

Acknowledgements

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39th International American Studies Conference

Monuments, Museums and Murals: Preservation, Commemoration, and American Identity

**Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University
Department of English Language and Literature
May 15–17, 2019**

**Co-organized and co-sponsored by the American Studies
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39th International American Studies Conference

**Monuments, Museums and Murals: Preservation, Commemoration and
American Identity**

Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, May 15–17, 2019



Wednesday, May 15

Registration (Troia Kültür Merkezi): 1:30–3:00 pm
Welcoming Remarks (Sevim Buluç Auditorium): 3:00–3:15 pm Meldan Tanrısal, ASAT President Dilek Kantar, Chair, Dept. of English Language and Literature, Onsekiz Mart Uni. Scott Weinhold, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy, Ankara
Musical Interlude: 3:15–3:30 pm Chair: Dilek Kantar Ahmet Can Başaran (Piano) Batuhan Ertunç (Cello) Nehir Aydoğmus (Flute) <i>Çanakkale Türküsü</i> <i>Ander Sevdaluk</i> <i>Sarı Gelin</i> <i>Air on the G String</i> (J.S. Bach)
Keynote Address: 3:30–4:30 pm Chair: Meldan Tanrısal Heidi K. Brandow, “Whose Memory?”
Opening Reception (Troia Kültür Merkezi): 4:30–5:30 pm

Thursday, May 16	
Session #1: 10:00–11:30 am	
<p><u>Mustafa Aksoy Amfisi</u> <i>Food for Thought</i> Chair: Tanfer Emin Tunç</p> <p>Tanfer Emin Tunç Culinary Commemoration: Constructing and Preserving American History and Identity through Food Museums</p> <p>Fatma Eren “A National Embarrassment” or Pride?: Henrietta Nesbitt and the Preservation of American National Identity through Food</p> <p>Ece Saatçioğlu The Museum of Jurassic Technology: A Postmodern American Space of Enlightenment and Entertainment</p>	<p><u>Ümit Serdaroğlu Amfisi</u> <i>Rural and Urban Environments</i> Chair: Ufuk Özdağ</p> <p>Ufuk Özdağ The Arches National Monument: Edward Abbey’s Aesthetics of Place</p> <p>Joshua Bartlett The Many Lives of the Charter Oak</p> <p>Izabella Kimak The City as a Museum in Jonathan Lethem’s <i>Fortress of Solitude</i></p>
Break: 11:30–11:45 am	
Session #2: 11:45 am–1:15 pm	
<p><u>Mustafa Aksoy Amfisi</u> <i>Public Archives and Commemoration</i> Chair: Merve Özman Kaya</p> <p>Mert Deniz Remembering, Identity and History: The Sculpted Life of Benjamin Franklin</p> <p>Gizem Altın On the Hill of Labor: The Use of Slave Labor in the Building of Capitol Hill and Its Interpretations</p> <p>Gamze Katı Gümüş Seeking Justice through Civil War: “Records of Irish-American Patriotism” as an Alternative Archive</p>	<p><u>Ümit Serdaroğlu Amfisi</u> <i>African Americans and the Horror of Lynching</i> Chair: Ayşe Lahur Kirtunç</p> <p>Meldan Tanrısıl “Strange Fruit Hanging from the Poplar Trees”: The Lynching Memorial and Lynching in the United States</p> <p>Laura A. Macaluso and Tanja Schult Commemorating the Past, Healing the Present, Working for the Future: The National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama</p> <p>Rebecca H. Flannagan Natasha Trethewey’s Poetic Palimpsests: Poetry as Monument for Private and Public Racial History</p>
Lunch: 1:15–2:30 pm	

Session #3: 2:30–4:00 pm	
<p><u>Mustafa Aksoy Amfisi</u> <i>Monumentalizing War</i> Chair: Özlem Türe Abacı</p> <p>Eren Alkan “Remember the Alamo”: A Lone Memory from the “Lone Star”</p> <p>Julia Lange Troubling Memories? German American Museums and the Representation of the Two World Wars</p> <p>Serhan Bulanık The Strange Case of Japanese Americans: A Comparison of the Poston Memorial Monument, the Marine Corps War Memorial and the National Japanese American Memorial</p>	<p><u>Ümit Serdaroğlu Amfisi</u> 9/11 Chair: S. Bilge Mutluay Çetintaş</p> <p>S. Bilge Mutluay Çetintaş Cartooning Fallen Towers: Art Spiegelman’s <i>In the Shadow of No Towers</i></p> <p>Seda Şen Reimagining the Skyline: 9/11 in Poetry</p> <p>Ezgi Ilimen Memory Preservation and Traumatic Commemoration in Jonathan Safran Foer’s <i>Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close</i> and Orhan Pamuk’s <i>The Museum of Innocence</i></p>
Break: 4:00–4:15 pm	
Session #4: 4:15–5:15 pm	
<p><u>Mustafa Aksoy Amfisi</u> <i>The Jewish American Experience</i> Chair: Ceylan Özcan</p> <p>Ergün Baylan Remembering the Holocaust: Cynthia Ozick’s “The Shawl” and Defamiliarization</p> <p>Faruk Kalay Anne Frank’s Commodification in Philip Roth’s <i>The Ghost Writer</i></p>	<p><u>Ümit Serdaroğlu Amfisi</u> <i>Literary Monuments</i> Chair: Özlem Uzundemir</p> <p>Özlem Uzundemir Verbal and Visual Intrusions in Poe’s “The Oval Portrait”</p> <p>Esin Korkut Savul <i>The Spoils of Poynton</i> by Henry James: The Monumental House and a Contradictory Discourse on Popular Memory</p>
Conference Dinner: 7:00–9:00 pm	

Friday, May 17	
Session #5: 10:00–11:30 am	
<p><u>Mustafa Aksoy Amfisi</u> <i>Monumentalizing the West I</i> Chair: Ayça Germen</p> <p>Duygu Beste Başer Özcan A Woman Behind the Scenes: Commemorating Jessie Benton Frémont</p> <p>Michael Fink Land of Disenchantment: Sites of Controversies and the Visual Cultures of Memory and Belonging in Contemporary New Mexico: Three Case Studies</p> <p>Sangjun Jeong Disneyland: A Monument of the American Way of Life</p>	<p><u>Ümit Serdaroğlu Amfisi</u> <i>Monuments and Gender</i> Chair: Nisa H. Güzel Köşker</p> <p>Emine Geçgil The 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition and the Woman's Building as a Venue for Women's Creativity and Visibility</p> <p>Nisa H. Güzel Köşker The Female Body as Memorabilia: Construction of Female Spectatorship in <i>Love 'em and Leave 'em</i></p> <p>İdil Didem Keskiner The (De)Construction of American Masculinity through the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Bobbie Ann Mason's <i>In Country</i></p>
Break: 11:30–11:45 am	
Session #6: 11:45 am–1:15 pm	
<p><u>Mustafa Aksoy Amfisi</u> <i>Monumentalizing the West II</i> Chair: Sercan Hamza Bağlama</p> <p>Kara McCormack Imagining Tombstone: Hollywood, Historicity, and the Construction of a Usable Past</p> <p>Caroline Frank Native Americans in Monumental Museums</p> <p>Kübra Aksay Reconstructing and Performing Heritage in <i>Never Alone</i></p>	<p><u>Ümit Serdaroğlu Amfisi</u> <i>The Immigrant Experience</i> Chair: Azer Banu Kemaloğlu</p> <p>Elisabetta Marino Preserving, Remembering, and Commemorating the Italian American Experience in Chicago</p> <p>Figun Dinçer The Invisible Monument: The Silent Cries of Chinese Immigrants</p> <p>Zafer Parlak Turkish Festivals in the United States as a Form of Commemorating and Preserving Turkish and American Identities</p>
Lunch: 1:15–2:30 pm	

Session #7: 2:30–3:30 pm	
<p><u>Mustafa Aksoy Amfisi</u> <i>Personal and Political Narratives</i> Chair: David Espey</p> <p>David Espey Roth and Updike, Memoir and Memorial</p> <p>Özge Özbek Akıman A Double Retrospective: Baldwin Looking Back in the 1980s; Looking at Baldwin Now</p>	<p><u>Ümit Serdaroğlu Amfisi</u> <i>Coming to Terms with the Confederacy</i> Chair: Cem Kılıçarslan</p> <p>Cem Kılıçarslan The Removal of the Confederate Past: Erasing History or an Invitation for a New Future?</p> <p>Tarık Tansu Yiğit “Tear it Down, Tear it Down”: Does <i>Silent Sam</i> Speak for Civil War Memory?</p>

