Bhabha 1990). Several writers have recognized the power of myth as paradigm. Ronald Wright:

Most history, when it has been digested by people, becomes myth. Myth is an arrangement of the past, whether real or imagined, in patterns that resonate with a culture’s deepest values and aspirations. Myths create and reinforce archetypes so taken for granted, so seemingly axiomatic, that they go unchallenged. Myths are so fraught with meaning that we live and die by them. They are the maps by which cultures navigate through time (Wright 1992:5).<sup>9</sup>

In creating a distinctive Canadian identity, therefore, this meant that national chronicles had to be established, stories with which the new, confident, and expanding nation could identify. Accordingly, Canada produced several state agencies concerned with

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<sup>8</sup> . It should be noted that, in this context, *narrative* is not merely a literary form. Rather, the sense here is that narrative challenges the modernist belief in foundational knowledge, asserts that the world is known to us through stories and that these are always socially situated. For Schwandt, “[e]very narrative simultaneously creates or makes up a reality and asserts that it stands independent of that same reality” (Schwandt 1994:179).

<sup>9</sup> . If I may be allowed to allude yet again to the all-pervasive events since 11 September, Thomas Homer-Dixon, author of *The Ingenuity Gap* and director of the Centre for the Study of Peace and Conflict at the University of Toronto, commented on the WTC destruction as follows: “It’s a very powerful blow to some fundamental American myths, and all societies depend on myths” (*National Post* 17 September 2001:B7).

political integration and disseminating a didactic nationalism: National Archives (1872); Dominion Parks Branch (1911); Historic Sites and Monuments Board (1919); Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (1932); National Film Board (1939); Canada Council (1957). At the elite-populist level, a host of academic and professional organizations sought nativist expressions of national identity: for example, the Canadian Club (1893), the IODE (1900), and The Champlain Society (1905); and individuals from Sir Edmund Walker to Charles Bronfman have always been available to act as cultural provocateurs. Mass dissemination of centralizing ideas by newspapers, magazines, books, school curricula, and popular culture contributed to the popular visualization of selected historical events, places, and people (Osborne 1992 1992a 1994 1995 1998). In these various ways, the cultivation of a national consciousness has attempted to integrate fractions, sections, and edges of the state.

### **Symbolic Landscapes and Inscapes**

The first step in the general principles of classical mnemonics was to imprint on the memory a series of *loci* as a “mnemonic place system” to facilitate mental recall (Yates, [1966] 2001:3). To this end, the complex reality of the nationalizing-state is rendered in “singular histories and geographies” that serve as a symbolic shorthand for the putative values of a particular national formation (Daniels 1993:5). Sack agrees:

Place and its landscape become part of one’s identity and one’s memory. Its features are often used as mnemonic devices...For all of us the landscape is replete with markers of the past—graves and cemeteries, monuments, archaeological sites, place names, religious and holy centers—that help us remember and give meaning to our lives (Sack 1997:135).

That is, the link between place and self is profound, but applies also to groups of selves and their collective identities. In particular, the material rendering of social memory in a mythologized landscape transforms landscape from an external phenomenon to be engaged visually, to a psychic terrain of internalized symbolic meaning. Indeed, for Gerard Manley Hopkins, the term was *inscape*: the quintessential aspects of reality were to be found in the “oneness” of things, or the “outward reflection of the inner nature of a thing” (Gardner 1976:xx). Schama emphasizes this reflexivity between the outer world and the inner person:

Landscapes are culture before they are nature; constructs of the imagination projected onto wood and water and rock. ...Once a certain idea of landscape, a myth, a vision, establishes itself in an actual place, it has a peculiar way of muddling categories, of making metaphors more real than their referents; of becoming, in fact, part of the scenery (Schama 1995:61).

Others have taken these ideas further. For Halbwachs, the imagery of collective memory focuses on particular people, events, and their spatial reference points—“places of memory.” These are reinforced in the collective memory by acts of commemoration as a “contrived structuring of time and space” which establishes a

“mental geography in which the past is mapped in our minds according to its most unforgettable places” (Hutton 1993: 80).<sup>10</sup> These constitute commemorative landscapes composed of *landmarks* that provide spatial and temporal coordinates for remembering: that is, an array of “particular figures, dates, and periods of time that acquire an extraordinary salience” (Cosser 1992:223-4).<sup>11</sup>

Nora looks at symbolically-loaded sites and ideas as *lieux de mémoire* which conflate site, memory, and history (Nora 1989 1996 1997 1998). He has concentrated on an analysis of “the places in which the collective heritage was crystallized, the principal *lieux*, in all senses of the word, in which collective memory was rooted” (1996:xv). These have included such underpinnings of a quintessential identity as “the land,” “the cathedral,” and “the court,” war memorials, gastronomy, and *Le Tour de France*, as well as such emotive sites of remembering as the *tricolore* and *la Marseillaise*, Lascaux and Verdun, and the Gallic cockerel and Jeanne d’Arc. Of course, all of these memories are located in places. But rather than geography being merely the stage for the acting out of history, the two are closely imbricated throughout.

For Bakhtin, they are *chronotopes*,

points in the geography of a community where time and space intersect and fuse. Time takes on flesh and becomes visible for human contemplation; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time and history and the enduring character of a people....Chronotopes thus stand as monuments to the community itself, as symbol of it, as forces operating to shape its members’ images of themselves (Bakhtin 1981:7).

Given these several perspectives that emphasize the richness of historical and cultural associations, it is not surprising that some scholars have addressed the emotive power of imagined place in marshaling people’s sense of belonging. It prompted Mitchell to declare that landscape is a verb, not a noun. That is, we should “think of landscape, not as an object to be seen or a text to be read, but as a process by which social and subjective identities are formed” and that we should ask of it,

not just what landscape *is* or *means* but what it *does*, how it works as a cultural practice. Landscape...doesn’t merely signify or symbolize power relations; it is an

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<sup>10</sup> . Of course, it is not surprising that it was in *La topographie légendaire des Évangiles en Terre Sainte* (1941) that Halbwachs found the perfect historical and cultural context for demonstrating how a remembered history is rendered through a place in which the cultural landscape was a living mnemonic system constantly being empowered by formal and informal acts of commemoration.

<sup>11</sup> . Others have also used the term *landmark*. For Kevin Lynch, in his ground-breaking behavioural study, *The Image of the City*, “Landmarks, the point references considered to be external to the observer, are simple physical elements which may vary widely in scale...Landmarks become more easily identifiable, more likely to be chosen as significant, if they have a clear form; if they contrast with their background; and if there is some prominence of spatial locations...Once a history, a sign, or a meaning attaches to an object, its value as a landmark rises” (1960:78-81). While not as rich as Halbwachs’ or Nora’s meaning, it emphasizes the referential theme of finding one’s way.

instrument of cultural power, perhaps even an agent of power that is...independent of human intentions. Landscape as a cultural medium thus has a double role with respect to something like ideology; it naturalizes a cultural and social construction, representing an artificial world as if it were simply given and inevitable (Mitchell 1994:1-2).

