Building on trauma and memory studies, which have been predominantly informed by Holocaust studies, Kirsten Emiko McAllister broadens the analytic lens with her important book *Terrain of Memory: A Japanese Canadian Memorial Project*. An interdisciplinary work that draws on feminist and literary studies, geography, museum studies, and ethnographic methodologies, *Terrain of Memory* examines the afterlife of Japanese Canadian internment in New Denver, British Columbia, as it is memorialized and its ghostly presence given materiality in the form of the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC).

*Terrain of Memory* constructs a densely textured and carefully researched account of the development of the NIMC as a collective form of memory, one that embodies the competing perspectives and contradictions of internment’s afterlife. The NIMC was envisioned by the remaining elders of the Kyowakai Society, which had been formed in 1943 to represent the 1,500 internees of New Denver, as a way to preserve the memory and archive of internment for future generations. However, their vision for the centre must also contend with professional consultants who work on historical preservations and tourism, other Japanese Canadians of New Denver and beyond, as well as other non-Japanese residents of New Denver, some of whom viewed internment as a wartime necessity. Against the backdrop of these different perspectives are the contradictions of internment’s afterlife. For the survivors and the generations that follow them, New Denver is former internment location, current home, pilgrimage site, and a tourist destination. And for McAllister, a bi-racial sansei whose mother’s family was interned during WWII, it also brings into relief her ambivalent relationship to the object of her study. Thus, the opening chapter titled “A Necessary Crisis” not only characterizes her own identity crisis and expectations as “an academic researcher, project worker and community member” (p. 37), but it also foregrounds the text’s disciplinary and generic crisis between autobiography and ethnography, marking these subjective and formal crises as foundational to the process of collective memorialization.

In exploring the configurations of identity, community, history, and memory, *Terrain of Memory* is not simply an account of a community’s past nor is it merely about loss and recovery. Rather, it is an account of how the process and act of memorialization is transformative of one’s relationship to the past and constitutive of community. As a result, internment is not simply presented as an event that happened to the Japanese Canadians, defining them only as victims of state violence or of past trauma. Instead, *Terrain of Memory* demonstrates how a Japanese Canadian community actively participated in the process of history-making in the face of that violence and trauma.

McAllister organizes the complex set of voices, competing positions, and shifting alliances through the cartographic trope of “terrain,” grounding the project of memorializing Japanese Canadian internment within a particular spatial and temporal order that both shapes and indexes how internment is experienced, remembered, and rep-
resented. Moreover, the movement across this “terrain” of memory reflects the process by which the participants who collaborated in the construction of the NIMC actively negotiated, reworked, and spatialized the past with an eye toward its preservation for future generations.

And though the text is ostensibly about the construction of the NIMC, it resists a developmental narrative. The “terrain” of memory is excavated through these chapter descriptions: an analysis of how different maps direct, orient, and reflect resident and visitor relationships to past internment and its present memorialization; the multiple temporalities embodied in the memorial conceptualized as a space for mourning, congregating, and healing; the inter-generational perspectives on memorialization and stewardship; the broadening of the region’s history beyond those of Japanese Canadians to include other residents such as the Doukhobors and the Sinixt First Nation, whose presence in the region has been erased; and what the range of NIMC visitor response experiences reveal about their understanding of the memorial’s function.

By illuminating what is absent, what lies in-between spaces of the official archives of internment, McAllister sensitively navigates the uneven dynamics of power in the disciplinary production of knowledge through her integration of a multiplicity of voices. Here, the oral histories of the elders, other New Denver residents, and visitors are presented alongside her field notes and personal reflections in which she casts herself as “a character that was at times irritating and judgmental” (p. 249). They are given equal weight to the theoretical apparatuses that inform her work. This constellation of voices and perspectives trouble a coherent narrative about internment’s afterlife, revealing the limitations of one’s epistemological framework when one’s academic agendas run up against those belonging to the subjects of one’s study. In fact, what is most powerful about The Terrain of Memory is its simultaneous acknowledgment of that which exceeds its representational capacity and its vigilant attempts to capture and honour the stories of the interviewees. For a text that examines the memory work of Japanese Canadian internment, its significance extends beyond the subject of its enterprise. Terrain of Memory produces its own form of memorialization, offering a model of ethical, engaged scholarship that self-consciously notes the conditions of its own production by paying tribute to the voices that give it its form.

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