Keynote Speaker: Heidi Brandow



Heidi Brandow is a multidisciplinary artist working primarily as a painter, printmaker, and social-engagement artist. As a painter, Heidi's work is commonly filled with whimsical characters and monsters that are often combined with words of poetry, stories, and personal reflections. She hails from a long line of Native Hawaiian singers, musicians, and performers on her mother's side and Diné storytellers and medicine people on her father's side. Heidi has been awarded the Turkish Cultural Foundation Artist Fellowship, a Ford Foundation-Santa Fe Art Institute Fellowship, a First Peoples Fund Fellowship, and a Smithsonian-National Museum of the American Indian Social Engagement Fellowship, to name a few. Heidi is a graduate of the Institute of American Indian Arts and studied design at the Harvard Graduate School of Design in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Istanbul Technical University in Istanbul, Turkey. Examples of her artwork can be found on her website: <http://www.heidikbrandow.com>

Heidi's conference presentation, "Whose Memory?," encompasses her work as a Native Hawaiian/Diné. It explores the evolving definition of identity while challenging dominant narratives regarding memory, memorials, and understandings of place and belonging.

Abstracts and Biographies

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Kübra Aksay is a graduate student in Master of Arts Program in British and North American Cultural Studies, Department of Philology, Albert-Ludwigs University of Freiburg, Germany. Her research interests include film studies, popular culture, heritage studies and sociolinguistics.

Reconstructing and Performing Heritage in *Never Alone*

Over the last decade, the popularity of video games and modern technology in the interactive entertainment industry has allowed the emergence of new methods of preserving and reconstructing cultural heritage. In addition to representing objects with computer graphics, digital games can also reconstruct actions through interactive gameplay. Video games can be entertaining, but they can also be educational, and serve as an effective way of conveying heritage from one generation to the next. This is why the Cook Inlet Tribal Council, a non-profit organization based in Anchorage, Alaska, chose the medium of the video game to share its cultural heritage with new generations of Iñupiat, as well as the rest of the world.

Never Alone (2014) was developed by Upper One Games in collaboration with the Cook Inlet Tribal Council and E-Line Media, another group of developers working on game-based learning products. *Never Alone* is interesting to study for many reasons: it is a digital heritage reconstruction, and a puzzle-adventure game, unlike many other historical action games with war settings. However, the most important reason to choose *Never Alone* for academic study is its collaborative development process. The Iñupiat community helped the game developers choose the story, the characters, and a great deal of the other content during the game's development.

In this study, I will explore how *Never Alone* offers a performance of cultural heritage through a combination of content and gameplay. The involvement of the local community in game development and its effect on authenticity, the choice of content, the video game narrative, and interactivity are the main aspects I will analyze in my paper. I will also compare the level of interactivity and accuracy in the chosen medium and product to other, more traditional methods of heritage reconstruction, such as displaying objects in museums and historical reenactment.

Keywords: Heritage, Reconstruction, Authenticity, Popular Culture, Digital Games

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Eren Alkan earned his BA and MA degrees in the Department of American Culture and Literature at Ege University. He has worked as an English instructor, writing skills coordinator, research and development unit coordinator, and Head of the English Unit. He is now pursuing his PhD in the Department of Humanistic Studies at Universitat Rovira i Virgili and American Studies at Ege University.

“Remember the Alamo”: A Lone Memory from the “Lone Star”

In “To the People of Texas and All the Americans in the World,” William Travis, the soldier who headed the company of 183 volunteers at the Alamo in the Texas Revolution in 1836, says “The enemy has demanded a surrender [. . .] I have answered the demand with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender or retreat.” After Texans revolted against Mexico because of the government’s tax and immigration policies in Texas, Mexican general and President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna sent troops to Texas. The Mexican troops were defeated in an old mission in San Antonio, which was a fortress called the Alamo. In twelve bloody days, all but five Texans were killed by Mexican attacks. As Travis describes in the quotation above, the Alamo inspired American Texans to seek an independent and free country; thus, although it was a Texan defeat, the battle inspired the hope and faith that resulted in future victory.

Today, the Alamo is a symbol of the Texas Revolution and the “Lone Star Republic.” It is under siege, just as it was in 1835: in this case, moisture is causing the limestone walls to crumble. As this presentation will demonstrate, Texans see the Alamo as a unique memorial to their fight for freedom and are trying to preserve it from further damage. It is an important part of American identity and why Texans still echo the battle cry “Remember the Alamo.”

Keywords: Alamo, Texas, Santa Anna, Texas Revolution, American Identity

Gizem Altın earned a BA from the Department of English Language and Literature at Hacettepe University, and an MA in History from Bilkent University in 2018 with a thesis entitled “The Free Speech League: A Study on the Ideas about the Freedom of Speech during the Progressive Era.” She is currently a lecturer at Türk Hava Kurumu (Turkish Aeronautical Association) University in Ankara, and her areas of interests are civil rights, constitutional jurisprudence, feminism, and censorship.

On the Hill of Labor: The Use of Slave Labor in the Building of Capitol Hill and Its Interpretations

Housing the United States Congress and located in the capital of the country, the United States Capitol rises above the city on magnificent columns of labor. The construction of the United States Capitol, located on Capitol Hill, was completed in the 1800s, and today undeniably reflects the neoclassical taste in architecture that characterizes the era. However, the home of the legislative branch was not merely erected for the purpose of visual art; the newly established capital materialized and represented the values of freedom and democracy upon which it would stand. The Founding Fathers sought a capital as mighty as Rome, and the structures themselves were not all they adopted from the Romans. Washington, D.C. was already one of the well-known hubs of the slave trade and ironically, made use of slave labor to build its pillars of liberty and justice.

When analyzing the United States Capitol in terms of its use of slave labor, the *indexical* meaning of the building emerges within its architectural scope. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the design of the building and its intended use, representing the transfer of power from tyrannical, monarchical forces to the people. Yet, Capitol Hill was built on the backs of enslaved men. Thus, the story of the physical construction, and enslaved laborers, of the United States Capitol help us unravel the slave trade in Washington, D.C. while allowing us to reconsider the political and social meanings of the symbolic structure.

Keywords: United States Capitol, Founding Fathers, Slavery, Architecture, Indexical Meaning

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Joshua Bartlett is an Assistant Professor in the Department of American Culture and Literature at Bilkent University, where he researches, writes, and teaches in the areas of early and nineteenth-century American literature, Native American literature, literatures of the Americas, poetry studies, and ecocriticism. His essay, "Anne Bradstreet's Ecological Thought," appeared in *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* in 2014 and he was the recipient of a 2018-2019 Jay and Deborah Last Fellowship in American Visual Culture from the American Antiquarian Society. His current book project is *Before Nature's Nation: Ecological Thought and Early American Poetry*.

The Many Lives of the Charter Oak

On October 24, 1814, in "An Address Delivered Before the American Antiquarian Society, in King's Chapel, Boston, on Their Second Anniversary," Congregationalist minister Abiel Holmes called attention to Hartford, Connecticut's famous Charter Oak: "Who can behold the venerable Oak, which concealed the Charter of Connecticut from the rapacious hands of Andros...and not feel a detestation of tyranny, and a firmer resolution to maintain the constitutional rights and liberties of the state and country?" Holmes' insistence on the power of natural objects to generate feelings of democracy and national identity was not isolated sentiment in early America. Such connections imply nature's value beyond resource abundance or aesthetic appreciation: in order to "feel American," one must affectively engage with the rocks and trees of American landscapes. Moreover, they suggest that natural "association items," such as the Charter Oak serve, as key avatars in this broader web of environmental entanglement.

In this paper, I explore how Hartford's "venerable Oak" has resonated in American literary and cultural history from the colonial era to the present day. Examining the period between its "conceal[ment of] the Charter of Connecticut" in October 1687 and its demise in August 1856, I consider how the Charter Oak came to function as a historical icon, an object of artistic interest, and a figure of literary nostalgia—as in several poems by Lydia Huntley Sigourney that take it as their subject. Then, in looking past its physical destruction (and subsequent "funeral"), I investigate how the Charter Oak embodied new "lives" post-August 1856—not just in fragments of the tree itself (including acorns), but in terms of manufactured items (chairs, picture frames, even a wooden baseball), brand name products (from lawnmowers to vinyl siding), and even as a curious rhetorical figure in the 1856 presidential election campaigns of James Buchanan and John Fremont. Throughout my project, I draw on Timothy Morton's theory of "hyperobjects" and Jane Bennett's work on "vibrant matter" to examine the connections between nature and national identity that natural monuments such as the Charter Oak forge, and the ways in which new evaluations of these historical relationships and their artistic, cultural, and literary representations might suggest new directions for contemporary environmental engagements and ecological actions.

