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Memorializing 9/11

Absence and Materiality in 9/11 Temporary and Permanent Memorials

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Année académique 2016-2017

Master et finalité
Master en langues et lettres, orientation germaniques, à finalité didactique

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2016-2017

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who participated, directly and indirectly, to the elaboration of my master dissertation.

I would first like to thank my supervisor, Professor Véronique Bragard. Her availability, corrections and advice have permitted me to carry out the present research. Thank you for your implication in my work.

I also wish to thank Manon, Céline and Emilie for taking the time to proofread my work, as well as give me advice on how to improve my piece. Without your participation, my dissertation would not be the way it is.

Thank you to my family for their patience and support throughout my years of study, and through those two years of research and writing. I want to especially thank my mother, my grandparents, my stepfather, my brother Loïc and my godmother for their understanding and their love.

I would also like to acknowledge my amazing friends for their presence and support during the last few years, in particular Manon, Sarah, Marine, Ophélie and Julie. And last but not least, I am extremely grateful to my best friend, Emilie, for her constant presence and emotional support, for believing in me and for encouraging me to push my limits always further.

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Introduction

September 11, 2001, is a day that marked the United States of America forever. The terrorist attacks that targeted the country on that morning have made thousands of casualties, which resulted in a world that felt impacted by those events after having witnessed them on television. Normally, life proceeds from birth to death with humans evolving through all the stages before becoming old and dying. However, when death occurs at a younger age, it is often sudden and unexpected, because it does not correspond to what should normally happen. In the case of 9/11, it was highly emphasized since the victims did not die by accident, instead their loss implied terror. The event was terrifying and it was so violent that it is non representable – which explains why memorials were erected. They serve as a means to mediate the feelings and the anguish that ensue from such events that epitomize the extension of memory and trauma. As claimed by Erika Doss in *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials*, the United States used to be a death-denying society, an attitude that was explained by the fear of the unknown regarding death itself, but also by the possibility of an afterlife.[1] In the course of the 19th century, research in the field of grief has been carried out. It has modified how death is perceived and today, it results in a society that is obsessed with memory and honoring lost citizens. Be they temporary or permanent, memorials thus offer a place to honor the dead, restore the strength of the nation, and mourn. As pointed out by Anders Gustavsson, thanks to memorials, "[…] much of the anguish connected with sudden death is alleviated and replaced with something of a brighter aspect."[2] Memorials serve memory, as they create a physical trace of events that have marked the history of a country, while providing the citizens with a place to remember indefinitely. As opposed to history which is static, memory is in constant evolution, as it depends on the citizens and their needs. Memory has increasingly become more prominent because trauma is a wound that needs to be engaged with and that implies the presence of something physical, for instance memorials and their materiality.

Building on the idea that new rituals have appeared to deal with traumatic events, several questions will be addressed in this master dissertation. How do citizens remember events that

[1] Erika Doss. *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008. Print, p. 28.
[2] Anders Gustavsson. "Rituals around Sudden Death in Recent Years." *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore* 38 (2008): 23-44. Web. 1 July, 2016, p. 41.

have marked them and have left a trace in the history of their nations? Why do they need to build memorials? As will be developed, many factors play a role in the erection of memorials whose materiality entails many symbols related to the feelings expressed by the visitors. What symbolism lies behind the various objects that are brought to the places of commemoration? Of course, even though the objects are typical of temporary memorials, and many permanent memorials contain elements which are similar, it is important to stress that a major shift from monuments to memorials has taken place. Thus, how have monuments and memorials evolved in the course of time? Then, as has been stressed, 9/11 memorials were erected in honor of the victims of the terrorist attacks. It can consequently be wondered how absence and loss are represented in the agency of memorials. An important distinction between the concepts of absence and loss is to be made because they lie at the heart of 9/11: citizens have to deal with the loss of loved ones which is reflected with absence at memorials. Doss claims that "loss connotes destruction and disappearance, whereas absence suggests vacancy and lack, or 'nonpresence' and the anxious possibility of reappearance."[3] Therefore, do memorials put the focus on loss or on absence? Both of them refer to the victims, but also to the Twin Towers that collapsed to dust destroying the buildings and the people who were inside them.