As Bender puts it, “[t]he landscape is never inert, people engage with it, re-work it, appropriate and contest it. It is part of the way in which identities are created and disputed, whether as individual, group, or nation-state” (Bender 1993:3). As such, landscapes are often called upon to serve as emotional prompts for action in the present through what Halbwachs has called the “semiotics of space” (Cosser 1992:175). In particular, the material rendering of social memory in a mythologized landscape transforms landscape from an external phenomenon to be engaged visually, to a terrain of internalized symbolic meaning. Such landscapes serve as emotional prompts for action in the present and it follows, therefore, that the interpretation of the form and symbolism of a landscape helps us understand its role in “cultural practice” and as an instrument of “power” (Mitchell 1994).

Storied landscapes come to define groups when they become personified as homeland, motherland, land of our fathers, *heimat*. Schama makes the point that,

it is clear that inherited landscape myths and memories share two common characteristics: their surprising endurance through the centuries and their power to shape institutions that we still live with. National identity, to take just the most obvious example, would lose much of its ferocious enchantment without the mystique of a particular landscape tradition: its topography mapped, elaborated, and enriched as homeland (Schama 1995:15).

Further, the addition of unique narratives that bond people to place produces what Daniels has called “patriotic topographies”:

National identities are coordinated, often largely defined, by *legends and landscapes*, by stories and golden ages, enduring traditions, heroic deeds and dramatic destinies located in ancient or promised home-lands with hallowed sites and scenery. The symbolic activation of time and space...gives shape to the *imagined community* (1993:5).

Daniels is here referring to the problem posed by Benedict Anderson (1991): how do societies as large, extensive, and complex as the modern nationalizing-state achieve that profound identification with place and narrative so intrinsic to pre-modern societies? As the dominant repositories of symbolic space and time, story-laden landscapes play an instrumental role in the formation of national identities. Indeed, in the case of Canada, much has been made of the transformation of the nation’s natural setting into a “patriotic topography.” The development of a powerful symbolic attachment to the north and the wilderness has been so successful that they have been transformed into iconic statements of Canadian national identity (Kaufmann and Zimmer 1998; Pratt and

Karvellas 1997; Osborne 1988, 1992, 1992a, 1995). Elsewhere also, *national landscapes* have served to offer generalized visual condensations of values of a particular dominant culture or political formation (Bunce 1994). For Häkli, the complex processes of lived experience in place and political aspirations produce a *discursive landscape* which becomes a *semiosphere* for its people:

It is possible to address the particular relation between national identity and cultural landscape...by looking at the ways in which things and events are systematically drawn together to signify nationality, and nationhood. The fact that there are certain textual or text-like materials through which this can be done—the result of reading and writing national space—justifies the term *discursive* in connection with the landscape. National landscape is not only read from nature and culture, it is also written therein (Häkli 1999:124).

The point is that nation-states function in material and psychic terrains that have been nurtured to reinforce their identification with specific social contexts through symbolically-charged time and space. The abstraction of time becomes punctuated by symbolic dates; the abstraction of space is focused on specific sites associated with particular events. Consider some examples: Masada (AD 73) for Jews; Hastings (1066) for the English; Kosovo (1389) for Serbians; Mohacs (1526) for Hungarians; the Plains of Abraham (1759) for the French; Culloden (1746) for Scots; the Battle of the Boyne (1690) for Protestant Irish; Gallipoli (1916) for Australians; Vimy Ridge (1917) for Canadians. And it is not insignificant that many of these places are associated with battles, mythic victories, and mythic sacrifices. They are places where blood and soil come to signify belonging (Ignatieff 1994; Osborne 1995 1998). But there are other, more benign examples: the “countryside” idyll for England; dining *en famille* for the French; the theatre of the “piazza” for Italians; the iconic “Shield lake” for some Canadians.

It may be posited, therefore, that landscape is the dominant depository of symbolic space and time, “the most generally accessible and widely shared *aide-mémoire* of a culture's knowledge and understanding of its past and future” (Kuchler 1993:85).

## **Monuments**

Whereas landscapes often exist in general categories, monuments focus attention on specific places and events and are central to this endeavour of constructing symbolic landscapes of power. On the occasion of the unveiling of the statue to Wilfrid Laurier on Parliament Hill on 3 August 1927, the *Ottawa Citizen* recorded the high-flying rhetoric of the Speaker of the House. The Hon. Mr. Lemieux pointed out how monuments were central to the construction of a national identity: they were “reminders of a past which Canadian youth should ever keep before their eyes”; they would serve to “rekindle in their souls memory's flame whereby great teachings and profitable lessons were retained”; and how these figures etched in bronze stood as witnesses of our national life. Landmarks of Canada's onward march, they proclaimed that at every turn in history,

in every crisis, there emerged a man who, embodying the soul of the anonymous and collective masses, championed an essential right and indispensable liberties.

Here we have it all in one speech: monuments were spatial and temporal landmarks; they were loaded with memory; they performed a didactic function; they were signs of national progress; they were heroic figures—men, of course!—who represented the anonymous masses; symbols of rights and liberties.

Such monuments direct attention to specific places and events. From its classical origins, through the French Revolution, and into the age of the nation-state, monumental public statuary in the Western world has constituted what Hobsbawm has called, “an open-air museum of national history as seen through great men” (Hobsbawm 1995:13). For Boyer, public spaces and public monuments of the nineteenth century city constituted a memory system “transcribed in stone”:

Historical monuments and civic spaces as didactic artifacts were treated with curatorial reverence. They were visualized best if seen as isolated ornaments; jewels of the city to be placed in scenographic arrangements and iconographically composed to civilize and elevate the aesthetic tastes and morals of an aspiring urban elite. This was an architecture of ceremonial power whose monuments spoke of exemplary deeds, national unity, and industrial glory (Boyer 1994:33-34).

*Statuemanía*—the rage for commemorative statues—peaked in 1870-1914 throughout Europe and North America and attained a social and political role not seen since the days of the Roman empire (Agulhon 1978; Cannadine 1983; Denis 1988; Hobsbawm 1983 1995; Kamman 1991; Levinson 1998; North 1990). In an age of increased loss of identity in a rapidly changing world, monuments anchored “collective remembering” in material sites that served as rallying point for a shared common memory and identity. They were the material signifiers of ideas that were intended to be immortalized. Perhaps more importantly, however, they represented the personification of the nation or nationalizing-state, the transmission of mythic histories, a material and visual connection with the past, and the legitimization of authority. Intended to function as visual prompts for the collective memorizing of an official state narrative, some monuments were accompanied by texts, but most relied upon the depiction of the human form in colossal heroic statues that rendered abstract principles in allegorical allusion. According to Wolfgang Braunfels, “One cannot build for strangers; history cannot be planned in advance; what is necessary needs aesthetic exaggeration” (Braunfels 1988:371). To this end, there were certain requirements for didactic public architecture and sculpture:

It must be rigorous, of spare, clear, indeed classical form. It must be simple. It must have the quality of “touching the heavens.” It must transcend everyday utilitarian considerations. It must be generous in its construction, built for the ages according to the best principles of the trade. In practical terms, it must have no purpose but instead be the vehicle of an idea. It must have an element

of the unapproachable in it that fills people with admiration and awe. It must be impersonal because it is not the work of an individual but the symbol of a community bound together by a common ideal (Tamms, quoted in Hinz 1979:236).