Keywords: Charter Oak, Early America, Trees, Environment, Nature, Ecocriticism

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A Woman Behind the Scenes: Commemorating Jessie Benton Frémont

In 2014, a bill was proposed to rename the Mammoth Peak in Yosemite National Park after Jessie Benton Frémont (1824-1902), the wife of the first Republican presidential candidate and explorer John C. Frémont. Proponents of the bill see Jessie Benton Frémont as the heroine of the West and claim that it is necessary to honor and commemorate her since she played an important role in the approval of the Yosemite Grant. However, this attempt has not been successful and today, Jessie Benton Frémont is only commemorated at the Arizona Sharlot Hall Open Air Museum, the house the couple inhabited when John C. Frémont was the territorial governor.

Yet, Jessie Benton Frémont was far more than just the wife of a politician. Not only did Frémont publish stories in magazines and write books to support her family financially, but she was also involved in politics as an abolitionist at a time when the cult of domesticity confined women to the private sphere. Moreover, she actively participated in her husband's 1856 presidential campaign, during which "Frémont and Jessie, too" became a slogan. Although contemporaries such as Harriet Jacobs, Elizabeth Candy Stanton, and the Grimké sisters have each claimed a space in American women's history, Jessie Benton Frémont and her works remain understudied. Using her books about the Civil War and the West, this presentation will examine Frémont as a feminist role model of the nineteenth century who not only shaped and preserved American identity, but also worked within the system to reform it.

Keywords: Jessie Benton Frémont, Feminism, the West, Museum, Commemoration

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Ergün Baylan holds a BA in American Culture and Literature from Hacettepe University, and an MA in American Studies from Heidelberg University, Germany. He is pursuing a PhD at the Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, and since 2009, has been working as a Research Assistant in the Department of English Language and Literature, at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University. His research interests include Transcendentalism, philosophy, literary theories, cultural theories and the short story.

Remembering the Holocaust: Cynthia Ozick's "The Shawl" and Defamiliarization

Is poetry after Auschwitz really barbaric, as Adorno once put it? While some claim that the only way to keep the inexpressible intact is silence as language is insufficient and untrustworthy, others argue that silence can never keep this horrifying experience alive, since there is a need to transmit this experience to future generations. On one hand, if a writer treats the subject, the risk is that it may be falsified, aestheticized or trivialized. On the other, writing is one of the strongest ways of keeping cultural memory alive.

Viktor Shklovsky coined the term defamiliarization as a means to "distinguish poetic from practical language," because it is far more difficult to perceive the poetic, and its effects are stronger. For Shklovsky, the function of art is to create perception and overcome automatization. Art makes things "unfamiliar" and increases the complexity and duration of perception. This technique universalizes context in a non-restrictive mode as it makes the text timeless and purifies it from expectations and prejudgments.

This concept has been used in Holocaust literature to tell the untellable, while keeping memory intact and the lessons of the past alive. In her short story "The Shawl," Cynthia Ozick tells a story without offending the past, yet at the same time conveys the feelings and horror of the experience to the next generation. Even though she herself did not personally witness what she recounts, her narrating mode, and use of defamiliarization, results in a work that is unique in every sense as Holocaust literature.

Keywords: Cultural Memory, Holocaust, Defamiliarization, Cynthia Ozick, "The Shawl"

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Serhan earned a BA in American Culture and Literature from Ege University in 2018 and is currently an MA student in the same department. His research interests include literary journalism, ethnic American literature, ethnicity, race and immigration, American cultural studies, American social history, and captivity narratives. Last year, he presented a paper on Arab American memoirs at the International Anglophone Studies Graduate Symposium at Ege University.

The Strange Case of Japanese Americans: A Comparison of the Poston Memorial Monument, the Marine Corps War Memorial and the National Japanese American Memorial

While some monuments can make individuals feel proud of their history and revive patriotic sentiment, others evoke dark, catastrophic histories and/or incidents that often remain silent. Monuments can also be contradictory, prompting onlookers to question whether they should identify with a national identity and/or an ethnic identity.

The Poston Memorial Monument, the Marine Corps War Memorial, and the National Japanese American Memorial are examples of such monuments, contradictory yet interpenetrating, especially in terms of the realities that Japanese American have had to face, both as “aliens” and American citizens concurrently. As this paper will explain, Japanese Americans have a complicated history, which is further problematized through monuments. Moreover, how do these monuments, which commemorate events that occurred generations ago, still impact Japanese Americans today?

Keywords: Japanese Americans, Ethnic Identity, American Identity, Monuments, Commemoration

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Mert Deniz received his BA from Ankara University's Department of American Culture and Literature in 2015. In 2018, he received an MA in History from Bilkent University, with a thesis on the foreign relations of the Bolsheviks and American Progressives before and during the Great War. He is currently a PhD student in the Department of American Culture and Literature at Hacettepe University. He is employed as an expert judicial translator, and has taught English language courses at various institutions, including the Turkish American Association (TAA) in Ankara.

Remembering, Identity and History: The Sculpted Life of Benjamin Franklin

History requires remembering. However, the act of remembering is perhaps even more important than the historical "truth" because it provides a source for the process of identification. History, therefore, plays a much larger role in the lives of human beings as they identify themselves through memory—the storage of data they perceive to be historical.

This presentation focuses on the visual objects of remembering; in other words, visual sources of history, specifically statues. It will discuss the role of visual material in history, with reference to the ideas of various scholars, from Descartes to contemporary scholars like Nicholas Mirzoeff and Peter Burke. It will question the intrinsic details of statues and how they can be included in a study of history that scrutinizes the phenomena of memory. Specifically, this paper will concentrate on an analysis of Benjamin Franklin's statues, scattered around the City of Philadelphia, which, collectively trace the life, and identities, of Franklin from his youth to his death. The identities, which were created by the sculptors, will be discussed in terms of American identities and those of public leaders. As this presentation will also demonstrate, such public discourses, often beyond the physical presence of the statues themselves, can shape future generations' collective memory of public figures.

Keywords: Benjamin Franklin, History, Memory, Remembering, Social Identity, Statues

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The Invisible Monument: The Silent Cries of Chinese Immigrants

Monuments are built forms that emphasize commemorative meanings. Dictionaries of English generally define monuments as explicitly erected to remind people—especially privileged dominant groups—of important events. Whether for political or aesthetic purposes, monuments are essential for the articulation of the national politics of memory and identity. Often, they are erected to provide favorable historical narratives as they simultaneously obliterate uncomfortable ones. Thus as objects, they often represent the dominant culture's values and the tools of those in power.

However, the Chinese poetry carved into the walls of the barracks at the Angel Island Immigration Station can be considered silent and humble monuments, created by those without power, that challenge the historical narratives of the American political elite. Reminders of a dark chapter in American history, the Angel Island Poems are a recently discovered body of over 135 poems, written primarily in Chinese, and carved into the walls at the Angel Island Immigration Station, where Chinese immigrants were detained between 1910 and 1940. Collectively, they can be regarded as a mural, but I prefer to think of them as metaphorical monuments. This study will provide a critical reading of these poems as a form of human communication and commemoration. Clearly, monuments do not have to represent a single event or identity. In the case of the Angel Island Immigration Station poems, they represent the entire history of immigration to the United States, and the struggles of all those who chose to make America their home.

Keywords: Monument, Angel Island, Immigration, Chinese Americans, Poetry, History

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Fatma Eren is a PhD student in the Department of American Culture and Literature at Hacettepe University, where she currently works as a Research Assistant. Her research interests include identity studies, the contemporary American novel, and cultural studies.