The present research deals with how 9/11 memorials manage to convey absence and remembrance by focusing on three permanent and four temporary memorials. They were chosen according to their location which are the nearest to the various places targeted on that day. Citizens were shocked by this tremendous number of sudden deaths and, as has become common in the recent decades, they have erected temporary memorials in the hours following the terrorist attacks. The ones that appeared in New York, in Shanksville – where United Airlines Flight 93 crashed – and at the Pentagon will be discussed in the dissertation. In addition, the National September 11 Memorial, the Flight 93 National Memorial and the Pentagon Memorial will be analyzed. Most memorials increasingly pay attention to materiality, light, or the contrast between absence and presence – some aspects that will be studied in the present research.

Because of its scale, 9/11 is an event that particularly marked citizens all around the world. Thus, many scholars have studied this topic, as well as some of the memorials. However, much research was conducted for the National September 11 Memorial in New York, as its

[3] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010. Print, p. 45.

design entitled *Reflecting Absence* attracted much attention. As is made clear with its name, it focuses on the absence of the victims, as well as of the towers. Because the victims rest at the Ground Zero site, it has acquired a sacred status, which rendered the rebuilding on the site controversial. Consequently, this master dissertation aims to fill the gap for the other memorials, as well as present a comparison of the various elements that both types of commemoration, i.e. temporary and permanent memorials, have in common. Many authors will be cited to help conduct the research. Among them Erika Doss can be cited, a professor in the Department of American Studies at the University Notre Dame,[4] who has studied several contemporary cultural phenomena in the United States. Her article "The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials: Towards a Theory of Temporary Memorials" (2008) and her book *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (2010) have been inspiring for the elaboration of the present dissertation and shed light on the research detailed in this paper. As she points it out, the phenomenon of "Memorial mania" has appeared in the last century. She claims that "Memorial mania is especially shaped by the affective conditions of public life in America today: by the fevered pitch of public feelings such as grief, gratitude, fear, shame, and anger."[5] Today, those feelings are expressed in public and witnessed at memorials, whereas they used to belong to the private sphere.

The present master dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is more theoretical as it deals with the various elements that influence the erection of memorials. It first focuses on memory and *lieux de mémoire*, a concept developed by Pierre Nora. He explains that "there is no spontaneous memory, that we must deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries, organize celebrations, pronounce eulogies, and notarize bills because such activities no longer occur naturally."[6] Memorials are thus built because we need a physical trace in order to remember and to transmit history to future generations. The second section of Chapter 1 concentrates on the traumatic elements that ensued 9/11. Traumatic events require people to mediate their feelings, which cannot be expressed. Thus, memorials are erected, as they help them in moments of crisis. In addition, as a shift from vertical monuments to memorials as they are built today took place, typical characteristics that imply the physicality of the experience were increasingly acquired. They imply that visitors are encouraged to physically be in contact with memorials since they often touch them. The

[4] http://americanstudies.nd.edu/faculty-and-staff/erika-doss/, accessed on July 20, 2017.
[5] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit.,* p. 2.
[6] Pierre Nora. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations* 26 (1989): 7-24. Web, p. 12.

various elements that constitute memorials will thus be analyzed. They involve the objects, the words and names, symbols and nature. With the help of various examples, it will be explained why it has become common to include these elements in the design of memorials.

In Chapter 2, a description of the different memorials chosen is provided before starting the analysis of the temporary memorials in Chapter 3. Because I was not able to visit the memorials in person, the analysis is based on pictures and videos that were found on the Internet. In addition to that, the research is not exhaustive, as memorials evolve in the course of time, when the objects brought by the visitors fade or when they completely disappear, as it was the case with the various temporary memorials. Their analysis will focus on diverse aspects that include the physicality of the visitors' experience who are invited to be in contact with the memorials, how the individuality of the victims is expressed, the materiality that was brought and what it symbolizes, some messages and the symbol of light. These elements are common to all the temporary memorials that were studied. Furthermore, as mentioned by Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic in *A Place of Remembrance: The Official Book of the National September 11 Memorial*, "the act of memorializing victims, scholar Edward Linenthal has said, is a protest, a way of saying, 'We will not let these dead become faceless and forgotten.' That spirit of remembrance infused the world's immediate response to 9/11."[7] It is consequently not surprising that the temporary places of commemoration were replaced by permanent ones.

