Places of Memory

Spatialised practices of remembrance from prehistory to today

edited by

Christian Horn, Gustav Wollentz, Gianpiero Di Maida, and Annette Haug

Cover: Photo of a rock art site in Finntorp (Tanum 90), Sweden, taken by Åke Fredsjö in 1945

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Preface

This volume is the materialized memory of a session called "Tonight will be a memory too...' – Memory and landscapes' that was held at the International Open Workshop: Socio-Environmental Dynamics over the Last 15,000 Years: The Creation of Landscapes V at the Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel, Germany (20th-24th March 2017). It was organized in the framework of the Graduate School 'Human development in Landscapes' in which all organizers had different positions. The volume you hold in your hands presents a diversity of perspectives upon landscapes and memories. Rather than offering a uniform picture, our aim is to open up interesting areas of discussion and exchange of perspectives, which are transcending traditional disciplinary boundaries.

All the editors have widely separated research fields in terms of material and chronology. However, we were amazed how fruitful a discussion of memory and landscapes was crossing these boundaries. Thus, we received many different perspectives on memories and landscapes in the session. This was such an inspiring experience that we decided to publish the contributions.

Furthermore, the present volume also incorporates contributions by speakers of an earlier workshop held in Kiel in September 2015 which was organized by two of the editors (Gianpiero Di Maida and Gustav Wollentz). That Workshop ('Acting the Landscape. The creation and use of a non-empirical space through memory, religion and power-oriented activities') was aimed at studying the osmotic relationship between on one side the human communities and the individuals that constitute them, and on the other special places in the landscape showing thus the strong connection between the underlying concepts of the two symposia. Hence, we made the decision to host also those contributes in this volume. This operation has certainly caused a further broadening of the perspective for the publication, but – in line with the underlying spirit of the whole operation – we are sure that this will represent a refreshing and much welcomed approach.

Introduction

Christian Horn

University of Gothenburg

Gustav Wollentz

Nordic Centre of Heritage Learning and Creativity

Gianpiero Di Maida

Neanderthal Museum

Annette Haug

Christian-Albrechts-University Kiel

The idea to approach landscape and memory practices from a multi-disciplinary and diachronic perspective was born out of a collaboration between the editors working on archaeological conceptualizations of landscapes especially in relation to memory. Horn and Wollentz[1] collaborated on an article that itself was a comment on current 'symmetrical' approaches in the course of the new material turn that attributes to material culture and landscapes the same primary agency that human beings exhibit. It was argued that it is worth keeping the notion that the agency of material culture and landscapes originates in human engagement with these entities and is, therefore, always a 'secondary agency'.[2] It was also argued that landscapes are not a total social construction, that they exist independently of human cognition and that they shape the ways they can be experienced by humans. Here, the article touched on the relationship between landscapes and memories. Landscapes are said to be multi-temporal,[3] in which no opposition between time and space exists.[4] For such a phenomenon the Russian literature professor Mikhail Bakhtin, building upon the theory of relativity by Albert Einstein, coined the term chronotope which accounts for the 'inseparability of space and time (time as the fourth dimension of space)'.[5] Thus, a multi-temporal approach to landscapes and memories lies at the center of this volume, which emphasizes diachronic and multi-disciplinary perspectives. In this introduction, we will briefly present some of the most influential theories on memory in order to situate and provide a basis for the contributions. Thereafter, we will present some concluding thoughts based on the contents of this volume.

Social and spatial memory

Memory exists on two levels. One is individual or personalized memory and the other is memory of social collectives or collective memory.[6] Breaking it down to the smallest constituent part, every action upon a landscape is an individual action. However, the normal frame of reference for research on (pre-)historic memories addresses collective memory. The term 'collective memory' was popularized in an influential study by Maurice Halbwachs.[7] For Halbwachs, memory that extends beyond an individual's life-time, i.e. memories of the past, are always collectively constructed, although he recognized that individuals constitute groups and that different viewpoints on that past may exist.[8] In this, memory is more than just chronology, it is the (re-)construction of past practices, motions, and emotions, i.e. the fabric of social interaction. Another major contribution in his studies, and of particular concern within this volume, is that he recognized the significance of space in locating and giving memories directions.[9] It is argued that each and every memory does not only need to be located within a social framework, but also a spatial framework. Halbwachs maintains that it is especially the so-called 'enduring' aspects of space that makes it crucial for locating memories. He does this by claiming that impressions rush rush by fast, while the surrounding space remains intact and preserves the past, so that it can be recaptured through our memories.[10] However, Halbwachs' studies fall somewhat short in explaining the fragility and transformation of memories, as well as how memories are transferred between generations,

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[1] Horn and Wollentz 2019.
[2] Gell 1998.
[3] Ingold 2000.
[4] Bender 2006.
[5] Bakhtin 1981.