“A National Embarrassment” or Pride?: Henrietta Nesbitt and the Preservation of American National Identity through Food

In 2004, “Mrs. Nesbitt’s Café” opened at the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park, NY, serving “homemade soups, salads, wraps, both hot and cold, along with specialty deli sandwiches.” The café, offered as an ideal place to eat at the FDR National Historic Site, is named after Henrietta Nesbitt, who served for over a decade as the head housekeeper of the White House during the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration (1933-1945). According to Laura Shapiro in *What She Ate* (2017), Henrietta Nesbitt’s service at the White House is, in a literal sense, considered to be “a national embarrassment” (116) because the food prepared under her supervision is said to be “the worst in the history of presidency” (92). Then, why is a restaurant at a historic site named after a woman who was known for her “parsimony” and bizarre menus? The answer lies in the exceptional culinary practices of Depression-era kitchens.

The social and economic turmoil of the Depression years was inevitably reflected in the changing culinary practices and consumption patterns of the nation. Thus, an examination of the social impact of the economic strife on foodways provides a window into the larger picture of American life, revealing the patriotic mission embarked on by women to preserve American national identity. However, while doing so, some Depression-era women both reinforced and subverted the supposedly inherent qualities ascribed to women as perfect homemakers. As this presentation will argue, Victoria Henrietta Nesbitt (1874–1963) was one such woman. She both acted within the confines of traditional gender roles by devoting herself to establishing the White House kitchen as an exemplary culinary model, and debunked the assumption that a woman’s place is in the kitchen by surviving despite her (in)efficacy as the head housekeeper of the White House. This study will also offer insight into Depression-era foodways in an attempt to reveal the true reasons behind the bad culinary reputation of White House women Henrietta Nesbitt and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

Keywords: Henrietta Nesbitt, Great Depression, White House, Food, Cooking, American National Identity

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Roth and Updike, Memoir and Memorial

Both Roth and Updike have memorialized their hometowns in their writing, and their hometowns—Newark, New Jersey, and Shillington, Pennsylvania—have in turn memorialized them. A Newark website offers a self-guided tour of “Philip Roth’s Newark,” and connects excerpts from his writing to actual sites and buildings in the city. The John Updike Society is making a museum of Updike’s childhood home in Shillington, and the Shillington Borough Council recently renamed a section of a local creek “Rabbit Run,” after Updike’s novel.

One rite of passage for aging writers is the challenge of writing a memoir. A first step in such a journey is a return to the past, both in body and in memory. Going home is an archetypal journey, a chance to ponder anew the question of one’s identity by looking back upon the world of childhood with the eyes of a seasoned and accomplished adult. Both writers did this in the 1980s. Updike’s first memoir of himself and of Shillington began in 1984, with an essay in *The New Yorker*, entitled “A Soft Spring Night in Shillington.” Roth wrote of his childhood home in an essay, “Safe at Home,” in the *New York Times Magazine*. These essays became the first chapters of each writer’s memoir. Roth’s title, *The Facts*, underlines the difficulty of separating fact from fiction. Updike’s *Self Consciousness* evokes the subjective, ego-centered nature of memorializing one’s own early life.

Focusing on their autobiographical writing but glancing as well at the echoes of these memories in their fiction, I will compare how the two writers blend the identity of their hometowns and their country with their own American identity. As contemporaries, they were educated at public schools, witnessed the same national events, and consumed the same popular culture. But Roth had to distance himself from the immigrant past of his Jewish forbears to feel American, whereas Updike’s small-town Protestantism made him feel right at home in middle America.

Keywords: Philip Roth, John Updike, Memory, Childhood, American Identity, Journey

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Land of Disenchantment: Sites of Controversies and the Visual Cultures of Memory and Belonging in Contemporary New Mexico: Three Case Studies

While the tourism industry still cherishes New Mexico's tri-cultural myth, which focuses on the exotic constituents of the state's Native American, Hispanic/Hispano and Anglo-American heritage that have shaped its collective image of a land of enchantment, the actual realities that define the politics of identity and remembering in contemporary New Mexico can be described as more contested.

Taking the re-ignited academic debate on Kenneth Adams' *Three Peoples Murals* at the University of New Mexico as a recent example of how the tri-cultural myth has once again become subject to criticism and de-mystification, this paper will cover the controversies surrounding the politics of belonging and commemoration of three New Mexican sites of memory: 1) The protests prior to the 2018 Santa Fe Fiesta, which revolved around the re-enactment of the Entrada; 2) Chris Eyre's forthcoming *Statues against U.S.* project as a contemporary response to the 1997 Oñate Cuatrocenenario monumental dispute; and 3) the *Our Lady* controversy in the aftermath of the exhibition of Alma López's revisionary cyber interpretation of the Virgin of Guadalupe in 2001.

By focusing on examples taken from Santa Fe's festive culture, community protest directed at an equestrian statue erected to commemorate a key figure in the collective memory of the Hispano Upper Rio Grande Valley, and one of the state's most heated art controversies, I will present a comparative reading of three New Mexican sites of memory, which have not only deconstructed former ideologies of the tri-cultural myth, but have also sparked ongoing debates about the politics of identity and belonging over a period of decades. This analysis therefore aims to transcend the specific local/regional frameworks out of which the controversies emerged by focusing on their present-day legacies in terms of ethnicity, heritage and memory in New Mexico, from a decisively transcultural/transnational point of view.

Keywords: Land of (Dis)Enchantment, Tri-Cultural Myth, Sites of Memory, New Western Histories, Transnational American Studies

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Natasha Trethewey's Poetic Palimpsests: Poetry as Monument for Private and Public Racial History

Natasha Trethewey, the US Poet Laureate in both 2012 and 2014, has published multiple collections of poetry and non-fiction. Her 2006 collection *Native Guard* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 2007. Trethewey's latest collection, *2018's Monument: New and Selected Poems*, invites readers to participate in the palimpsest of racial history. For Trethewey, this history is personal: in some poems, such as "Duty" for example, she indicts her white father for overwriting her African American mother's (and by extension, part of her) story. In this poem, the narrator says of her father: "What/can I do but this? Let him/tell it again and again as if/it's always been only us." However, Trethewey also speaks for the histories of those who have not been adequately memorialized such as the Mississippi Native Guards—the focus of the collection of the same name—former slaves who fought against the Confederacy but who have also been "overwritten" by memorials to their white counterparts.

Using visual inspirations (paintings, photographs, tombstones, texts), Trethewey's often ekphrastic poems both comment upon the necessity, and typically the inadequacy, of the visual to commemorate and legitimate the life and death of a person or event. However, Trethewey's poems also make clear the deceptions of these temporal "monuments" as she identifies the multiplicity of identities in any single representation. Her attempts to convey these complex and layered racial memories interrogates both the national impetus to commemorate, as well as the inherent difficulty in conveying any history so steeped in the divergent complexities of racial misinterpretations.

Keywords: Natasha Trethewey, Poetry, Racial History, Palimpsest, Native Guard

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Native Americans in Monumental Museums

"We've been trying to educate the visitors for five hundred years; how long will it take to educate the visitors?"

Native elder when asked to consult on the National Museum of the American Indian

Why do museums exist? In this talk, I argue that they tell a story to the dominant population of a nation—"the visitors"—about who they are. Museums convey a national identity, allowing the members in a state society not only to better know their collective identity, but given the monumental architecture of museum structures and the omniscient curatorial voice, to celebrate that ethno-national identity. Museums are temples of the national state, enshrining a national *we*. Among the initial acts of newly formed states is often the erection of a national museum. Ethnographic artifacts have been central to defining a white American national identity by voyeuristically exhibiting who they are not. In the case of American Native peoples, violent and violating settler colonialism facilitated the accumulation of museum collections that remain today.

In US museums of 2019, how are Indigenous objects and peoples represented? How are museums addressing the colonial legacies that live on within their halls and objects? Is there an embedded threat to national identity that has made it difficult for museums to openly acknowledge the colonial processes responsible for their collections? While indigenous erasure in national museums occurs worldwide, this talk focuses on institutions in the American Northeast, including two Ivy League university ethnographic museums, the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and the Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC and New York.

Keywords: Museum, Indigenous, Colonialism, Nation, Identity

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The 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition and the Woman's Building as a Venue for Women's Creativity and Visibility

The 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, with its classical and state-of-the-art architecture, farm machinery, torpedo ships, ragtime music, and carnival rides attracted over twenty-seven million visitors. A particularly interesting exposition site was the Woman's Building, which exhibited the artistic, scientific and literary creations of women from both the United States and different countries all over the world. Sophie Hayden, a young female architect, designed the Woman's Building in Italian Renaissance style and won the design competition organized by the Board of Lady Managers, which allowed her to implement her project. The building soon became a target of harsh criticism, especially from male architects, who thought the design was too feminine, or in their words, "light and gay."