Permanent memorials are dealt with in Chapter 4. The first part of the chapter will focus on the symbolic elements that were included in the memorials' designs. It will then be analyzed whether objects and notes, which are similar to the ones of the temporary memorials, are commonly brought to permanent memorials. One can also wonder whether the designs can manage to reflect the individuality of the victims, an element that was deemed important in the case of 9/11 for which many bodies could not be recovered. The last part of Chapter 4 deals with memorials as tourist destinations. Were 9/11 memorials built to meet this purpose? Are the events and their causes explained in the museum? How is the political side of the events addressed? In the last chapter, the elements that are common to temporary and permanent memorials are analyzed. The focus will firstly be laid on the debates that arouse when designing memorials. Then, the absence of the victims and how loss and absence are

[7] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *A Place of Remembrance*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2011. Print, p. 93.

reflected in the design are analyzed. In addition, questions regarding the process of individualization of the victims, the affective impact of the visit, as well as whether memorials only focus on the positive and on the future are addressed.

The aim of the present dissertation is to analyze how, through their agency and design, 9/11 temporary and permanent memorials manage to convey absence and remembrance. They have become a new ritual when citizens suddenly die. It is not always simple to grasp the meanings and symbolism that lie behind the materiality that is brought when citizens visit the place. This aspect will thus be addressed in the paper. Can this materiality help visitors feel close to the victims and ease their grieving? What does this materiality symbolize? Is it necessary to build permanent memorials, or do temporary ones suffice?

Chapter 1: the Importance of Memory and the Evolution of Memorials

As will be developed in the present chapter, the building of monuments and memorials has increasingly become a common practice everywhere in the world. As defined by Judith Dupré, "the former is closely associated with largescale civic works that celebrate a triumphalist history, while the latter speaks to commemorations that are interwoven with death and loss."[8] Their construction can be linked to history, memory, mourning and sometimes to the trauma that develops after tragic death and mainly as a consequence of traumatic events such as World War I and II, as well as terrorist attacks. Ensuing large-scale loss of life, it is thus undeniable that practices of remembering have increased in the last century. As pointed out by Doss, the United States used to be a death-denying society, because of "public anxieties about the finality of fleshly existence and uncertainties about an afterlife, as well as the causal dimensions of tragic and traumatic death."[9] Consequently, "modern Western social and cultural conventions insisted on private and individual forms of grieving,"[10] because citizens were scared to die, and this feeling is all to more emphasized today with those terrorist attacks that can happen anytime. Some research in the field of grief has changed how it is perceived, and it is now acceptable to express this emotion in public. As claimed by Doss, it means that the topic of death used to be considered as being taboo.[11] Death has eventually become more meaningful and it is considered as highly important to honor the memory of the dead. Rieff quotes historian Tsvetan Todorov and mentions that "there is also too much remembering, and in the early 21st century, people throughout the world are, 'obsessed by a new cult, that of memory.'"[12] This obsession can be explained by "the need of human beings for community, already compelling in times of peace and plenty, [that] comes to feel like a psychic and moral necessity in troubled times."[13] In addition, citizens need to remember and create their history to transmit it to the next generations and, as

[8] Judith Dupré. *Monuments: America's History in Art and Memory*. 1st ed. New York: Random House, 2007. Print, p. xii.
[9] Erika Doss. *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials*. *Op. Cit*., p. 28.
[10] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p. 93.
[11] Erika Doss. "Death, Art and Memory in the Public Sphere: The Visual and Material Culture of Grief in Contemporary America." *Mortality* 7.1 (2002): 63-82. Web. 2 Apr. 2016, p. 63.
[12] David Rieff. "When History does more Harm than Good." *The Guardian*. March 22, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/mar/02/cult-of-memory-when-history-does-more-harm-than-good, accessed on March 30, 2016.
[13] *Ibid.*

argued by Nora, "we speak so much of memory, because there is so little of it left."[14] This desire to remember is all the more emphasized when citizens have to deal with traumatic events, whether they are linked to terrorism or not. Numerous temporary and permanent memorials were erected in the United States in the aftermath of 9/11. Likewise, in Europe, several memorials to honor the victims of the various recent terrorist attacks have been and are still being erected, such as in Brussels where a memorial honoring the victims of terrorist attacks has been dedicated on March 22, 2017, the date that marked the one year anniversary of the attacks in Brussels. In this chapter, the focus will be laid on the importance of memory, trauma, mourning and the evolution of monuments towards memorials, as well as the characteristics of contemporary permanent and temporary memorials that will help analyze the memorials chosen for this dissertation. It is essential to grasp those concepts correctly in order to understand why monuments and memorials have acquired a considerable prominence in the last decades.