If effective, public monuments were consensus builders. They were focal points for identifying with a visual condensation of an imagined national chronicle rendered in heroic symbolism.

Statuary, therefore, was presented as an allegorical statement of the national narrative and the abstract principles that were thought to be constitutive of the national experience. They were intended to function as visual prompts for the collective memorizing of an official historical script (Leith 1990). This was particularly true of “portrait statuary.” Royalty, political leaders, military heroes, and mythic figures were presented in standard poses with an array of predictable accoutrements—and sometimes recognizable visages.<sup>12</sup> Often located in heroic pantheons established in national capitals, they were also carefully sited to underscore the particular symbolic role of particular places: the Statue of Liberty in New York, Vercingétorix at Alesia, King Alfred in Winchester (Osborne 2001).

Certainly, Canadian monuments and commemorations have been intimately tied to nationalism, both in its provincial and Dominion variants. Throughout the nineteenth century, monuments in British North America generally commemorated the sacrifices of imperial military heroes—Wolfe, Montcalm, Nelson, and Brock—or else defensive victories against an expansionist United States, campaigns against the recalcitrant Métis, or enthusiastic participation in the imperial South African War.<sup>13</sup> As elsewhere, however, Canada also witnessed a growing enthusiasm for monuments dedicated to political leaders and cultural figures. Indeed, in Quebec, the 1880-1930 period constituted a new era in the cultivation of the *patrimoine*—the collective cultural heritage—and a new era of monumental hagiography was associated with a “rear-window nationalism” (Zelinsky 1988). Missionaries and martyrs such as Jeanne Mance, Kateri Tekakwitha, Brébeuf, and Lalement, as well as explorers and military heroes such as Cartier, Champlain, Dollard, Maisonneuve, La Salle, Frontenac, and Montcalm were all rendered in idealized, devotional imagery and contributed to the construction of the French Canadian collective memory (Martin 1988:3). This active propagation of “le culte des héros laïques et religieux du passé national” by the erection of hundreds of monuments throughout the towns and villages of Quebec made a major contribution to

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<sup>12</sup> . Thus, in 1865, the sculptor Aimé Millet—perhaps with sycophancy moderated by diplomacy and nationalist fervour—modeled his rendering of Vercingétorix on the face of his patron, Emperor Napoleon III (Champion 1997). Similarly, Nepean Point's Champlain is modeled on committee member and historian, Benjamin Sulte (Gridgeman 1977), while Edinburgh's memorialization of “Braveheart” Wallace turned to the Hollywood profile of Mel Gibson!

<sup>13</sup> . This was unabashedly underscored by the activities of the precursor of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board, the National Battlefields Commission.



the development of “le panthéon visuel de nos gloires nationales...l'évolution de la mentalité québécoise” (Martin 1988:xi-xii).

By 1914, however, monumental public statuary was well into decline and near extinction as a medium of institutionalized social memory. Of course, the one exception were the ubiquitous, and increasingly vital, war monuments (Heffernan 1995; Inglis 1998; Johnson 1995; King 1998; Mayo 1988; Moriarty 1995; Savage 1997; Sherman 1999; Shipley 1992). Collectively and individually, they reflected the nation's response to an important nation-building enterprise—the “Great War” (Osborne 2001). According to Tilly, nations make war, wars make nations (Tilly 1992). Large scale conflicts require that nation states mobilize internal social, economic, and political power (Giddens 1987; Mann 1993). But the power of war as an agent of nation-building transcends the logistics of the implementation of state-power. It is as if societies are hard-wired to always transform the grim realities of human sacrifice and suffering into collective psychic energy and a confirmation of putative national values. This is what Raphael Samuel means when he speaks of the “romanticization of war” as a “cultural universal” which “enters into the very marrow of the national idea” (Samuel 1998: 8). Certainly, the war memorials scattered throughout Canada, and especially the national memorials at Ottawa and Vimy, continue to be catalysts—and have been manipulated as such—for patriotic remembering for complex reasons.

But war memorials aside, after World War I, “bronze and marble went distinctly out of fashion. The elaborate visual language of symbolism and allegory became as incomprehensible in the twentieth century as the classical myths now were for most people” (Hobsbawm 1995:13). Henceforth, monumental statuary was favoured only by dictatorships that manipulated pomp, gigantism, and poor taste into symbolic statements of “the face of power” (Hobsbawm 1995:12). Nevertheless, portrait sculpture has joined flags, anthems, national chronicles, currency, coins, etc. as symbolic devices for building a sense of community, identity, and nationalism.

But if the enthusiasm for monuments flagged in the twentieth century, commemorative plaques emerged as a dominant presence in the landscape of commemoration (Osborne 1998). Founded in 1919, Canada's Historic Sites and Monuments Board erected markers, over the next 75 years, at some 1600 sites of historical significance (HSMB 1994). Commemoration activity flourished during the first twenty years, lagged until 1970, and has surged over the last twenty years. And in all of this, what is being looked at are the *memorialized* persons, places, and events that have been nominated, evaluated, and accepted in what is, essentially, a state-approved, if not state-directed, exercise. It is a reflection of the ideological priorities at the time of decision making. Predictably, there has been a pronounced gender bias to such a view of national history, with only 30 of the 527 persons classified as “Persons of National Significance” being women.<sup>14</sup> Equally predictably, past interpretations have ensured a heavy

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<sup>14</sup> . However, as of March 2001, this figure has now been increased to 51 of 569 persons, an increase from 5.5% to 6%.

emphasis upon French-Anglo-Celtic participation in the monumentalized history, as well as a dominance of the military, political, and economic elite. However, since 1970, as befits a Canada that emphasizes multiculturalism, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and inclusive social agendas, there has been a shift in emphases. Thus, of the 473 “Historic Sites” commemorated in the 1971-1993 period, only 12% referred to political-military events, and the former dominant class of the “Battle of ...” has been overtaken by sites associated with federal politics. The leading grouping of monuments was dedicated to historic buildings (43%), the largest number commemorating municipal and commercial structures, while the cultural category amounts to 20% of the sites, with an emphasis on religion. The 79 “Historic Events” commemorated between 1970-1993 honoured an array of “firsts,” but with those in the economic realm—and especially transportation<sup>15</sup>—being dominant. More noteworthy was the relatively large number of commemorations of activities associated with “new” Canadians including Ukrainians, Chinese, Japanese, and Africans. Of the 193 elevated to the role of “Persons of National Significance,” 49 were politicians of various stripes (two being classified as “rebels”!), and 40 were artists and writers (six being prominent in various realms of “popular” culture).<sup>16</sup> This being said, it should be noted that the most recent system plan for National Historical Sites of Canada recognizes that “the history of Aboriginal peoples, ethnocultural communities and women [i]s insufficiently represented” and that “these three areas are Park’s Canada’s strategic priorities” (Canada 2000:39).

