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**Producing and Consuming the Nation: Ethnography of a Czech National Memorial**

**Abstract**

Following a research agenda stimulated by Billig (1995), Palmer (1998) and Fox (2008) towards the study of aspects of everyday life through which nations are reproduced, this work approaches the National Memorial on Vítkov Hill, part of the Czech National Museum in Prague. In order to investigate to what extend national cultural productions constrain people’s practices and understandings, this research offers an ethnographic study of the production and consumption of the monument, considering practices of consumption and occupation that reproduce, subvert or negotiate its national content and colossal planning. The National Memorial on Vítkov Hill combines memorial, museum, statue and park, which had their meanings re-negotiated by different political regimes during the 20th century. Re-opened in 2009 aiming to ‘make sense’ of national history, identity and memory in the context of a new, democratic and European Czech Republic, the monument combines official ceremonies, such as military parades and presidential rituals, with permanent and temporary exhibitions with national functions. Although planned to celebrate the nation, exhibitions are consumed by visitors that distort the national narratives presented. The space planned for military parades and national rituals is occupied in everyday life by different social groups such as elderly people, parents with children and youngsters that complement or change the official national landscape constructed by the National Memorial.

**Keywords**

Nationalism, everyday life, museum, cultural consumption