1.1 Creating Memory

Remembering and trying to make connections with the past and lost citizens of the nation is a practice that has become increasingly common over the years all around the world. In her book entitled *Memorial Mania* that deals with the implications of the desire to memorialize, Doss notes that "memorials are designed to recognize and preserve memories."[15] In fact, giving history materiality enables citizens to remember important events indefinitely. Furthermore, Nora contends that "*Lieux de mémoire* originate with the sense that there is no spontaneous memory, that we must deliberately create archives, maintain anniversaries, organize celebrations, pronounce eulogies, and notarize bills because such activities no longer occur naturally."[16] In addition, monuments are planned by politicians and groups of citizens and then built because, as Doss argues, "acts of remembering are key to the formation and reformation of social identity."[17] This means that there is a political side behind the idea of building a memorial. Commemoration practices bring citizens together in troubled times and contribute to the reformation of a sense of nationhood. Furthermore, she claims that, a lot of cultures have always manifested their intention to mourn through the use of a material

[14] Pierre Nora. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations* 26 (1989): 7-24. Web. 25 Oct. 2016, p. 7.
[15] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p. 7.
[16] Pierre Nora. *Op. Cit*., p. 12.
[17] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit*., p. 48.

presence. She also adds that "[…] both older and contemporary American monuments testify to human desires to capture and represent memory, to pay tribute, to validate certain historical, political and social perspectives and to grieve."[18] As Carlson maintains, the political side is added to memorials partly because of the money that the country sometimes has to provide,[19] but also because the building of the memorial leads the citizens in the sense that they cannot choose to remember anything. For example, Rieff points to the fact that events are sometimes not commemorated because they should not be remembered.[20] Humans have always wanted to commemorate death through remembering and expressing their grief with the use of objects, as materiality seems to enable them to express their feelings and make sure that the person who died will not be forgotten.

As Doss points it out, remembering is part of the making of a country's history[21] and this is even more emphasized with the conception of modern memory that is shared today. This assertion leads to the consideration of the distinction between history and memory that Pierre Nora[22] thoroughly explains. Those two concepts are not synonymous. They are, however, inextricably linked. Nora thus claims that:

> Memory is life, borne by living societies founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being long dormant and periodically revived. History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer. Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past.[23]

While history is stuck in the past and is conventional, memory lives in the present and is freely expressed by the citizens of a nation. It has an impact on them because it brings them together and binds them as they choose to remember specific events that have particularly marked them. "Memory is by nature multiple, and yet specific; collective and plural, and yet individual. History on the other hand, belongs to everyone and to no one, whence its claim to

[18] Erika Doss. "Death, Art and Memory in the Public Sphere: The Visual and Material Culture of Grief in Contemporary America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 70.
[19] Marla Carlson. "Looking, Listening, and Remembering: Ways to Walk New York after 9/11." *Theatre Journal* 58.3 (2006): 395-416. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 11 Feb. 2016, p. 409.
[20] David Rieff. *Op. Cit.*
[21] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit*., p. 49.
[22] Pierre Nora. *Op. Cit.*
[23] *Ibid*., p. 8.

universal authority."[24] In his article, Lessault evokes Hartog's notion of *présentisme* saying that the present does not erase the past. Instead, it gives it sense. When being in the present, the past as well as the future should always be in connection. Hartog defines *présentisme* as a multidirectional present that enables citizens to ward off the unbearable uncertainty of what is going to happen in the future.[25] Nora also defines modern memory as being archival: "[i]t relies on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording [and] the visibility of the image."[26] Citizens need a physical presence in order to remember and this explains their need to build memorials; particularly temporary memorials that are built on those citizens' own initiative. In other words, "if we were able to live within memory, we would not have needed to consecrate *lieux de mémoire* in its name."[27] Giving memory materiality enables to pass it on to the next generations. Without *lieux de mémoire*, the past would be forgotten. Again, this emphasizes how distinct history and memory are: "memory takes place in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images and objects; history binds itself strictly to temporal continuities, to progressions and to relations between things."[28] History is abstract and can only be thought of. By contrast, memory can be lived and be sensed through objects that efficiently remind the citizens of the events that took place. This physical presence will enable today's memory to become history in the future.[29]