So how do we interpret the meaning, significance, and effectiveness of the monumental landscapes of power that have been constructed around us? Lefebvre warns that representational space—monumental space in particular—constitutes a deceptive and tricky *trompe-l'œil* that cannot be approached by semiological and symbolic interpretation alone: it is a product of extensive webs of meaning (1991:143). Indeed, it is the nature of the public reaction to monuments that determines whether or not they serve as passive visual statements contributing to social cohesion, or as active elements in a public discourse of redefinition. Elite groups and/or political authority have always sought to organize public space to communicate to the public a particular kind of national consciousness, a conformity to a particular public order. Often, states nurture a patriotism that is akin to a civil state religion—sometimes marked by an unholy alliance between church and state—in which capitals, cemeteries, national monuments, cenotaphs are elevated to sacred spaces. But, as Levinson argues, anyone can play the “identity politics” game and “there is rarely a placid consensus” upon which the state may build (1998:10). As he shrewdly points out, “a sometimes bitter reality about life within truly multicultural societies is that the very notion of a unified public space is up for grabs,” each group having its own lists of heroes and villains (1998:37). Consequently, rather than being sites of consensus building, public space and its population of carefully selected monuments and statuary become contested terrains (Osborne 1998).

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<sup>15</sup> . I have written elsewhere about the role of a “culture of communication” that matches that of a “culture of nature” in Canadian identity (Osborne 1999).

<sup>16</sup> . In a somewhat self-serving exercise, no fewer than eleven persons were honoured as historians!

Finally, monuments are also sites of a contestation between the laws of physics, social change, and human psychology. Simply put, they last too long! As Savage puts it,

Public monuments are the most conservative of commemorative forms precisely because they are meant to last, unchanged, forever. While other things come and go, are lost and forgotten, the monument is supposed to remain a fixed point, stabilizing both the physical and the cognitive landscape. Monuments attempt to mold a landscape of collective memory, to conserve what is worth remembering and discard the rest (1997:4).

Basing his ideas on Nietzsche's comment that monumentalism is "a protest against the change of generations and against transitoriness," Levinson has further argued that "[a]ll monuments are efforts, in their own way, to stop time" (1998:7). In the same vein, Acconci has declared time to be "fast" and space to be "slow," the problem being that memorials attempt to freeze ideas in space and time (Acconci 1990). Thus, resistant materials such as bronze, iron, marble, and granite ensure forms become archaic and remain as enigmatic elements in the landscape. They are frozen in space while time moves on around them, their rigid materiality ensuring their estrangement from the ever-changing values of the society in which they are located. As Young puts it,

monuments have long sought to provide a naturalizing locus for memory, in which a state's triumph and martyrs, its ideals and founding myths are cast as naturally true as the landscape in which they stand. These are the monument's sustaining illusions, the principles of its seeming longevity and power. But in fact...neither the monument nor its meaning is really everlasting. Both a monument and its significance are constructed in particular times and places, contingent on the political, historical, and aesthetic realities of the moment (1999:6-13).

Ritualized remembrance and performance do ensure the relevance of some monuments, but others receive the ultimate insult of neglect, anonymity, and disinterest. In still others, contemporary events challenge the original values of the site, appropriate it for new causes, and thus revitalize them as visual statements of contemporary—albeit dissonant—values.

This begs the question, what to do with the plethora of now irrelevant monumental *bric-à-brac* that litters our public parks, plazas, and capital grounds? The reputations of their subjects has faded; the relevance of what they stand for is lost; rather than exclamation points for their time, they become enigmatic question marks in contemporary space. The ever-so-many Queen Victorias located throughout the former imperial-red capitals—and the equally abundant surplus Marxes and Lenins throughout the communist-red plazas of the world—have been blown up, torn down, or hidden away to await the next shift in political iconography (Foote, T<sub>h</sub> and Árvay 2000).

Verdery has examined “political burials and reburials”— that is, an examination of the “postmortem life” of memorialized individuals—and investigates how and why the bones and corpses of deceased individuals become political symbols (Verdery 1999). She argues that such “dead-body politics” requires the consideration of several topics: political symbolism; death rituals and beliefs; national and international contexts; and the reworking of “memory.” For Verdery,

Statues are dead people cast in bronze or carved in stone. They symbolize a specific famous person while in a sense also *being* the body of that person. By arresting the process of that person’s bodily decay, a statue alters the temporality associated with the person, bringing him into the realm of the timeless of the sacred, like an icon (Verdery 1999:5).

It follows, therefore, that desecrating a statue amounts to iconoclasm. Tearing a monument down and eliding it from the landscape is an exercise of power; re-erecting it means a correction and re-appraisal.

Recognizing this, monuments and their associated commemorations are best thought of as devices of communication rather than aesthetic representations: as such, they underscore the power of “dead-body politics” and the “reworking of memory.”

Several examples come to mind relating to the First Nations’ assertion of their place in the iconography of the nation. A decade after the unveiling of the statue to Samuel de Champlain in Ottawa in 1915, a faithful native amanuensis was added crouching at the feet of the hero, only to be removed in 1997 after considerable opposition (Osborne and Osborne 2001). Similarly, Louis Riel was executed as traitor on 16 November 1885, but had statues erected in his honour in Regina (1968) and Winnipeg (1971); they were removed in 1991 and 1995 respectively after much protest, with a new, more romanticized version erected in Winnipeg in 1996 (Osborne 2001). In another example, on Aboriginal Day 2001, Lloyd Pinay’s ten metre-high war memorial in marble and bronze incorporating symbolic animal forms and four Aboriginal figures was unveiled as commemoration of the high participation rates and fighting abilities of the Native peoples in Canada’s wars.<sup>17</sup> Finally, there is the whole question of First Nations’ artefacts as mnemonic systems, cultural retainers, and resistance (Phillips 1998), and as appropriated icons (Cole 1985).

These examples demonstrate how monuments, plaques, and other mnemonic objects always perform an action that is governed by conventions, contribute to the formation of social relationships, and often involve the sanction of prevailing systems of power (Austin in King 1998). As such, they are often contested.

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<sup>17</sup> . Ironically, the unveiling ceremony was a markedly low-key event in comparison with the high-powered dedication of the monument to the “Unknown Soldier” at the nearby National War Memorial in May 2000.

## Capital/Capitol Complex

Another principal site of place making and remembering is the national capital. The *capital-capitol complex* is a focal point in the national imagination and, consequently, pantheons of heroic figures are incorporated into the public grounds and ceremonial spaces. Not merely the locus of administrative power, the national-state capital consists of three components: the *capital* is the city housing the administration of the state or national government; the *capitol* is the building that houses government's lawmakers; and the *capital-capitol complex* consists not only of the capitol/parliament building itself, but also all the structures intended to communicate the "government visually to the governed" (Vale 1992:10). The *capital-capitol complex* thus becomes a symbolic centre integrating "both a governing elite and a set of symbolic forms expressing the fact that it is in truth governing" (Geertz 1983 quoted in Vale 1992:12). Thus, capitol/parliament buildings are intended to be imposing, impressive, evocative of the dignity, majesty, power of the state. Moreover, states rendered visible the symbolic bases of their power through the performance of mass ceremonials and the construction of "ritual spaces" that were integral to experiencing and participating in national identity (Hutton 1993:51).