[6] Frank 2018.
[7] Halbwachs 1992; see also Russell 2006.
[8] Halbwachs 1992.
[9] Halbwachs 1980.
[10] Halbwachs 1980: 139-140.

i.e. the communicative aspects of remembrance.[11] Focus is regularly placed upon the maintenance of memories through social institutions which form the basis for group memories as well as through the endurance of spatial features, while the more dynamic aspects of memories are rather understood as a gradual and inevitable process inherent in the attempt at recapturing memories while simultaneously altering them in the process. In this approach variation between memories and contrasting memories within groups were not given precedence, a topic which many future scholars on memory, such as Jan Assmann and Paul Connerton, have expanded upon. Furthermore, the profound significance of space for locating and giving memories a direction, came to be expanded upon by the French historian Pierre Nora, born in 1931 and most known for his concept of 'sites of memory', or *lieux de memoire*, which he has developed over the last decades.

Sites of memory

Pierre Nora[12] took a very proactive stance with this concept because he feared that memory would fade into history in post-war France. To prevent or slow down this occurrence, Nora wanted to create and maintain sites of memory in the landscape. He saw a division between 'memory' (as in oral histories and traditions) and 'history' (as in the official canonized national history). Often these sites were battlefields perhaps because they represent an especially difficult heritage.[13] From such places of memory an individual can create meaning from the past. While this may be useful to archaeological and critical heritage studies, Nora's definition is very broad and his clear division between memory and history has been criticised. This criticism led to narrower definitions and more layered views.[14] Indeed, as Anne Gangloff's chapter within this volume stresses, Nora has distanced himself from many of the varied applications of 'sites of memory' among scholars influenced by his work, often connected to a too rigid understanding of the concept (Gangloff, this volume).

Inner, social and cultural memory

Jan Assmann sees the human self, following Thomas Luckmann, as 'diachronic identity'. He relates time, identity, and memory. It could be said that memory compounds time to allow the formation of an identity. All three aspects are split into three levels: inner (individual), social (communicative), and cultural. Cultural memory and Halbwachs' collective memory are linked in that cultural memory is a form of collective memory that imparts a cultural identity on a group of people. This cultural memory can be externalized in material symbols. However, things such as landscapes do not have a memory of their own and memories are not preserved for eternity after the symbols were originally infused with them. The *lieux de memoire* need to be re-embodied according to Assmann, which requires institutions preserving the memory and allowing the re-embodiment, for example in ritual, etc.[15] Since all this depends on human agency it also incorporates the inherent possibilities of transitions, transformations, fallibility, misunderstanding, power struggles, etc. In contemporary contexts, the most obvious form of cultural memory is the one which serves to legitimize and naturalize the nation as an imagined community, making the present-day nation the natural culmination through a chronological development from then to now.[16] However, it is important to emphasize that cultural memory can pertain to many different forms of identities, including more local ones. Cultural memories serve to build identities of belonging, for example connected to religion, ethnicity or class/rank. They are often hierarchical and exclusive. The communicative memory is on the contrary fluid and may challenge the cultural memory. It is oral and embodied through everyday habits and interactions. It is informal and devoid of monumental traces. These forms of memories also engage with different temporalities. Cultural memory deals with an absolute (and chronological) past, often mythological (i.e. the myth of the nation). Communicative memory, on the other hand, can only be kept intact for approximately three generations. Assmann's studies have been widely influential in archaeology and anthropology. However, they are not free from critics: Assmann' approach has been accused of lacking an understanding of how materiality and memory functions in indigenous contexts pertaining to problematic evolutionary ideas concerning cultural development (Porr, this volume).