Memorialization helps in the process of healing after a tragedy. Moreover, Doss contends that today, at many memorials, "commemoration of the dead actually commemorates national healing."[30] She emphasizes that, most of the time, memorials are designed to lead its visitors to a path of forgiveness and forgetfulness and they do not focus on the tragic event.[31] This is the reason why many memorials are designed in a way that encourages them not to express any feelings of hate and anger, but to gather and help each other grieve. In this sense, as mentioned by Pivnick, "memorializing differs from mourning in that it is an act that involves shared memory and collective grieving."[32] It means that the building of monuments and

[24] *Ibid.,* p. 9.
[25] Bertrand Lessault. "F. Hartog. *Régimes d'historicité. Présentisme et expérience du temps*, L'orientation scolaire et professionnelle." *Revues.org* 33.3 (2004): 1-5. Web. 30 Sept. 2016, pp 3-5.
[26] Pierre Nora. *Op. Cit.,* p. 13.
[27] *Ibid.,* p. 8.
[28] *Ibid.,* p. 9.
[29] *Ibid.,* p. 13.
[30] Erika Doss. "Death, Art and Memory in the Public Sphere: The Visual and Material Culture of Grief in Contemporary America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 78.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] Billie A. Pivnick. "Enacting Remembrance: Turning toward Memorializing September 11th." *Journal of Religion and Health* 50.3 (2011): 499-515. Web. 18 Oct. 2016, p. 500.

memorials is closely related to a country's history, as well as to the concept of memorialization that Foote divides into four different categories: sanctification, obliteration, designation, and rectification.[33]

> Sanctification occurs when events are seen to hold some lasting positive meaning that people wish to remember – a lesson in heroism or perhaps a sacrifice for community. A memorial or monument is the result. Obliteration results from particularly shameful events people would prefer to forget – for example a mass murder or gangster killing. As a consequence, all evidence is destroyed or effaced. Designation and rectification fall between these extremes. Designation, or the marking of a site, simply denotes that something "important" had happened there. Rectification involves removing the signs of violence and tragedy and returning a site to use, implying no positive of lasting meaning.[34]

Those categories deeply emphasize that some events are not considered as worth remembering and that memorials can be built either for positive or negative reasons. Throughout history, the fact "that sites that produce reactions of shame and revulsion are often obliterated or silenced"[35] has often been descried. Remembering is a choice and it influences citizens: if an event is considered as not being worth remembering, it will be silenced and people will not be encouraged to remember. In this sense, memorials differ from monuments because anything can become a memorial: a teddy bear, a journal article or a collection of objects brought by people to the site of a tragedy. Citizens remember more freely today, because of the easiness with which a memorial can be erected. Thus, Doss supports the view that "the spontaneous, often impermanent, and distinctly 'unofficial' nature of many of these [memorials] seem less concerned with producing a critique of historical moments and tragic events than in catharsis and redemption."[36] Sometimes, atrocious events like terrorist attacks still need to be commemorated because they are part of a country's history and the victims are considered as heroes. It is important for Americans to remember the victims and places destroyed in terrorist attacks because it accentuates their feeling of nationalism and it is also a consequence of the trauma from which they suffer. The lost ones have died as "freedom

[33] Robert Fanuzzi and Michael Wolfe. *Recovering 9/11 in New York*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Pub, 2014. Print, p. 104.
[34] Kenneth E. Foote. *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003. Print, p. 9.
[35] Erika Doss. "Death, Art and Memory in the Public Sphere: The Visual and Material Culture of Grief in Contemporary America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 64.
[36] *Ibid*., p. 70.

fighters and national martyrs"[37] for their nation. As a consequence, many 9/11 memorials, "especially those that feature pieces of the World Trade Center, focus on national strength, revenge, and sacrifice."[38] Those visual memorials will have a tremendous impact on people and will reinforce their togetherness as Americans.