Certainly, this was true in the late 19th century for such capitals as London, Paris, Berlin, and Washington as they embarked on the construction of spaces and landscapes of sovereignty suitable for choreographing the drama of state power. As Boyer has explained, such capitals were "ceremonial cities," places where one could find "transcribed in stone, a memory system of public monuments and places" that conscripted city space into the "democratic public sphere" through a "frenzy of the visible" (Boyer 1994:7). They became assemblages of inspirational monuments, imposing state architecture, and theatrical civic display. Intended to be consensus builders, they were focal points for identifying with a shared past and representing an agreed-upon national chronicle.

Like other political regimes, Canada also developed its *capital/capitol complex*.<sup>18</sup> Following Queen Victoria's final decision of 1859, Ottawa prepared itself for its new role as national capital. It was to be both a focal point as well as the materialization of Canada's new constitutional status. Indeed, it was to be a symbolic space that reflected national ambitions and annexed other cultural spaces into the national domain. Canada's cultural plurality required a "contrived metaphor of unity" and a symbolic representation of political process and national dream. Not simply a matter of vistas and arrangements of public buildings, increasingly, the capital-complex came to be loaded with symbolic icons that rendered in allegorical terms the nation's progress from colony, through empire, to state-nation. Three nested symbolic spaces may be recognized: the Parliament Buildings; Parliament Hill; and the surrounding region administered by the

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<sup>18</sup> . The following discussion also relates to the construction of symbolically-loaded provincial—"national" in the case of Quebec's *Assemblée nationale*—capitol-capital complexes.

National Capital Commission (Osborne and Osborne 2001; Gordon and Osborne, forthcoming).

By 1865, the Parliament Buildings were completed in a “civil Gothic” style that has been labeled the “Canadian National Style” (Kalmen 1994:541). As for the Parliament Hill, the grounds were gradually populated by an array of political figures in appropriate poses: Sir Georges-Étienne Cartier (1885); Sir John A. Macdonald (1895); Queen Victoria (1901); Alexander Mackenzie (1901); George Brown (1913); Robert Baldwin and Sir Louis-H. Lafontaine (1914); Alexander Mackenzie (1901); George Brown (1913); Robert Baldwin and Sir Louis-H. Lafontaine (1914); Thomas D’Arcy McGee (1922); Sir Wilfrid Laurier (1927); Sir Robert Borden (1957); Mackenzie-King (1968); Diefenbaker (1986); Pearson (1990). But not St. Laurent—he’s outside the Supreme Court. Nor Bowell, or Bennett, or Meighen—matters of aesthetics versus realism have interfered with their inclusion. As for Trudeau, Clarke, Turner, Mulroney, Campbell, and Chrétien, they are all waiting in line! They have been preceded by a tradition-breaking addition, that is, not royalty, prime ministers, or Fathers of Confederation, but the Alberta Five (Osborne and Osborne 2001).<sup>19</sup>

Beyond the cast-iron fence surrounding the Hill, Ottawa is being gradually transformed into one of Boyer’s “commemorative cities.” In the search for suitable “ritual space” for the performance of state power and celebration of an advocated national identity, the Hill has been appropriated for nation-wide celebrations such as the 1927 Jubilee and the 1967 Centennial, as well as such annual festive occasions as Canada Day, Christmas, and the New Year—all now receiving massive media attention.<sup>20</sup> Also, the development of Connaught Place into Confederation Square, has proceeded apace, focussed on the inspirational National War Memorial and the recent addition of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Plans call for five other focal points, one being the Peace Keepers’ Monument, all linked by Confederation Boulevard, the “path of heroes.”

These national sacred spaces—capitals, cemeteries, national monuments, cenotaphs—attempt to communicate “privileged narratives” of the national experience and cultivate a national consciousness. Yet there is rarely consensus on the imagery of public statuary, national heroes, and political iconography (Levinson 1998:37). As Michael Walzer argues in his study, *On Toleration*, anyone can play the “identity politics” game. He poses a fundamental question:

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<sup>19</sup> . A very popular monument, unveiled on 18 October 2000, commemorates the activities of five leading social activists, or the “Famous Five” (Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Henrietta Muir Edwards, Louise McKinney, and Irene Parlby), as well as the 1929 decision that declared women to be “persons” under the law, thus making women eligible for public positions.

<sup>20</sup> . The most recent was the memorial service for those lost on 11 September held on 14 December and attended by some 100,000 persons.

Civil religion consists of the full set of political doctrines, historical narratives, exemplary figures, celebratory occasions, and memorial rituals through which the state impresses itself on the minds of its members....How can there be more than one set for each state? (Quoted in Levinson 1998:85-86).

Recognizing this, public art, ceremonies, and space—intended to be symbolic of public order and to communicate public identification with that order—often become sites of contestation.

### **Performing Identity**

Monumental sculpture in public places relied upon solitary or small group interactions between the object and the individual. Where its location is appropriate, however, a monument may become the focal point of ceremonial, thus transforming Lefebvre's passive "representational space" into a dynamic site of ideology (Lefebvre 1991:39).<sup>21</sup> Here, the public may experience mythic-history through orchestrated commemorations and controlled spectacle. Through these "contrived structures of time and space," social memory focuses on particular events and places (Hutton 1993:80). Ideally, the involvement of large numbers of people in ritualized performances of remembering at these places reinforces societies' bonding with them, what they represented, and with each other (Connerton 1989).

With the democratizing of political power, publicly performed ritual and ceremony became essential elements of the political process. It has been noted that "historical shrines and monuments" became "social and spatial" anchors for historical traditions, just as "national holidays" anchored tradition in time:

Secular efforts at tradition building mirrored, at least in function, court rituals and religious traditions that had evolved in Europe over centuries. Throughout the nineteenth century the use of secular traditions grew, even within the monarchies and empires. These traditions became a means of legitimizing political and territorial claims over increasingly large and diverse populations and for coming to terms with the social and economic upheavals brought about by industrialization (Foote, T<sub>h</sub> and Árvay 2000:305).

Existing or newly planned *space-containers* became the sites for public ceremonies, public entertainment, and public participation in choreographed performances:

What power required was performance art in the enclosed spaces, elaborate ceremonies (the British became particularly adept at inventing royal rituals of this kind from the late nineteenth century onwards); and, in the open spaces, processions or mass choreography. The leaders' theatre of power combined

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<sup>21</sup> . For a discussion of "representational space," "representations of space," and "spaces for representation," see Mitchell 1995.

military and civilian components and preferred open spaces (Hobsbawm 1995:12).