Incorporating and inscribing practices

One of the most influential scholars on memory within the last decades has been the British social anthropologist Paul Connerton.[17] This influence can be traced to three main reasons. Firstly, Connerton pays attention to the embodied aspects of remembrance, through what he coins 'incorporating practices'.[18] Secondly, Connerton has studied how the so-called spatial framework, introduced by Halbwachs, does not only help us remember, but also, as in cases of rapid development and re-organization of the urban space within modernity, causes us to more swiftly

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[11] See also Assmann 2008; 2011; Connerton 1989: 36-39.
[12] Nora 1996.
[13] Nora 1989; 1996.
[14] See for example Assmann 2008; Winter 2008.

[15] Assmann 2008.
[16] See also Anderson 2006; Balibar 2002.
[17] Connerton 1989; 2009; 2011.
[18] Connerton 1989.

forget.[19] Therefore, the physical landscape influences our memories in profound and unexpected ways. This way of framing memory helps us to move away from approaches which regard the landscape simply as a visual ideology or a social construction. Thirdly, Connerton does not make an *a priori* value judgement in regard to remembrance being inherently positive and forgetting being inherently negative. He acknowledges that the process of forgetting is both inevitable as well as prerequisite when shaping a sense of self and for finding a direction for the self when moving forward.[20]

Connerton[21] is locating two forms of social practices in order to understand how memory is amassed, namely incorporating and inscribing ones. Incorporating practices are messages imparted by bodily activity. These constitute habits which are embodied and routinized, often *ritualized.* Therefore, a study of the transmission and alteration of memories demands a recognition of the embodied and performative dimensions of memory. Inscribing practices on the other hand, constitute the acts of trying to preserve, trap and store information through physical means. A vast amount of material that archaeologists work with are results of inscribing practices, be they megalithic passage graves or war memorials in Verdun. However, the practice and process of *attempting* to preserve memories by physical means does not mean that memories *themselves* are being physically inscribed.

These two concepts are not to be regarded as mutually exclusive. Indeed, practices can include elements which are simultaneously incorporating and inscribing. One illustrative example would be the act of writing a document. Holding the pencil and moving it with the hand is an incorporating practice, i.e. being a routinized and subconscious memorial practice. However, the outcome is an inscribing practice, i.e. an attempt to preserve memories by physical means. If we relate these concepts to Jan Assmann's[22] distinction between three forms of memories, both incorporating and inscribing practices are contributing to individual, communicative and cultural memory. Nevertheless, inscribing practices are to a higher degree adding to the cultural memory, for example when a linear history is presented at a national museum[23] or when a text book is produced for school children.[24] Incorporating practices have a larger degree of flexibility and freedom which make them more suitable in challenging the cultural memory, for example through acts of demonstrations.

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[19] Connerton 2009.
[20] Connerton 2008; 2011: 51-82.
[21] Connerton 1989.
[22] Assmann 2008.
[23] Aronsson and Elgenius 2011.
[24] See Šebek 2010.

Content of the volume

These theoretical excursions into some of the most influential researchers on memory demonstrate that memories and landscapes are in a multi-layered relationship which is dependent on the cultural context but holds transcending aspects. Thus, the relationships between memories and landscapes can be studied within the framework of different categories. *Monuments, media, and material culture* within landscapes are used in an attempt to preserve and access memories of events. Incorporating and inscribing practices, including periodical gathering at memorials, are *memory practices* carried out by the communities. These are often laced with effects such as identity formation and power plays. Such effects may well be intended, and the *use of memories* can be quite deliberate. Such use may include not barely evoking memories but shaping and changing them. The book is organized roughly in accordance to these three categories. Within these sections, the chronological theme is largely kept, but some exceptions are made for contributions that work across several phases. Before passing to some concluding remarks, we will provide a short overview of the contents of the papers of the volume.

Monuments, media, and material culture

The landscape as a multi-temporal entity facilitating different relationships to memory or rather memories and monuments, is discussed by **Richard Bradley** on the example of the hill of Tara on the east coast of Ireland traditionally believed to be the site of inauguration of the kings of Ireland. He shows how still visible ancient monuments including Neolithic barrows (3300-3200 BC) were repurposed throughout time, but that this does not mean that their history or original historical significance was understood. He argues that the connection that was made to such places was a creative act perhaps establishing memories to events that never happened.