At the same time, memorials are not specific to tragic events such as the 9/11 attacks and they consequently need to be adapted to the type of event that they denote. Gobel and Rosell highlight that they are the mirror of the society that builds them and they convey how people feel at a particular time,[39] as opposed to written history which is sometimes wrongly interpreted because of its "hard, cold facts, and monolithic master narratives."[40] History is monolithic because it is conventional and the stories that build it are not open to any change. Conversely, memorials are primarily built because people need them in order to express how they feel and they are designed in ways that manage to reflect those feelings accurately. In addition, Miller and Tougaw[41] emphasize that "if every age has its symptoms, ours appears to be the age of trauma."[42] Carlson writes that memorials are needed in order to work through people's grief and enable them to keep living after tragic loss.[43] Various 9/11 memorials are representative of this characteristic of memorialization. Right after the attacks, many citizens posted their thoughts on the Internet and commented on articles, as they did not know how they were supposed to remember.[44] It was essential for them to give a manifestation of their presence. In fact, emphasizing this idea, Gessner states that "planning memorials seemed a viable way of containing trauma."[45] As a result, shortly after the attacks, it was decided that "the sites of violent terrorist impact in Manhattan, Washington, and Shanksville" would be "the definitive sites of mourning" and would be the location of memorials to honor all citizens who died on that tragic day because "they provide spaces for the exchange and transfer of memories."[46] Likewise, Nora emphasizes that "there are *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory,

[37] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit*., p. 166.
[38] *Ibid.,* p. 159.
[39] David Walter Gobel and Daves Rosell. *Commemoration in America: Essays on Monuments, Memorialization, and Memory*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013. Print, p. 54.
[40] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit*., p. 49.
[41] Nancy K. Miller and Jason Tougaw. *Extremities: Trauma, Testimony, and Community.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002. Print.
[42] *Ibid*., p. 1.
[43] Marla Carlson. *Op. Cit*., p. 413.
[44] Ingrid Gessner. "The Aesthetics of Commemorating 9/11: Towards a Transnational Typology of Memorials." *Journal of Transnational American Studies* 6 (1) (2015): 1-16. Web. 1 Sept. 2016, p. 1.
[45] *Ibid.*
[46] *Ibid.*

because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory."[47] It means that monuments and memorials are erected because citizens *need* a place to remember and if the site of trauma does not provide any space for remembrance, citizens will choose another symbolic place to erect their memorial. This contrasts with earlier types of commemoration that used to be made of oral stories that were narrated inside families.[48]

It held true in Brussels after the terrorist attacks on March 22, 2016. Because the mourning citizens did not have access to the airport or Maelbeek subway station, a temporary memorial was erected at the Place de la Bourse in the aftermath of the attacks.[49] Likewise, many temporary memorials were erected in various cities in Belgium. Many citizens who could not go to Brussels wanted to express their grief and support towards the victims and their families. It was the case in Louvain-la-Neuve, where many drawings, messages written in many languages and burning candles forming the letters BXL were present on the Place de l'Université. The messages expressed love, peace and nationalism as well (FIG. 1.1). It can also explain why hundreds of memorials commemorating 9/11 were built all around the United States and elsewhere in the world.[50] This, of course, reflects the impact of the events not only on Americans, but also on a global scale. And, as pointed out by Rieff, "today, most societies all but venerate the imperative to remember. We have been taught to believe that the remembering of the past and its corollary, the memorializing of collective historical memory, has become one of humanity's highest moral obligation."[51] Commemorating has become part of our culture and it could not be imagined to leave an important event non-commemorated, which sometimes results in over commemoration.

[47] Pierre Nora. *Ibid.,* p. 7.
[48] Margaret McGlynn. "Memory, Orality, and Life Records: Proofs of Age in Tudor England." *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. 40, no. 3, 2009, pp. 679–697. Web. 29 June 2017, p. 679.
[49] http://www.lemonde.fr/photo/portfolio/2016/03/24/place-de-la-bourse-a-bruxelles-le-memorial-aux-victimes-des-attentats_4889431_4789037.html, accessed on March 22, 2017.
[50] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p. 159.
[51] David Rieff. *Op. Cit.*

Fig. 1.1. Temporary memorial in Louvain-la-Neuve representing the letters BXL to commemorate the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016. Photo by Lauryne Douxchamps.