This propensity for large-scale “crowd choreography” in public spaces may be linked to several contemporary developments: labour demonstrations; modern warfare; stage spectacles; cinema epics and dance reviews; marching bands; commercialized sport; and a general shift to visualization in culture in general (Osborne 1998). The transition from public sculpture-as-viewed object to public-as-sculpted masses required nation-wide participation in the theatrics of ideology in appropriate spaces: thousands performed as on-site actors; more thousands served as on-site spectators; and millions more were incorporated as distanced participant-voyeurs listeners and viewers through national and international radio and film (Hinz 1979; Welch 1993).<sup>22</sup>

In this way, totalitarian states applied a whole panoply of devices such as marches, pageants, mass meetings, and party rallies to cultivate a new “mass-aesthetic” through theatrics of power expressed by what Taylor has called “human architecture” (Taylor 1974).<sup>23</sup> In all cases, they were careful to co-opt existing social memories and traditional commemorations such as the Nazis’ development of “volk-gemeinschaft,” the Soviets’ appropriation of ecclesiastical processions that had formerly focussed on cross and icon, and Italian Fascists’ reliance upon the theme of “romanita,” the symbols of Ancient Rome. In this way, new state-agendas were grafted onto these commemorative events and public participation became passive as these events were transformed into paramilitary spectacles in which viewers and participants were reduced to the role of cogs in the collective machine of the state.<sup>24</sup> But non-totalitarian societies also exhibited a growing predilection for spectacle and “ephemeral” mass events:

Mass audiences were thrilled by replications of themselves in decorative patterns: whether in the geometric precision of dancers in revue, gymnasts in formation, or crowds on parade. Perhaps these collective and routinized forms, what Kracauer called “mass ornaments,” were but a parody of the linear assembly line and the efficiency of Taylorized body movements, their alienating forms transcended through a pleasurable mirroring of their figural patterns. But ornamental patterns, he insisted, only observable from a distant or aerial view, effaced the presence of the individual in the organized fabrication of the mass (Boyer 1994:118).

In this way, ritualized and repetitive mass performance was co-opted to cultivate the national imagination through,

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<sup>22</sup> . Of course, Leni Riefenstahl's *œuvre*, especially her *Triumph of the Will* (1935), makes the point.

<sup>23</sup> . For more on how Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, Franco, and Salazar exercised their demagoguery through architecture and spectacle, see Osborne 1998.

<sup>24</sup> . It is interesting that both totalitarianism and industrialism were parodied at the time by Charlie Chaplin in *Modern Times* and *The Great Dictator* respectively.



mysterious excitements of the spectacle, the pure visual enjoyment that rose up from illuminated shows and fireworks and turned the darkness of the city streets into marvels of light. Ephemeral shows, these punctuating celebrations of sovereign and national power, were public events intended to dazzle the crowd with the greatness of empire and the glory of the nation (Boyer 1994:319).

Places of memory are buttressed by ritualized acts of commemoration intended to prompt, nurture, and focus specific recollections of the past which are intended to advance particular emotions, beliefs, and ideologies. Thus, nations demonstrate their continuity with a particular identity that is reinforced by performance, mass participation, and repetitive re-enactment. As Connerton puts it, such commemorative ceremonies constitute a “theatre of memory” whose performances remind a community of its identity through a “master narrative” that engenders the sense of a “collective autobiography” (Connerton 1991:70). He suggests three perspectives on how such initiatives shape communal memory (Connerton 1991:48-50):

1. The “psychoanalytical” position holds that ritual is a form of symbolic representation of prevailing social conflicts and tensions wherein attempts are made to overcome, deny, or even perpetuate these.
2. The “sociological” perspective argues that the ritualized performance of commemoration communicates shared values in order to reduce internal tensions. Encoded in metaphorical and symbolic form, carnivalesque rites, ceremonies, and popular festivities symbolically link people with a mythic past and reconstruct a present that promises a golden future. In this way, individuals are encouraged to see themselves as part of a collectivity with shared objectives.
3. The “historical” perspective recognizes all rituals and commemorations as being invented and that their essential meaning can only be discovered by re-situating them in the discourses of the day.

This combination of monuments, commemoration, and ritualized performance can become a powerful mnemonic system that produces a “mental geography in which the past is mapped in our minds according to its most unforgettable places” (Hutton 1993:80). Taken together, therefore, monuments, commemorations and public participation in them, comprise “the *practice* of representation that enacts and gives social substance to the discourse of collective memory” (Sherman 1994:186). They serve “to anchor collective remembering...in highly condensed, fixed, and tangible sites” (Savage 1994:130-1).

As self-conscious exercises in national remembering, commemorations produce masses of primary material: commemorative volumes, official reports, promotional materials, minutes, pamphlets, debates, sermons, speeches, poems, records of ceremonies and parades, newsletters, magazines, histories, souvenirs, and programs.

This is what Spillman (1997) calls the “buzz of national talk” and the “public languages of national identity.” She argues further that the best way to understand these “large, diffuse, and transient” commemorations is to consider them as the propagation of consensual values by self-constituted “cultural centres” with the intention of overcoming significant political and social differences exhibited by “cultural peripheries.” Such a perspective highlights the role of public ritual as a creation, expression, and representation of solidarity, as well as a prompt for the ventilation of disinterest—or even hostility and protest.

Certainly, the orchestration of the festivities and celebrations in landscapes of power has often been a conscious exercise to cultivate political consensus and suppress dissent or difference. Indeed, they have often been located in times and places where dominant ideologies are being contested. Recognizing that memorialization and commemorations are “attempts at closure,” Sider and Smith warn that,

It would thus be a serious mistake to create a concept of “history” that is intrinsically and ordinarily (rather than episodically and partially) the domain of order, rationality, pattern, progress, development, and linear change. “History” is used in ways that misleadingly imply the majesty of systemic coherence over and against the seemingly more random and incoherent expressions of a multitude of peoples’ claims, concerns, and actions (Sider and Smith 1997:13).

Accordingly, they need to be analyzed, not for what messages are being transmitted and displayed, but also in terms of how they are being received and what reactions they elicit.

### **The Commodification of Place**

The manipulation of place and remembered history, however, is not exclusive to a nationalizing-state. Increasingly, private enterprise and all levels of government—municipal, provincial, federal—are recognizing the economic potential of marketing places and stories as consumable heritage.

#### *Heritage, Fantasy, Entertainment: Selling Place*

The current engagement with the past has seen formal academic *history* being appropriated, transformed, and re-presented. But it has always been thus. History has always been manipulated by nationalist ideologies, drama, and romantic fiction: just read your Shakespeare, your state-approved text books, and the hours of CRB/Historica “Heritage Minutes.” And apart from the cultivation of such hegemonic metanarratives, there’s the appropriation and consumption of heritage: the first Roman “tourists” must have been guided around the sights of Pompeii soon after the dust and lava cooled!

But it's getting more complex. As David Lowenthal puts it in his *Possessed by the Past: The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*: "Today things are different. We steal, forge, and invent much of our heritage" (1996:xiii).

The point is that the challenges of a post-industrial world are prompting new initiatives. Increasingly, "heritage" is now discussed in the context of constructed mythologies, popular entertainment, tourism, and economic development. What history has always been to national identity, so heritage is now to "social cohesion" and economic vitality. A combination of nostalgia for an imagined past, economic and cultural insecurity, and a growing demand for the consumption of entertainment has made a multifaceted engagement with the past the stuff of heritage. In Canada, this can be seen in an array of theme parks, ghost tours, romanticized murals, and "historical" re-enactments and displays (Osborne 2001).<sup>25</sup> Such projects may be used as a mirror to examine how our contemporary values are reflected in them. Are they history, heritage, fantasy, theatre—or a simulacrum of contemporary discourses? What do they tell us about the ways by which the past is being appropriated in our contemporary world, and to what end? It needs to be better understood.