By comparing two different regions in Archaic Aegean (800-450 BC), namely the Argolid and Eastern Crete, **James Whitley** argues that that there is no single Greek past. Instead Greek pasts always have to be seen as multiple, contested and full of variation. In the Argolid, multiple pasts were referenced and sometimes celebrated, manifesting itself in different media such as rich oral traditions of epic poetry and on iconography. Here, the past was constantly re-imagined and re-claimed. In Eastern Crete, on the other hand, there is no evidence of epic poetry, instead the past was maintained through material and ritual conservatism. This in turn serves as a critique of the term 'ancestral' as an explanatory model of referencing the past because it reduces complexity – instead pasts always have to be seen as multiple. In this spirit, his use of the term past

instead of memory transcends any sharp distinction between memory and history.

Matthias J. Bensch's paper deals with memory and power in the early imperial times (27 BC – 200 AD), in Rome. By tracking down the re-use of two ancestral figures, and their role in the foundation of the city, we are led to discover their function within the complex of the Forum Augustum and how this space finally became the merging-point of four types of the *Erinnerungskulturen* in the representation and display of the Augustean version of the history of Rome.

Another form of using material culture to facilitate collective memory is discussed by **Christina Videbech**. She investigates how reused materials, so called *spolia,* were used to make the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome a vessel of collective memory and Roman identity during the 4th century AD. She argues that this allowed Christianity to present itself as a continuation of the Roman past, and not as a break, legitimizing the new religion in a time when new things were viewed with suspicion.

Memory practices

In a study of depositional practices of stone objects from the Funnel Beaker Complex (4100–2800 cal BC), **Michael Müller** argues that some of them may be ritually relinquished objects marking the borders of social space. The very acts of depositing these objects may have stayed present in the collective memory, constituting part of the frame forming group identities. This may be an example how ritual activities such as depositing a hoard can inaugurate memorial spaces.

That everyday activities, like pottery making and house building, can be memory practices is demonstrated by **Robert Staniuk.** He is applying Jan Assmann's concepts of 'memory of things' and 'communicative memory', when examining the household pottery of the Middle Bronze Age (*c.* 2000-1450 BC) site 'Kakucs-Turján Mögött', a fortified Vatya culture settlement located in present-day Hungary. Staniuk uses memory studies as a way to overcome archaeologically developed temporal boundaries, through investigating how the embeddedness of memory practices in daily life allows long-term transmissions.

Looking at memory practices at the WWI (1914-1918) Verdun battlefield, **Paola Filippucci** argues that the landscape of the battle acts upon the memory of successive generations, making those who died in the battle imaginatively and affectively available for care. In turn, this challenges the notion that the battle has, with time and the passing of generations, resided into a distant and abstract 'history'.

The use of memories

During the Nordic Bronze Age (1800/1700-550 BC), mainly in Sweden, the transformation of memories may be observed using older rock art images. That is argued by **Christian Horn** and **Rich Potter** who employ new and traditional documentations of rock art in Scandinavia to demonstrate several processes through which images were altered creating new scenes and motifs. They argue that rock art and the connected memories were changeable and that such change was informed by lived practices. However, this process was potentially streamlined by the cultural memory that was conveyed by the scenes and motifs already on the rocks.

Based on Halbwachs' notion that memories have to be anchored **Anne Gangloff** reflects on the link between landscape and memory in the Roman world (100 BC – 200 AD). Using literary sources, she demonstrates that this link was obvious to ancient Romans. Gangloff develops a critical reading of Pierre Nora and argues against the rigidity of the concept. This, and a discussion of others like Jan Assmann and Susan Alcock, sets up her theoretical framework to consider memories and landscapes in Roman paintings as mementos of memory spaces. She ends by formulating one of the main challenges for the study of the theme memory and landscapes in the Roman world, which is the question, whether or not it is possible to move beyond the conception of a 'topical' landscape.

Anna Gawlik and **Marcin Czarnowicz** demonstrate how archaeology can recover memories. Their contribution details the excavation of a Bronze Age barrow in the village of Kowary, Poland. The accounts of an eyewitness in the village suggests that this barrow was used for burials during WWI. However, the excavation revealed that instead of WWI soldiers, the Bronze Age barrow had been used for burials during the 17th century, most likely for victims of an epidemic or a plague. The case thus provides a discussion of archaeology as a discipline which can bring new memories to light, as well as on oral history and the interplay between remembering and forgetting.