As this paper will explore, along with philanthropists, clubwomen, temperance advocates, settlement workers, suffragists, college-educated artists, and writers, the Board of Lady Managers fought a battle to make their work more visible at this huge event. While the exposition represented a turning point in American history, transforming the era from one of nation-building to empire-building, the organized efforts of these women, spearheaded by the Board of Lady Managers, helped them form a sense of gender solidarity—a "united womanhood," or sisterhood, which would eventually advance these women's position in the public sphere where they would challenge the male dominance.

Keywords: 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, Woman's Building, Board of Lady Managers

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The Female Body as Memorabilia: Construction of Female Spectatorship in *Love 'em and Leave 'em*

This paper analyzes the objectification and commodification of the female body, the male gaze, and the construction of female spectatorship in the American silent movie *Love 'em and Leave 'em* (1926). Directed by Frank Tuttle, the movie features a spectacle of a woman's legs, in silky, transparent stockings, in high-heeled shoes. The first scene positions the beautiful legs of one of its female protagonists and prompts the question of whether or not the objectification of attractive female legs—in this case in almost monumental proportions—deprives women of their subjectivity by turning them into mere commodities.

However, the critical stance the movie assumes is a parody of the male gaze, rather than a simple presentation of stereotypical gender roles. While reframing traditional gender norms in a performance of parody, the movie also dismantles what critic Laura Mulvey calls *a hermetically sealed world*, which plays on voyeuristic fantasies of the spectator. Thus, it also goes a step further by constructing a novel sphere for its spectators, in particular, female spectators, where they observe distinct representations of the female body. Conjuring up a novel perceptual sphere in which the spectator views the female body through a critical light, *Love 'em and Leave 'em* relocates the spectator's perception in relation to multifarious questions it poses, rather than serving male fantasies.

Keywords: Female Body, Female Spectatorship, Commodification, Gender Roles, Male Gaze, *Love 'em and Leave 'em*

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Memory Preservation and Traumatic Commemoration in Jonathan Safran Foer’s *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* and Orhan Pamuk’s *The Museum of Innocence*

This presentation discusses traumatized people’s coping mechanisms and the workings of obsessive memory as a response to death in Jonathan Safran Foer’s *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* and Orhan Pamuk’s *The Museum of Innocence*. Foer’s novel reflects the 9/11 attacks through the eyes of a child who struggles to reinterpret his father’s death. Oskar Schell embraces his father’s legacy: a detective game, ideas, habits, clothes, voice messages, and a key. Pamuk’s novel chronicles an era that spans his beloved’s life and death, along with socio-economic transformations and political turmoil. Kemal’s exhibition of love and obsession suggests that even trivial objects can evoke reveries of the past and emerge as substitutes to fill loss and absence in one’s life.

As this paper will argue, these works suggest that possessive and obsessive memory can respond to death through the creation of shrines. Such efforts to create monuments to the dead can maintain balance and sanity in the face of sudden loss and the absence of logic and meaning-making. The intensity of trauma and the accumulation of objects and stories can cause constant pain and gradual consolation. In these novels, the protagonists collect symbols of lost love and affection in their efforts to reconnect to the idealized past. Their personal collections and journeys enable them to tell their stories and even temporarily live in the remembered past. In this way, they transform complex and immaterial memories and loss into tangible objects and shareable stories.

Keywords: Memory Preservation, Commemoration, Trauma, Obsession, Death

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Disneyland: A Monument of the American Way of Life

Advocates of Disneyland claim that it is a monument of American culture. A vast portion of American population, if not all, "freely" participates in what Disneyland provides and is treated "equally" in the park. Although Disneyland is separate from the outside world, it is a place that truly realizes American culture. While the Giza Pyramids and Karnak Temples in Egypt, the Roman Forum, and the Notre-Dame Cathedral and Versailles Palace are monuments constructed to symbolize the authority and glory of rulers, empires, and churches, Disneyland is a monument constructed for the pleasure of ordinary people. In fact, Walt Disney wanted to build "the happiest place in the world" for all Americans.

To understand the United States and Americans, a historian suggests, one should start from Disneyland, because the park is a museum where American history and symbols are kept alive. In brief, Disneyland is the embodiment of the American way of life. This statement appears self-evident, but appearances are deceptive: the American way of life could refer to diametrically different things. While for some the American lifestyle means positive values such as freedom, equality, diversity and solidarity, for others it means commercialism, racism, and (cultural) imperialism. Thus for its supporters, Disneyland is a utopia on earth symbolizing the US, whereas for its critics, the park is a dystopia embodying all of America's problems.

Keywords: Disneyland, Walt Disney, Utopia, Dystopia, American Lifestyle

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Anne Frank's Commodification in Philip Roth's *The Ghost Writer*

Philip Roth is one of the most distinctive writers of modern Jewish American literature of the twentieth century. However, unlike traditional Jewish writers in America, he overlooks the themes of anti-Semitism, Judaism and Jewish politics as a member of second-generation Jewish writers like Saul Bellow and Bernard Malamud. *The Ghost Writer*, the first novel narrated by the protagonist Nathan Zuckerman, one of the Roth's alter egos, is different. Zuckerman is a young and ambitious author who spends a night at the home of his idol, writer E.I. Lonoff. Amy Bellette, one of Lonoff's students, visits his home, and Zuckerman begins to suspect that she may be Anne Frank living in the United States after having survived the Holocaust. Moreover, he even fantasizes about marrying her. By doing so, Roth and his alter ego Zuckerman legitimize the Holocaust while claiming a Jewish consciousness in America.

The novel's year of publication, 1979, is important because it was the year after Holocaust's "arrival" in the United States. In 1978, public figures, such as Henry Greenspan, appeared on television to discuss the Holocaust and plans for the US Holocaust Museum were made. Around this time, Anne Frank also became a Jewish saint, an innocent symbol of the Holocaust. Yet, as this paper will ask, was Anne Frank sanctified or abused, exploited, and commodified in Roth's novel?

Keywords: Anne Frank, Commodification, Nathan Zuckerman, Philip Roth, *The Ghost Writer*

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Seeking Justice through Civil War: “Records of Irish-American Patriotism” as an Alternative Archive

During the course of the Civil War, the *Pilot*, an ethnic newspaper for the Irish Catholic published in Boston, minimized its formerly dominant religious concerns, instead becoming an instrument to prove the loyalty of Irish citizens and immigrants to the Union. During this period, the paper created a counter-archive to the hegemonical state archives as it was aware of the state’s power to write history through the means of script, erasure, and the application of selective memory in the service of its institutions. Therefore, the *Pilot* aimed to regulate the creation of an American identity and a patriotic memory of the Civil War that would accelerate the inclusion of the Irish into the American nation.

To this end, “Records of Irish-American Patriotism” was published weekly from 1862 to 1866 and documented the heroic acts of the Irish Brigade and Irish American soldiers, thereby creating an alternative archive, or a collection of memories and news articles proving the entrenched attachment of the Irish to the American nation. As this paper will argue, with the publication of this series, Laffan, the author, established a memory of patriotic Irish Americans whose sacrifices contributed to the Union cause. Emancipation, along with the creation of racial discourse and the articulation of whiteness in the news articles, further supported the *Pilot*’s role as an alternative archive because it is through the authority of whiteness that the *Pilot* attained its powerful voice as a counter-archive to nativist amnesia. This paper will also analyze the *Pilot*’s attempts to create the image of loyal Irish Americans by highlighting the value of the Irish as soldiers and citizens through commemoration on its pages.

Keywords: Irish Americans, *Pilot*, Nationalism, Civil War, Whiteness, Archive

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**The (De)Construction of American Masculinity Through Vietnam Veterans Memorial in
Bobbie Ann Mason's *In Country* (1985)**

The Vietnam War is an exception in the “heroic” history of American warfare. While it was an opportunity for the United States to intervene in the expansion of communism in the world, and to continue the implementation of the containment policy, the war lasted longer than expected, and the image of the American soldier changed both in the homeland and in Vietnam. As the main actors of this war, American soldiers experienced a masculinity crisis as they questioned necessity of the war. Far from being seen as heroes, they were perceived as “murderers,” even though they were simply following the commands of senior officers. For many Vietnam veterans, this accusation resulted in self-questioning and self-blame.