At the root of the problem is the fact that our memory—both individual and collective—is a pliable thing. This is what Julian Barnes had to say about it in *England, England*: "A memory was by definition not a thing, it was...a memory. A memory now of a memory a bit earlier of a memory before that of a memory way back when. ...And there was another reason for mistrust...An element of propaganda, of sales and marketing always intervened between the inner and the outer person" (Barnes 1998:3-6). For Lowenthal,

All at once heritage is everywhere—in the news, in the movies, in the marketplace—in everything from galaxies to genes. It is the chief focus of patriotism and a prime lure of tourism. One can barely move without bumping into a heritage site. Every legacy is cherished. From ethnic roots to history theme parks, Hollywood to the Holocaust, the whole world is busy lauding—or lamenting—some past, be it fact or fiction (1996:ix).

What's going on? To some extent, the rear-window gaze might be a nostalgic one in reaction to a growing sense of anomie as our lives and places lose their distinctiveness in globalized morphings into a predictable sameness. And, in consequence of this longing, there is a market for heritage activities, especially among a growing leisure class. This is what Robins refers to as "the importance of place marketing in placeless times" (Robins 1991:38).

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<sup>25</sup> . The organizer of Kingston's "ghost tours" contacted me recently and asked if I had "come across any references to local 'darker' history such as grave-robbings etc. in your research that might be of interest to me." "Haunted Walks of Canada" was founded in 1995 and now offers unique historical walking tours with a "ghostly" theme in Kingston and Ottawa, and "are best done in the evening when the lights are low and the atmosphere is just right for a good ghost story." They strive "to capture the unique 'darker history' of each city by presenting it the way it was meant to be seen—up close and on foot." They feature, "Hangings at the Old Courthouse," "The Murder of Theresa Beam," "The Organist's Ghost," "Grave-robbings in Old Kingston," "Hidden Graveyards and Skeleton Park," and "Other tales, both historical and hair-raising."

As the title of his book, *Consuming Places*, implies, John Urry relates tourism and heritage to the transformation of distinctive locales through their commodification and subsequent consumption (Urry 1995:28-29). Central to his examination of tourism as a form of marketing are the “interconnections between modernity, identity, and travel and the significance of heritage...in the making and remaking of place” (Urry 1995:29). In unpacking what he calls the “complex and inchoate” nature of tourism, Urry privileges the importance of the tourist “gaze”:

Central to tourist consumption then is to look individually or collectively upon aspects of the landscape or townscape which are distinctive, which signify an experience which contrasts with everyday experiences (132).

The act of consuming involves leisure from work, movement, temporary residence, constructed expectations, and well-established symbolic associations. More importantly, Urry argues that “tourist professionals,”

attempt to reproduce ever new objects of the tourist gaze. These objects are located in a complex and changing hierarchy. This depends upon the interplay between, on the one hand, competition between different capitalist and state interests involved in the provision of such objects; and on the other hand, changing class, gender and generational distinctions of taste within the potential population of visitors (Urry 1995:133).

In fact, the past is increasingly being regarded as an economic resource integral to plans for regional development: the term “heritage industry” says it all (Ashworth and Howard 1999:88). For Graham et al., there are three dominant views of the role of heritage in economic policy planning:

- heritage as an economic activity in itself, an industry commodifying past structures, associations and cultural productivity and trading these for an economic return that can be measured in jobs, profits or incomes;
- heritage places as locations for economic activities, evaluated according to their ability to attract, accommodate or repel economic functions;
- heritage used to create and promote place-images for dominantly economic purposes (Graham et al. 2000:156-7).<sup>26</sup>

But while it may be argued that all heritage tourists are interested in escaping present realities—or at least immersing themselves in the past—it is possible to differentiate between two motives: “escape to reality” and “escape to fantasy” (Ashworth and Howard 1999:92). The “heritage realist” is “highly sensitive to the perceived authenticity

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<sup>26</sup> . Every urban website demonstrates all three of these: statistics of numbers of tourists, dollars spent, workers employed; the compatibility of the heritage place for economic locations in promotional text and images .

of the object or the place and is repelled by what is experienced as contrived heritage.” However, the consumer of “heritage as fantasy” turns to the theme parks, role-playing in banquets or battles, or sing-alongs and other forms of group participation in a nostalgic reaction to modernity. Provocatively, Urry argues that this form of “heritage-tourism” is supported by a category of “post-tourists” who are satisfied by “staged authenticity” and even “delight in inauthenticity” for a good reason:

The post-tourist finds pleasure in the multitude of games that can be played and knows that there is no authentic tourist experience. [Authenticity] is merely another game to be played at, another pastiched service feature of postmodern experience (Urry 1995:140).

Of course, Baudrillard takes the issue of authenticity a theoretical step further. He starts with a text from *Ecclesiastes*: “The simulacrum is never that which conceals the truth—it is the truth which conceals that there is none. The simulacrum is true” (Baudrillard 1983:1). Then he establishes a continuum from the “real,” through the “neo-real,” to the “hyperreal” of the “simulacrum” (Baudrillard 1983:13). That is, the “pure simulacrum” is no longer the simulation of something, nor the dissimulation of something—the strategy is of dissimulating that there is nothing! He explains:

When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its true meaning. There is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality; of second-hand truth, objectivity and authenticity. There is an escalation of the true, of the lived experience; a resurrection of the figurative where the object and substance have disappeared. And there is a panic-stricken production of the real and the referential, above and parallel to the panic of material production...a strategy of the real, neo-real and hyperreal (Baudrillard 1983:11-13).

This is what is being acted out in many places where economic restructuring has turned to the imaginative marketing of the past, in the present, to make a distinctive place. That is to examine how, as Robins puts it, “heritage, or the simulacrum of heritage, can be mobilized to gain competitive advantage in the race between places” (Robins 1991:38). In Jane Jacobs’ *Edge of Empire*, she discusses how cities “reinvent” themselves in their development of “new tourism” (Jacobs 1992:11). She speaks of “sites in the process of becoming,” sites saturated with the cultural politics of transformation, influenced both by the global and the local, and quotes James Clifford’s proposition that “these places mark a geography in which centre and margin, Self and Other, here and there are in anxious negotiation—where there is displacement, interaction and contest” (Jacobs 1992:101). For Jacobs, the construction of heritage is a political process, inherited elements either being incorporated or obliterated by the “sanctioned view of the national heritage”:

Which places do or do not become part of heritage and what transformations places undergo in this process of recognition is a key arena for combative struggles of identity and power. It is not simply that heritage places symbolize certain values and beliefs, but that the very transition of these places into

heritage is a process whereby identity is defined, debated and contested and where social values are challenged or reproduced (Jacobs 1992:35).

That is, heritage formation is a dynamic process in which a “multiplicity of pasts” contend for sanctification as “heritage” in the context of Late Capitalism—the resolution being arbitrated not by the muse of history but by the *real politic* of economics.

