

THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF MEMORY AND PLACE

Edited by Sarah De Nardi, Hilary Orange, Steven High and Eerika Koskinen-Koivisto

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The *Routledge Handbook of Memory and Place* comprises a vast range of themes, ranging from mobility, difficult memories and memory-scapes, to industry, the body, shared traditions and ritual. Despite the breadth of these topics within the complex field of memory studies and its relationship with place and identity, this volume manages to easily engage and draw in the reader. The book is split into seven parts with distinct themes, with each comprising a series of individual articles.

In part one, themes surrounding mobility, migration, displacement and diaspora are detailedly discussed by Witcomb and Bounia, Hrobat Virloget, Field, Sobers and Caquard, Shaw, Alavez and Dimitrovas. Part two revolves around difficult memories, such as war and conflict, ethnic cleansing, or the remembrance of places and events which “carry hurtful legacies” (De Nardi and Koskinen-Koivisto, p. 68), which are brought to the fore in various examples by Gensburger, Topouzova, Salerno, Renshaw, and Moshenska. In part three, Yoon and Alderman, Árvay and Foote, Carlson with Naxaxalhts’i, Sinamai, and Butler thematize the wide-ranging subject of memory-scapes. They investigate narratives, myths and materialities linked with space and place and discuss the “networks of past and present affects” (De Nardi and High, p. 117) which ultimately form those memory-scapes. The fourth part revolves around matters of industry and work: MacKinnon, Pleasant and Strangleman, Conlon, Taksa, Benjamin, and Merrill address how deindustrialization in particular is by no means simply a matter of the long-gone past, but is deeply linked to the

present day—in fact, industrial structures “become highly emotive structures, and their loss is keenly felt” (High and Orange, p. 172). In part five, Waterton, Sumartojo, Hicks, Morgan, Laviolette, Printsmann, Palang, and Sotelo focus on the body, emotions, experiences and senses, illustrating how these are essential, but also dynamic “forces of memory-making” in the present (De Nardi and Orange, p. 235). Part six explores themes within the area of shared traditions, with Cashman, Bartolini and DeSilvey, Seremetakis, Stanton, and Vahtikari putting particular emphasis on the “collective rehearsal and crafting of narratives”, or communities’ “‘shared’ production of knowledge about the past” (De Nardi and Orange, p. 287). The final chapter seven presents research on ritual, and sheds light on how these are embedded in various places and spaces, ranging from historical heritage sites to the urban environment. Orange and Graves-Brown, Saul, Williams and Williams, Mayorgas, Houlbrook, and Rouhier-Willoughby discuss ritual landscapes, and “processes of emergence, adaptation, and recycling of spatialized ritual practices” (Koskinen-Koivisto, p. 344), especially in their relationship with varying agents.

Bringing together authors from numerous disciplines, such as geography, tourism, heritage, anthropology, memory studies, and archaeology, the volume’s articles unite in two underlying notions: firstly, the centrality of space and place for memory and remembering, and secondly, the interconnectedness between the past, present and future. Throughout the entire handbook, one further overarching recognition emerges: memory and remembrance, as well as places, connections, networks, communities, and heritage are constantly reproduced and maintained through a complex and ever-changing synergy. For one thing, memory (and locality) is bound to humans, objects, place and remembrance, constantly being reproduced and maintained, but equally, it is also non-linear and unbound, often made and reworked through dislocation and deferral.

One fundamental aspect of this handbook is that it succeeds in walking the fine line between seemingly non-compoundable, and often even contradictory, theses in interdisciplinary memory studies. This dichotomy is particularly evident in the presentation of the relations between memory, spaces and various ‘[...]scapes’ that are repeated throughout the book: one major focal point is the addressing of memory being found, established, and constantly renegotiated in a seemingly endless array of objects, places and spaces in the present. Moreover, the authors also critically and comprehensively reflect on the ways and places where the absence of memory—or even deliberate forgetting—shapes and

impacts individuals, entire communities, or the environment. Though a connection between memory and place (or the creation of memory-scapes) can be enforced through remembrance, it can also be conjured by forgetting and even censorship, for example as discussed by Salerno or Renshaw.

The handbook comprehensively illustrates the role of communal knowledge in the presentation and legitimation of history and memory. It also discusses the contextualization of the self and community through memory, which is closely linked to identity formation and restoration (Witcomb and Bounia; Yoon and Alderman), particularly in the context of migration (Caquard et al.; Hrobat Virloget), the recognition of cultural trauma, or the struggle and perspectives of indigenous communities (Salerno; Carlson with Naxaxalhts'i). Its parts put emphasis on collective (social) memory and social space in the construction of shared realities and self-image, but also on censorship, whether self-imposed or by others, through the silencing or absence of memory and heritage. Moreover, it critically reflects on the interconnectedness of memory and nostalgia, particularly regarding the relationship between memory and work (MacKinnon; Pleasant and Strangleman; Taksa), deindustrialization (Conlon) and abandoned urban heritage (Hrobat Virloget).

Among other things, the volume discusses cityscapes and especially urban memory in the production and consumption of shared memories. Here, spatial hierarchies and processes are ubiquitous in networks of remembrance and collective memory, though these landscapes are also rife with non-places and buried memories—both literally and figuratively. Addressing this geography of memory, the handbook also sheds light on memorials and commemorative spaces in general, demonstrating its regional, interregional, and at times even international impact. This topic is vividly illustrated by Yoon and Alderman's chapter on the Comfort Women movement.

While memories are spatial, they are also fluid, ephemeral, and chaotic. Indeed, Caquard et al. suggest that "their geographies fluctuate along with the individual that bears them as well as with the context and form in which they are expressed, such as oral life stories, memoirs, or diaries" (p. 52). In this regard, this volume's articles highlight the essence and multidimensionality of our non-verbal encounters with memory-scapes as living aspects of the present which are inseparable from the past. These encounters are experiential, sensory and complex, laced with histories and memories, leading to a 'being in the moment'. The handbook illuminates the creative power of memory and

presence, especially in its influence on remembering things into place and thus moulding both the present and future. Moreover, it thematizes landscapes as ritual spaces for memory-making and ritual recycling, but also the role of legends in the continual creation of memory-scapes. More concrete ways of memory- and place-making are presented through examples of historical reenactment, historical pageants and pilgrimage, both in the past and present.

Some articles outline practical approaches to conducting research on memory and places (Butler; Caquard et al.; Laviolette et al.), producing tangible—and in large part applicable—outcomes: the mapping of memories and affiliations, for example, can be used to empower local communities and (re)establish community bonds, as well as to facilitate resistance, claims to land and resources, and the (re)making of cultural identities. However, the complexity of applying such pinpointed, place-oriented approaches is simultaneously exposed in that they are not universally applicable, and grasping the differing, nuanced, and personal aspects of memory in this manner sometimes proves impossible, particularly in cases where participants remember people, not places. Equally powerful proves Sobers' autoethnographic research in part one focusing on the embodied ownership of post-colonial landscapes. It not only reveals the intricate interplay of academic distance and objectivity with personal, subjective affectedness, but also leads to the realization that memory—in all of its forms—really is omnipresent, palpable, relatable, and utterly personal.

Unfortunately, the book lacks a closing chapter summarizing and reflecting on the main aspects and outcomes of the individual sections, one which could have provided an outlook on future potentials and obstacles of such interdisciplinary research on memory and place. Nonetheless, in short, the *Routledge Handbook of Memory and Place* aims—and succeeds—at creating a powerful and immersive, yet straightforward, read that draws from differing styles of storytelling, a multitude of backgrounds and perspectives, and various in part experimental and personal approaches to conducting individual research.