As this paper will explore, Emmett Smith in Bobbie Ann Mason's *In Country* (1985) is one example of a Vietnam veteran who questioned the cruelty and necessity of war and how it relates to hegemonic masculinity and its emphasis on strength, toughness and obedience to military authority. In the novel, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial plays a huge role in this changing masculinity, contributing to Emmett's breaking point as a man and a war veteran.

Keywords: Vietnam War, Masculinity, Monument, Patriotism, *In Country*

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The Removal of the Confederate Past: Erasing History or an Invitation for a New Future?

In 2017, a controversial movement reverberated across the United States that involved the removal of a series of Confederate monuments from public display. The movement met with various responses from different segments of society. While some stated that it was a belated action that was finally removing a great stain on the American conscience, others interpreted it as the erasure of part of the nation’s memory. Clearly, these disparate reactions illustrate that historic monuments matter not because they are reminders of some historical person or event, but because they are references to a present fact. In other words, they are different versions of a contested reality.

The general opinion so far has been that the Confederate monuments displayed in public spaces represent some sort of reconciliation between the North and the South. However, others point to the basic fallacy of this argument: the monuments may represent a reconciliation between the belligerent parties, but they are not symbols of repentance for slavery, the main cause of the Civil War. Thus, the removal of monuments assumes a different significance as the act proves that monuments are not static in meaning. Rather, they are actors in ongoing political conflicts. The problem is that monuments carry associations, and associations matter. Therefore, the controversy over the removal was not simply about the erasure of historical facts, which are very carefully preserved, amply depicted, and documented elsewhere, especially in written and visual forms. Monuments are about ownership: that is, about forms of possession, not over the public space upon which they stand, but on the shared (future) reality of public spaces. As Jane Dailey observes, “Most of the people who were involved in erecting the monuments were not necessarily erecting a monument to the past, but were rather erecting them toward a white supremacist future.” As this paper will discuss, the removal of Confederate statues unearthed one of the most significant fault lines in American society: race. This presentation will also comment on how the removal of monuments has also been experienced in Russia, Iraq, Ireland, Spain, England and Turkey.

Keywords: Civil War, Confederate Statues, Monuments, National Memory, Racism

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The City as a Museum in Jonathan Lethem's *Fortress of Solitude*

Jonathan Lethem's 2003 novel *The Fortress of Solitude*, the first part of which is set in the pre-gentrified Brooklyn of the 1970s, addresses the question of racial identity, depicting the development of a white boy, Dylan Ebdus, against the background of his exclusively black neighborhood. Interestingly, the protagonist's evolving sense of self is narrated in the novel via representations of visual art. The abstract paintings created by Dylan's father, Abraham, that adorn the walls of their brownstone are juxtaposed with graffiti created by Dylan and his black friend, Mingus Rude, within the cityscape. In my paper, I wish to situate the depiction of both types of art—abstract painting and graffiti art—within the context of individual and communal identity formation, arguing that the brownstone's walls and the public spaces covered with graffiti function as a contact-zone museum where black and white cultures meet and clash—a museum that offers the reader insight into the complexity of black-white relations in New York in the second half of the twentieth century.

Keywords: Jonathan Lethem, *The Fortress of Solitude*, Graffiti Art, Brooklyn, Race Relations

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***The Spoils of Poynton* by Henry James: The Monumental House and a Contradictory Discourse on Popular Memory**

According to John R. Gillis, elite memory differs from popular memory in the way it concretizes time as a unit of distinct boundaries with a definite past and a well-defined future. Rather than offering definite boundaries, popular memory consists of peaks as central commemorative moments in history. Henry James's *The Spoils of Poynton* constructs a discourse on popular memory by drawing on the metaphor of a house, Poynton, which contains an invaluable collection of antiques gathered from different parts of Europe at different times by the protagonist, Mrs Gereth, and her deceased husband. Although there is no temporal or spatial consistency among the items, they form a constructed unity within the house. Some central pieces of the collection, such as the Maltese cross, strengthen the novel's depiction of popular memory as an entity with peaks as commemorative events.

At the end of the novel, Poynton is totally consumed by a fire. However, the novel's configuration of popular memory is further emphasized when the fire occurs at the moment at which the Maltese cross is being removed from the house. The removal of this symbolic item refers to the disruption of a centrality crucial to the construction of popular memory. However, the novel's discourse on popular memory is contradictory, since all the items that create this popularity are valuable and rare antiques. As this paper will discuss, this parallels Gillis's claim that popular memory is a construct relying on "the preserve of elite males."

Keywords: Henry James, *The Spoils of Poynton*, Monument, House, Memory, History

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Troubling Memories? German American Museums and the Representation of the Two World Wars

This paper examines the representation of the first and second world wars at four German American heritage museums: the German-American Heritage Museum of the USA in Washington, D.C., the DANK Haus German American Cultural Center in Chicago (IL), the German American Heritage Center in Davenport (IA), and the German Heritage Museum in Cincinnati (OH). By investigating the discursive strategies at work in the permanent and temporary exhibitions at these museums with regard to the two world wars, the paper aims to shed light on the commonalities and differences in the representational politics of the four museums.

Keywords: Museums, German American, Ethnicity, Politics of Commemoration, Holocaust Remembrance, Cultural Heritage Sites

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Commemorating the Past, Healing the Present, Working for the Future: The National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama

In April 2018, a new milestone in the presentation of American cultural heritage opened in Montgomery, Alabama: *The National Memorial for Peace and Justice*, founded by the non-profit organization Equal Justice Initiative. In a memorial landscape widely dominated by the heritage of the Confederacy in the American South, this memorial sticks out: both by its clear intention to confront the destructive legacy of almost 4,400 lynchings which took place in the United States between 1877 and 1950, and by its exceptional design and pedagogical concept. The memorial consists of two parts. The first is permanently installed in an open-sided pavilion on a hill overlooking downtown Montgomery. More than 800 steles, one for each county where a lynching took place, represent the victims. The standing six-foot-tall rusted steles recall graveyard headstones; but some of them gradually lift from the ground, evoking the sight of hanging bodies. While the memorial aesthetics are powerful, the interactive component is most striking: outside the pavilion, duplicates are waiting to be claimed by the counties where the lynchings took place, which envisions a commemoration process yet to come. Thus, this memorial is directed towards the past, the present, and the future, as it incorporates a vision of a more inclusive and just national identity based on the acknowledgment of its history of racial violence and injustice.

While this memorial is stylistically influenced by Peter Eisenman's *Holocaust Memorial* in Berlin (2005), it also shares conceptual similarities with Gunther Demnig's *Stumbling Blocks*. Demnig's small markers in the pavement are more modest in size than the steles in Alabama, but since the 1990s it has developed into one of the most popular European memorial commemorating Nazi victims. Both memorials convey the same message: that coming to terms with a shameful past needs active involvement from interested citizens as well as public manifestations. In our presentation, we will embed the memorial in the spatial memorial context of Alabama and the American memorial tradition, analyze its design, and discuss its pedagogical concept using Anja Piontek's *Museum und Partizipation* (2017).

Keywords: Memorial, Monument, American South, Lynching, African American History

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Preserving, Remembering, and Commemorating the Italian American Experience in Chicago

A large number of Italian immigrants—mostly illiterate and poorly skilled workers—settled in Chicago between the second half of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century. By 1920, Chicago had the third largest Italian population in the United States, surpassed only by New York and Philadelphia. During Prohibition, the city became infamous for Al Capone's underworld operations, which severely damaged the reputation of all Italian Americans and contributed to preexisting ethnic tensions and racial hostility.

In the post-WWII era, subsequent waves of Italian immigration followed. However, these new settlers were more educated and endowed with both entrepreneurial talents and the will to challenge stereotypical, biased or distorted perceptions of their compatriots already living in America. As this paper will explore, starting in the 1980s and 1990s, the Italian American community in Chicago has promoted a series of initiatives aimed at remembering the past—both collective and individual—and highlighting the valuable contribution that citizens of Italian origin have made to the United States. The activities of *Casa Italia*, a center established in 1998 to preserve and promote the Italian American culture in Chicago, as well as the work of Chicago-based historian Dominic Candeloro, will be the subject of this investigation. Special emphasis will be placed on the "Italians in Chicago Exhibit," which includes photos, memorabilia and 113 oral history tapes, and on the "Italian-American Veterans Museum," which has drawn attention to the pivotal role played by Italian Americans during the Second World War.