Martin Porr brings us to Australia and into the remote Kimberly region: he uses the long-researched concept and specific characteristic of the Australian aboriginal culture – 'The Dreaming' – to investigate the relation between memory, rock art and enactment of the landscape in that part of the continent. The author, then, compares Assmann's general ideas about social memory with the specific Kimberly's case, and, by doing so, he successfully manages to shed light on, and to correct some of the general assumptions within Assmann's theory.

The paper by **Ana Paula Motta, Peter Veth** and **Martin Porr** focuses on the same region and rock art record. More specifically, their contribution deals with one aspect that plays an enormous role in the deciphering of memory practices in the landscapes within (ethno-) archaeological contexts: the recursivity. Thanks to an in-depth and wonderfully documented analysis of the most relevant cases, the authors allow us to gain a unique insight on the crucial aspect of when recursivity is present and when it is absent in the given record, and what are the possible conclusions that we can infer from such data.

Gustav Wollentz provides a theoretical excursion, in which he outlines possibilities and pitfalls within an archaeology of reclaiming memories. The suggested possibilities are that it may challenge temporal borders, constitute a more ethical archaeology and lend greater value to archaeological sites as heritage. The suggested pitfalls are an *a priori* valuation of 'authentic' memories as superior to what is deemed to constitute 'altered' memories, an assumption of forgetting as inherently negative and remembering as inherently positive, and a neglect of the forward-oriented dimensions of memories.

Conclusion

With this volume we hope we have been able to demonstrate that landscapes have an important role in the wider social process of preserving, altering, and potentially falsifying memories. The thematic and chronological variety demonstrates that the relationship of memories and landscapes can be studied diachronically. The diachronic perspective of this volume highlights that memorials, memory practices, and the use of memories are in complex and multivocal relationships that transcend times. The way in which these relationships and memories are shaped is highly time and context specific. Here, archaeology and heritage studies are topical for modern and current affairs.

Memories can be individually chosen as important to remember, as well as collectively enforced from the top-down. Selective features of the past, whether material or not, can help legitimize new social institutions (see Videbech). Thus, it is important to keep in mind that cultural/collective memories are seldom innocent or self-evident, but often connected to specific power relations. The recent resurgence of populism is based on such selective memory of a glorified past.[25] That this does not only influences ideologies and collective identities but manifests in policy can be seen in the 2016 Brexit referendum and the subsequent developments that this caused. Parties to either side of the divide

memorialize the history of British nationalism in different ways and use that as arguments either for or against the EU, in which also the prehistoric past of Britain is being actively employed.[26] There are no memorials yet commemorating a potential Brexit or its last-minute defeat. However, material culture and media, such as millions of placards, posters, stickers, etc. has been produced and already placed on or carried through the landscape, and photographs have been taken for coming generations to study. Furthermore, the influence of the far-right into archaeological practice, feeding specific narratives of the past, is not limited to the UK.[27] This calls for archaeologists and heritage professionals to be attentive and sensitive to how information is spread and potentially misused.

For example, many authors were able to demonstrate that memories could be changed, tweaked, and used for different purposes (see Bensch, Horn, Motta *et al.*). The memory of wars is shaped by the antecedents depending on whether they identify with the group that lost or the group that won the conflict (see Wollentz, Filippucci). Even different groups on the same side of a conflict remember differently depending on their cultural context and the way the conflict arose and developed.[28] The German 'Erinnerungskultur' (engl. commemorative culture) of the Second World War and the Shoa emerged from a culture of forgetting what happened, arguably caused by the totality of the loss, authoritarianism, and the severity of the crimes against humanity. The same aspects may have caused the attempts of later generations to purge themselves by portraying these things as long gone history or a past that had no bearing on the present.[29] Indeed, heritage becomes a political arena in post-war contexts, in which temporal proximity or distance can be actively invoked in order to either emphasize continuity or a break with the past.[30] In many sensitive cases, the atrocities of a war may be actively silenced in top-down attempts of forgetting. This occurred in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), through the so-called 'Pact of Forgetting' or 'Pact of Silence'.[31] However, such enforced attempts of forgetting seldom succeed but may instead lead to alternative ways of remembering. Nevertheless, Alfredo Gonzaléz-Ruibal[32] has provided an interesting account on Equatorial Guinea in which he argues that a 'production of oblivion' has created a 'land of amnesia'. He calls the result 'anti-heritage'. The past, and practices associated to it, may not only be forgotten, but also fabricated or invented,[33] which may

[25] Bonikowski 2016; Torres 2016.

