Memorials in the Age of the Anthropocene

Summary

The book involves monuments and memorials from the point of view of critical discourses of new humanism, posthumanism etc. It distances itself from the realm of memory studies, which are still one of the main fields of research concerning that kind of objects. The book offers a new interpretative frame both for memorials that are being created in our age as well as for those created in the past. Anthropocenic perspective helps to see memorials not only as identity creators and political tools, but also as artifacts which help to found communities, to pose questions concerning present issues, to invigorate social groups in their search for a better future, and to establish a space for individual experience, not necessarily related to the days gone by. Then, this perspective enables to interpret ephemeral, sensorial or environmental memorials which are hardly to be named as such, but still are classified this way. In those cases memory doesn't have to be the most important category of analysis. On the other hand, the book undertakes the question of traditional and non-traditional memorials, counter-memorials etc. discussing the pursuit of the commemoration which is perceived as an anthropocentric act.

The book consist of articles written by academics representing many different fields of humanities (such as anthropology, literary studies, cultural studies, history, art history, art criticism, musicology, ecocriticism) and articles and a manifest of famous contemporary artists. The first part of the book focuses mainly on the problem of war commemoration and on the presence of animal memorials dedicated to animals who took part in military conflicts. Next part of the book pertains to the question of commemoration of genocide, using the example of Rwanda genocide, Roma and Sinti genocide and Shoa. Last part of the book scrutinize non-traditional contemporary commemorations, such as sonic memorials, ephermal objects and other contemporary practices of remembrance.