Keywords: *Casa Italia*, Chicago, Dominic Candeloro, Italian Americans, Museums

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Imagining Tombstone: Hollywood, Historicity, and the Construction of a Usable Past

In the early 1880s, Tombstone, Arizona, became the fastest-growing silver-mining town in the American West, luring thousands to its camp with hopes of a better future. Two years after its founding, a thirty-second street fight went on to define Tombstone and its history long after the town's last piece of silver was taken from its mines. Today, Tombstone attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, hoping to recapture the wildness of its heyday, catch a glimpse of townspeople dressed as Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday, and explore modern-day Tombstone through the lens of its carefully abstracted history. Tourist expectations of Tombstone have been cultivated through a stream of Hollywood films and television series, history and legend, without which Tombstone would have become just another ghost town.

Negotiating authenticity and economic exigencies, restoration and preservation efforts in Tombstone have been a concerted effort by civic boosters, wealthy outsiders, street performers, Hollywood imaginings, and tourism—the single biggest industry in town. This presentation explores how Hollywood, the concepts of history and authenticity, preservation, and performance interact in Tombstone. This paper demonstrates that Tombstone's present and future rest not solely on a “usable past” but on a wide variety of avenues of sustainability that have earned Tombstone the reputation as “The Town too Tough to Die.” We can better understand the significance of the mythic West to American national identity by exploring the ways Tombstone has self-commodified; the symbiosis between Tombstone and Hollywood; and the ways Tombstone, Wyatt Earp, and the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral continue to resonate with audiences and consumers in the United States and around the world.

Keywords: Preservation, Authenticity, American West, Public History, Cultural Heritage, Tombstone

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Cartooning Fallen Towers: Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers*

In the Shadow of No Towers (2004) is Art Spiegelman's response to the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001. With a black cover featuring barely noticeable drawings of the fallen towers, the materiality of the large hard cardboard book is a funerary tribute to the fallen towers, which have, in fact, acquired several symbolical meanings since the tragic event. The book consists of twenty pages: the first ten pages are set after the attacks on 9/11, while the other ten consist of comics depicting life in the first two decades of the twentieth century (1900-1920). In this manner, Spiegelman links his drawings and narration to earlier comics sequences.

The attacks on 9/11 shocked Spiegelman on a very personal level. His panels reveal his traumatic anxieties with respect to his parents' Holocaust experience, making him remember his father's advice that he should always keep his bags packed to be able to run away. His concern for his children, who were at school at the World Trade Center on that day, disorients him and drives him to the brink of a nervous breakdown.

Since *No Towers* is a story told with pictures in the format of a comic book, the memorialization of the towers acquires several new meanings. Originally associated with the superhero comics of the 1930s, this genre presents a unique way of narrating traumatic incidents and the self-referential responses connected to it. Cartooning emphasizes details in a way that prose narratives or even photography cannot. Thus, recreating the fall of the monumental towers and its associated incidents through cartoons becomes a way of coping with trauma on the personal and collective levels. Spiegelman's cartoon panels in *No Towers* also run against the dominant narratives of the event, which are often laced with national discourses. Instead of reinforcing homeland security concerns and the common enemy, his 9/11 panels focus on the autobiographical responses of the narrator avatar, thereby creating a counter-memorial for the fallen towers.

Keywords: Art Spiegelman, Comics, World Trade Center, 9/11, Trauma

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A Double Retrospective: Baldwin Looking Back in the 1980s; Looking at Baldwin Now

James Baldwin was involved with the Civil Rights Movement in many of its diverse manifestations as *The Fire Next Time* (1963) testifies. During his lifetime, he was one of the most intelligently and prophetically outspoken witnesses, recording his thoughts in his essays and responding to issues publicly on television. My focus for this paper is the 1980s, for my purpose is to explore a James Baldwin who looks back. Baldwin’s journalistic attempt, *The Evidence of Things Not Seen*, published in 1985, two years before his death, responds to what is popularly known as the Atlanta Child Murders of the late 1970s and early 1980s. The case was closed, leaving the local people with a sense of injustice. Baldwin conjectures about “the evidence of things not seen”; what, to him, lies behind the court resolution. In this captivating inner monologue, he gives an indirect answer by looking back, retrospectively, at slavery and the colonial West, to the 1960s, to his own past, and to his present—the 1980s—a time when right-wing politics had claimed ground. The final turn I take in dealing with *The Evidence of Things Not Seen* is the recent scholarly and popular interest in Baldwin’s work and personality. I will end with an analysis of the ways in which James Baldwin and his work is currently remembered and memorialized, which is related to the ways in which the Civil Rights Movement is remembered and memorialized.

Keywords: James Baldwin, *The Evidence of Things Not Seen*, Civil Rights Movement, African Americans, 1980s

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The Arches National Monument: Edward Abbey's Aesthetics of Place

"Ranger, where is Arches National Monument?"
"I don't know, sir, but I can tell you where it was."

Edward Abbey

It has been fifty years since Edward Abbey, the author of the American southwest known for his anarchist political views, wrote his masterpiece *Desert Solitaire: A Season in the Wilderness* (1968), an autobiographical work which is now a nature classic. The topography of *Desert Solitaire* is as large as the Colorado Plateau, but Abbey's sense of place is rooted in the "Arches National Monument" (now Arches National Park), which houses more than two thousand natural sandstone arches. Abbey's writing reveals that after three seasons spent as a park ranger at the Arches National Monument, his conservational philosophy achieved maturity. Through the Arches National Monument—located twenty miles from Moab, Utah—which has fascinating geologic features, including spectacular sunsets/sunrises over red sandstone, Abbey developed a new approach for the conservation of the last unspoiled lands. Consequently, the Arches are still a reminder of the destruction of Glen Canyon, and still trigger the call to its future restoration.

Fifty years ago, Abbey wrote, "It will be objected that the book (*Desert Solitaire*) deals too much with mere appearances, with the surface of things, and fails to engage and reveal the patterns of unifying relationships which form the true underlying reality of existence." This presentation, via the red rock canyonlands, will explore Abbey's "patterns of unifying relationships" and his aesthetics of place, while drawing attention to the old American West before its best parts were transformed into highways and massive dams. The paper will also touch upon the Glen Canyon Dam and Lake Powell controversy and explore the role of Abbey's nature writing in shaping public discourse.

Keywords: Arches National Monument, Edward Abbey, Aesthetics, Place, *Desert Solitaire*

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Turkish Festivals in the United States as a Form of Commemorating and Preserving Turkish and American Identities

There are about almost 500,000 Turks living in the United States. Turkish Americans are significantly different from the Turkish migrants in other countries in terms of their history of migration, educational background, socioeconomic status, levels of integration, and adaptation to the host country. However, our knowledge about their adaptation, integration, and assimilation processes is limited.

A survey conducted by the author has shown that the majority of the respondents who call themselves Turkish Americans value their Turkish identity very strongly. Without falling into the traps of ethnic and identity politics, they revise, rewrite, reenact and recreate what they (mis)remember. They strive to overcome unintentional forgetting and avoid cultural amnesia. However, while they celebrate their American identity, they also stress their Turkish identity and combine them publicly through annual Turkish festivals and parades in large cities such as Seattle, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, New York and Washington, DC. Some of the festivals last almost a month, attract hundred thousands of Americans, and convince participants, once again, that American identity is an amalgamation of cultures and that diversity is richness. These events are organized and sponsored by Turkish American associations that emphasize the value of adaptation and integration of Turkish Americans into American society.

This paper will focus on how Turkish Americans employ Turkish festivals and parades to commemorate and preserve their Turkish and American identities.

Keywords: Turkish Americans, Turkish Festivals, Turkish American Associations, Adaptation, Integration

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The Museum of Jurassic Technology: A Postmodern American Space of Enlightenment and Entertainment

The Museum of Jurassic Technology, located in Los Angeles, California, is one of the weirdest, yet thought provoking, museums in the world. Visitors encounter objects mainly taken from nature, science and art, clearly labeled and explained with Latin terminology and detailed scholarly descriptions, which, at second glance, invite the questioning of reality, actuality, and plausibility, as well as history, science, art, culture, and ultimately, the museum as a concept.