[26] Gardner and Harrison 2017; Bonnachi *et al.* 2018; Brophy 2018.
[27] See Niklasson and Hølleland 2018 for examples from Scandinavia.
[28] Brandt *et al.* 2003.
[29] Adorno 1996; Benz 1991; Klenke and Tholen 1988.
[30] Macdonald 2009; Wollentz 2017.
[31] Viejo-Rose 2011.
[32] Gonzaléz-Ruibal 2016.
[33] Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983.

lead to memories of things that never happened (see Bradley, Whitley).

There are two temporal aspects linked to memories, memorials, and the use of both. Remembering things that have not happened fills a void that is left by forgetting that which occurred (see Bradley, Fillipucci, Wollentz, Gangloff, Gawlik and Czarnowicz, Videbech). Many memories are of temporally bounded relevance. For people born two centuries ago, the memory of the battle of Waterloo probably still loomed large in the collective and individual memory with father and grandfathers taking part in the fighting. Today, the battle for Waterloo is probably most famously 'relocated' to a Swedish pop band during the 1970s, and even that memory is fading. However, from an archaeological perspective it is also possible to observe how the long-term incorporation and strengthening of such memories and memory practices (see Bradley, Staniuk, Horn) gave rise to particular social trajectories and identities. Today the mass belief in a variety of conspiracy theories, for example memorializing the John F. Kennedy assassination as a government plot, may shape the self-identity of entire segments of populations.[34] This may also be done in an official capacity by sacrificing stone objects (see Müller) or by constructing a museum dedicated to the 9/11 attacks directly on the footprint of the destroyed World Trade Centre twin towers in New York. Landscapes and materialized spaces are the realm in and through which memories are remembered and renegotiated. Through popular culture or storytelling, place-bound memories may be tied to people that never existed and events that never happened. For example, the small town of Ystad in southern Sweden has had an influx of tourists in the wake of the success of the detective Kurt Wallander novels, written by Henning Mankell. Despite the fact that Wallander never existed, tours have been organized which visit the home of Wallander and other important places as revealed through the books.[35] A similar occurrence is happening in Montmartre, Paris, after the success of the 2001 movie Amelie from Montmartre.

There are also uncounted places of memory in the landscape. This makes landscapes potential arenas where power structures materialize themselves and can be studied. However, it is important to recognize smaller scale memories, memorials, and memory practices. For each memorial of the scale of Waterloo or Brandenburg Gate, there are thousands of small statues of local dignitaries. For each annual gathering at Ground Zero in New York, there are thousands of cemeteries with local customs where loved ones are mourned.

We do not contend that this volume has all the answers to the complex issues modern society faces. However, the long-term perspective adds an indirect critical voice that helps us understand the embeddedness of memories, their malleability, and how space can be used and contested to empower memories. The diachronic approach of this volume shows that the issues, functions, and interpretations are usually similar but different, which means that a diachronic perspective as provided here can cross-fertilize studies about collective/individual memory, *lieux de memoir*, identity construction, the transmission of myths, forgetting, and misremembering. Remembering can be a passive and subconscious process, as well as an active and deliberate one. Sometimes archaeology and heritage studies make a direct contribution and act directly as a corrective in testing whether personal recollections are accurate or not (see Gawlik and Czarnowicz), outline ways forward in how to deal with contested or subaltern memories (see Wollentz),[36] or criticize the academic conceptions of memories and memorials (see Gangloff). While this is exciting and should be developed in the future, it is also important to remember that the past does not justify present action. Policy is not justified purely on the basis that 'people in the past did it'.

We hope that this volume will provide some thought-provoking and innovative perspectives on memory, material culture and landscapes. Perhaps these case studies and theoretical excursions can even plant the seeds of new 'memories' worth further research. After all, there is no lack of memories out there, and new ones are born, materialized, remembered, forgotten, and mis-remembered every single day.

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[34] Oliver and Wood 2014.
[35] Holtorf and Faitclough 2013.

[36] Gonzaléz-Ruibal 2018.

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