### **Conclusion: Shifting Grounds**

Clearly, identity and sense of belonging in the modern world are complex concepts. Not surprisingly, therefore, there is an increasing unease with simple, unitary metanarratives. For Stuart Hall, “[i]dentities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within the narrative of the past. Cultural identity is a matter of *becoming* as well as of *being*. It belongs to the future as much as to the past” (Hall 1993:394). Then again, most people are defined by plural connections. Class, gender, religion, and ethnicity compete with local, regional, and national associations. Finally, globalization and migration trans-national identities are challenging the liberal, nation-bound concept of citizenship and sovereignty.

Charles Taylor, one of Canada’s most provocative thinkers on the matter of Canadian identity and national unity, underscores the dual challenge posed by people’s nested sets of identities in a multinational Canada and a globalizing world:

We have to learn how to live with these multiplicities of identity and yet achieve some kind of common understanding. And this can only be by recognizing that our being *together* is important to us, that it enriches us, that it is something we all cherish (Taylor 1998:341).

For Taylor, this is to be achieved by nurturing a consensual “common understanding” and an identification with a “common purpose” fulfilled through public decisions. More specifically, he argues,

we have to recognize we cannot all share the same historical identity; our growing nation-state is going to need to accept and work with a plurality of historical identities....But we can develop viable multinational societies in which the citizens’ common identity includes a set of basic principles that recognize that we all want to work with each other to preserve these historical identities with their differences intact (Taylor 1998:341).

Obviously, for someone like Taylor, the preferred model for his Canada is a civil nationalism based upon a rational adherence to liberal principles, rather than the emotional option of ethnic nationalism characterized by emotional links to “blood and soil”. And yet, while national identity is best defined in terms of a rational assessment of rights and obligations, they must also be accompanied by a modicum of symbolic attachment to the *idea* of what any particular nation stands for.

Taylor's "deep diversity" is similar to Kymlicka's call for a deep "cultural pluralism" that arises from "a recognition of the diversity of the histories and backgrounds we come from" (Kymlicka 1994 1995). For Will Kymlicka,

Canada has developed a political and legal culture that combines a commitment to universal values with recognition of diversity...Canadian citizenship is...grounded in universalistic values of freedom, equality, democracy and human rights. Our consensus on these values cuts across ethnic, linguistic and religious lines...In the past, our implementation of these values was stained by liberal assumptions about the inferiority of other groups and cultures. As we head into the 21st century, we are building new models of citizenship that uphold universal values of democracy and human rights, while simultaneously respecting the various languages, cultures, and identities that exist in Canada (Kymlicka, 2000:A15).

Recognizing this profound pluralism, Francis has called for the invention of new national narratives. His argument is that "[e]very nation has a set of myths" that express the fundamental beliefs that the nation holds about itself and that form the "master narrative that explains the culture to itself and express its overriding purpose" (Francis 1998:474). But while he recognizes the concern over the loss of "familiar narratives, the ones most of us were raised on, the comforting stories of responsible government, the railway, the Mounties," he proposes that "we should be listening to the urgent demand that we invent new ones" (Francis 1998:475).

And then there are those who seek the means to achieve a social cohesion that is defined as "the ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity within Canada, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity among all Canadians" (Jensen 1998). As Richard Gwyn has noted, as members of the "first postmodern state," Canadians must recognize that these shared values are "our substitutes for conventional commonalities of ethnicity and history" which serve to bind us together into "a political community, not a sociological one" (Gwyn 1995:254-5).

Others, however, are less sanguine about Canadian cultural policy. For them, while Canada's putative liberal state-nationalism initiatives have eschewed policies of erasure and forced homogeneity, the policies of apparent inclusion and tolerance have, nevertheless, served to reinforce dominant identities, exclusions, and hierarchies of difference (Mackey 1999). Accordingly, despite all the various liberal initiatives, internal divisions remain and the heterogeneity of the population is manifest in a fundamental alienation, "marked by the discourses of minorities, the heterogeneous histories of contending peoples, antagonistic authorities and tense locations of cultural difference" (Bhabha 1995:148). In a somewhat pessimistic, albeit realistic, recognition of the problem, Bhabha goes on to conclude that in such situations of shared histories of difference, "the exchange of values, meanings and priorities may not always be collaborative and dialogical, but may be profoundly antagonistic, conflictual and even

incommensurable.” Such hybridity<sup>27</sup> challenges the dominant culture’s metanarrative, forces its way into it and, in doing so, establishes a counter-narrative that critiques both the dominant culture and the structures which underpin it. As Prasenjit Duara has expressed it, “[n]ationalism is rarely the nationalism of the nation, but rather marks the site where different representations of the nation contest and negotiate with each other” (Duara 1995).

Finally, what does this have to say about our posture regarding future strategies for history making, monumentalism, and commemoration in a forward-looking Canada of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

- Is there a need for new metanarratives to be rendered in future strategies of commemoration and remembrance? This search for new metanarratives begs all the questions posed by the literature on “imagined communities” and advocates the replacement of “rear-window” nationalism by a forward-looking one. The nurturing of a civil/liberal nationalism requires a conceptualization based not on distinctive place, or people, or story, but a belief in appropriate values.
- How can diversity be accommodated in metanarratives? Identity—even plural identity—requires some degree of shared values. However diverse these may be in a nationalizing state that celebrates pluralism, a set of cohesive core values must be identified that are not dissonant with each other. The “representation” of identity should focus on these core values, clarify them, and celebrate them: that’s the role of the artistic imagination.
- How do we define new heroes, new historic events, new historic sites? It follows from revisiting former metanarratives that peoples and events that were once silenced or sidelined can now be foregrounded and highlighted. Others need to be discovered.<sup>28</sup> These need to be the subjects of new monuments, commemorations, or narratives.
- Do we need to revisit and edit the commemorative texts that continue to stud (no Freudian pun intended!) our mnemonic landscapes? As social values change, certain structures and places may need to be re-evaluated in terms of their contribution to the new Canada under construction. Indeed, some of the existing misrepresentations may be regarded as offensive and hurtful to some.
- Is there a need for a new paradigm of heritage commemoration? The classical allegorical forms of didactic statuary and monuments no longer resonate with the

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<sup>27</sup> . Bakhtin defines hybridity as “a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two linguistic conventions, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation, or by some other factor” (Bakhtin 1981:358).

<sup>28</sup> . The CRB/Canada Post “Heritage Minutes” have done an excellent job in this regard. For comments on the re-visiting of Louis Riel and Chinese immigrants see my recent work (2001).



modern world. The innovative concept of didactic commemorative plaques of the late 19th century are now so numerous in some places that it is close to becoming heritage-pollution; also, the extent to which they are read is questionable.

- Can we unclutter valued heritage space by better use of “virtual realities”? New generations of Canadians may be more inclined to visit websites than heritage sights, and participate in all of the diverse means of information dissemination and virtual reality that that medium has to offer.
- And certainly at this particular juncture in our national journey, should we be thinking outside of the “national box” with its well-worn tools of patriotism? Is there not, more than ever, a need to continue to nurture a national culture that celebrates its place in the global system of diversity, with all the opportunities that that entails?

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