The oxymoronic name of the museum is puzzling, for the Jurassic period is obviously not known for its technology. However, the museum, according to the audiovisual on display at the entrance of the halls, claims to be “an educational institution dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and the public appreciation of the Lower Jurassic.” The museum looks like a typical museum: banners, signs with gilded letters, polite reminders concerning museum etiquette, thematically-curated exhibit halls with subdued lightning and glass showcases, velvet display cloths, microscopes, explanatory labels, diagrams, catalogues, apology cards for temporarily missing objects, and a museum shop. The top floor hosts a dove garden where visitors can either freshen-up or reevaluate their recent museum experience as they enjoy drinking tea and listening to live nyckelharpa or accordion music performed by David Wilson, the founder and director of the museum.

As this paper will argue, despite the fact that the Museum of Jurassic Technology satisfies conventional stylistic expectations, it is subversive, blurry, amusing, and tricky. A postmodern space which displays the merging of subjective and objective knowledge, it transforms ephemeral artifacts into valuable sources of American history, science, art, and culture, blurring the line between entertainment and enlightenment.

Keywords: The Museum of Jurassic Technology, David Wilson, American Culture, Museum Studies, Postmodernity

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Reimagining the Skyline: 9/11 in Poetry

The collapse of the Twin Towers during the 9/11 attacks seems to have mutilated the Manhattan skyline forever. While news channels played the videos of the towers collapsing on loop, Hollywood was erasing anything that would remind people of the event and affect the movie ticket sales. The overuse and/or absence of such visual displays cultivated responses in other mediums, especially in poetry. Jenny Holzer's "For Seven World Trade" is one of the frequently documented responses to how poetry can be used as a means of healing; specifically, how poetry can itself be a monument, transgressing the limits of words and landscapes. Similarly, the traumatic events of September 11 and the destruction of the Twin Towers have been used in 9/11 poems as a means of confronting trauma rather than exploiting or escaping it.

As this paper will argue, the poems written as response to the events of the September 11 terrorist attacks can be regarded not only as a way of documenting its events, but also as acts of reimagining the skyline. These poetic responses also function as commemorative spaces which reproduce the experience of 9/11 by using striking visual images. In other words, these poems are monuments that register the traumatic events while, at the same time, acting as a medium for healing. This paper will focus on the poetic responses to the collapsing of the Twin Towers, and the ways in which the buildings are symbolically rebuilt in poetry as an act of commemoration.

Keywords: September 11, Twin Towers, Poetry, Manhattan, Commemoration, Monument

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“Strange Fruit Hanging from the Poplar Trees”: The Lynching Memorial and Lynching in the United States

Popularized in both music and literature, “Strange Fruit” is an image of the lynched bodies of African Americans hanging from trees in the South. “Southern trees bear strange fruit/Blood on the leaves and at the root/Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze/Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees...” go the lyrics of the song “Strange Fruit” which Billie Holiday first performed with extraordinary courage at the Café Society in 1939. The song lyrics were written by Abel Meeropol, a white Jewish schoolteacher from New York City who was disgusted with the lynchings in the South and sought to protest it through words. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, African Americans were the main targets, and often the innocent victims, of these atrocious crimes. Unlike hanging, lynching meant that the murders were committed by a mob without testimony, juries, or evidence. Since the mob, often backed by members of the Ku Klux Klan, served as prosecutor, judge, and executioner, the victim’s guilt or innocence was of no importance.

This paper will look at the history of lynching, the reasons behind it, and literary representations of lynching while connecting it to contemporary representations, such as the Lynching Memorial and Legacy Museum, which opened on April 26, 2018 in Montgomery, Alabama. The “National Memorial for Peace and Justice” is dedicated to the thousands of black victims of American white supremacy. A group of lawyers spent years researching in archives and libraries to document the thousands of lynchings which prompted Ida B. Wells, the African American journalist who launched an anti-lynching campaign in the late nineteenth century, to call “a disgrace to the civilization of the United States.” Unfortunately, the Black Lives Matter Movement in our time indicates that such crimes have not ended.

Keywords: “Strange Fruit,” African Americans, Lynching, National Memorial for Peace and Justice, Black Lives Matter Movement

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Culinary Commemoration: Constructing and Preserving American History and Identity through Food Museums

Food museums have existed for decades, but are increasing in popularity in the United States and globally, both as places to visit and as venues of study. This is connected to the growing food heritage movement, as well as to the expanding interest in the culinary arts through gastro-tourism, food writing, food blogs and apps, television shows and channels devoted to food, magazines, and cookbooks; the push towards *conscious* consumption; the spread of the "foodie" lifestyle; and the mounting awareness of the provenance of American cuisine. As Ruth Reichl conveys in *Eating Words: A Norton Anthology of Food Writing*, "the less we cook, the more we read about food," as if "we are desperate to reconnect in the only way we can." However, members of the food heritage movement maintain that there is much more at stake than simply reconnecting. They believe that as America severs its ties to the foodways of the past, it also loses an irretrievable part of its cultural history and identity. Thus, food heritage movement members maintain that honoring American foodways is a way of preserving "tradition" for future generations.

As this paper will argue, in the United States, food museums play a significant role in the preservation of American culinary culture and history by emphasizing the origins of the products consumed; the objects, rituals, and sites of food and drink cultivation, preparation, and presentation; and the places where food is sold and eaten. Such food museums encourage direct visitor participation, including tasting and purchasing what is on display, and immersion in American foodways through hands-on activities. However, as this paper will also explore, food museums are problematic in numerous ways, particularly when it comes to constructing and preserving specific *kinds* of American identities. Consequently, they have been accused of commodifying American foodways, commercializing their products, and museumifying their participants, even engaging in historical nostalgia, amnesia, and erasure, especially with respect to race, class, gender, and culture.

Keywords: Food, Museums, United States, Identity, Commemoration

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Verbal and Visual Intrusions in Poe's "The Oval Portrait"

Edgar Allan Poe's "The Oval Portrait" problematizes representation through its verbal frames—e.g., the description of a painting in a book embedded in an unnamed narrator's story— as well as visual frames, especially with respect to the paintings on the walls of the story's chateau. This ekphrastic story, which consists of two verbal representations of a woman's portrait, displays the paragon between the so-called sister arts, the word and the image: while the art work is silent and still, the literary work involves eloquence and action.

W.J.T. Mitchell enlarges this binary opposition in ekphrasis with respect to gender roles: the female image is objectified and gazed at, while the male author/narrator/artist is the subject and the gazer. In Poe's story, the painter's process of creation draws life from his silenced wife, and as soon as this magical portrait is finished, she dies. The fact that the narration ends with this frame within the narrator's story implies the possible death of the narrator as well. Hence, the birth of visual and verbal representation is at the cost of the female model and the male narrator. This paper, then, will discuss how the two narrative frames in Poe's "The Oval Portrait" contribute to one another with respect to the characteristics of ekphrasis.

Keywords: Edgar Allan Poe, "The Oval Portrait," Ekphrasis, Gender, Frame Narrative

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“Tear it Down, Tear it Down:” Does *Silent Sam* Speak for Civil War Memory?

The American Civil War ended *seven scores and thirteen years ago*. However, the war, fought on battlefields as well as on the home front, still lies at the heart of the story of Americans, with an ongoing struggle over the collective memory of the event. In recent years, there has been an increase in confrontations with the sectional/racist past of American universities, and various student/alumni organizations have even put pressure on decision makers to rescind honorary awards and to remove emblems, logos, statues, and other monuments celebrating the Confederate legacy, or as they see it white supremacist heritage, on campuses. This has prompted others to become self-acclaimed guardians of Confederate symbolism.

Silent Sam, the eight-foot bronze statue which, until recently, stood at the main entrance of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is one of the most controversial of these racist artefacts. Erected in 1913 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the armed young Confederate student-soldier tore the campus apart for almost a century and was finally was toppled in 2018 by “Tar Heel” students chanting “tear it down.” The university administration announced that the deposed statue would be placed in a museum to be built just for that purpose.

Focusing on *Silent Sam*, this paper will analyze the making of Civil War memory on American college campuses and the instrumentalization of memorials by different advocacy groups. An examination of the now-*dethroned* monument will show how institutions have celebrated, or confronted, the Confederate past, the legacy of the Civil War, and the issues of racism and white supremacy. *Silent Sam*’s story of glory, followed by collapse, can provide insight into contemporary socio-political developments in the United States, such as the Civil Rights Movement and the evolution of Civil War memory.

Keywords: Silent Sam, Civil War Memory, Monuments, Confederates, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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