1.2 The Trauma of 9/11

Building memorials has become a prevailing practice in the United States and in other parts of the world. Today, it is often closely tied to the trauma that victims or members of a community develop after tragic events. In fact, paraphrasing Caruth, who exclusively wrote about trauma, Doss contends that "modern history is a shared and haunted history of trauma. Among 9/11's many narratives – including anger, crisis, disbelief, sorrow, and vengeance – trauma is especially employed."[52] Trauma erects from those tragedies partly because terrorists strike when and where they are the least expected. This, of course, enhances the fear and the trauma that citizens feel. They are affected by the events, because they fear they might be involved in one of them. The scale of the 9/11 terrorist attacks deeply impacted the citizens of the nation; everyone felt involved. Of course, the dismay of retaliation is omnipresent. "If one knew, Derrida suggests, that 'September 11' would never happen again, then the horror of the attacks could be named, understood, historicized, and put to rest."[53] It should however not be forgotten, that if terrorists aim to destroy a country's humanist values, the better way to face them is to commemorate together and recreate a national unity.[54] However, the use of

[52] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p. 132.
[53] Marc Redfield. "Virtual Trauma: The Idiom of 9/11." *Diacritics*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2008, pp. 55-80. Web. 14 Oct. 2016, p. 60.
[54] Lucien Fauvernier. "Attentats: Pourquoi les Commémorations sont-elles si Importantes ?" *Psychologies.com*, November 13, 2016, http://www.psychologies.com/Planete/Societe/L-actu-decryptee/Interviews/Attentats-pourquoi-les-commemorations-sont-elles-si-importantes, accessed on November 16, 2016.

memorials to work through trauma should not be mistaken. As pointed out by Kaplan, once a person suffers from trauma, she can never heal "in the sense of a return to how things were before a catastrophe took place, or before one witnessed a catastrophe; but if the wound of trauma remains open, its pain may be worked through in the process of its being 'translated' via art."[55] She also states that after 9/11, New York was torn between two options: on the one hand, the city needed a place that would "witness" the events, and on the other hand, the atrocity had to be reflected through art, in order to keep living and to try to manage the trauma.[56] Furthermore, Edkins defines trauma using the definition developed by Caruth:

> The notion of trauma these days means for most people an injury to the psyche. The term indicates the response to a shock encounter with brutality or death, or, as Cathy Caruth (1991) puts it, "an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events, in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, and uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena." It is "the confrontation with an event that, in its unexpectedness and horror, cannot be placed within the schemes of prior knowledge."[57]

Trauma appears in the aftermath of tragic events that occur unexpectedly and that come to shatter the feeling of security of an individual or a community. In other words, as expressed by Edkins, "trauma takes place when the very powers that we are convinced will protect us and give us security become our tormentors."[58] Citizens believe that they are safe and they trust their government to handle any threat. Today, trauma often leads to memorialization because, as previously mentioned, we are in an age that deals with "a cult of memory." This is not always deemed positive because while "survivors need to remember in order to work through, and their suffering must be acknowledged, remembering also tends to perpetuate cycles of vengeance by establishing fixed categories; that is, victims and wrongdoers."[59] This idea is also shared by Rieff who claims that "remembrance may be the ally of justice, but it is no reliable friend to peace, whereas forgetting can be."[60] In New York City, the citizens had not even grasped the impact of the events, that it was already question of rebuilding the space.[61] To me, this emphasizes the importance of memorialization. There is a real *need* to

[55] E. Ann Kaplan. *Trauma Culture*. Piscataway, Rutgers University Press, 2005. Print, p. 19.
[56] *Ibid*., p. 136.
[57] Jenny Edkins. "Ground Zero: Reflections on Trauma, In/Distinction and Response." *Journal for Cultural Research* 8.3 (2004): 247-270. Web. 19 Oct. 2016, p. 253.
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] Marla Carlson. *Op. Cit.,* p. 413.
[60] David Rieff. *Op. Cit.*
[61] E. Ann Kaplan. *Op. Cit.,* p. 137.

remember and to build memorials. Not commemorating a tragic death would be unimaginable.

Nevertheless, this need to remember emphasizes the presence of a community in periods of trauma and it is now referred to as collective, community or cultural trauma.[62] Even if some members of this group did not witness the events directly, "they will still suffer from [a] traumatic injury."[63] This phenomenon can partly be explained by the omnipresence of the images in the media. Also, grief and loss often lead to the formation of a community because the citizens need to feel united and reassure themselves in troubled times. Erikson calls that "a gathering of the wounded, where those who carry the same pain are drawn together."[64] Likewise, Patrick Clervoy, a French medicine professor and psychic trauma specialist, mentions that as a victim of an event that generated trauma, the worst is to be left alone with one's psychological wound.[65] It is consequently important for them to feel that they are supported by a community, hence the need for commemorative events. Further, Pederson paraphrases Caruth and emphasizes that "in the immediate aftermath, the victim may totally forget the event. And if memories of the trauma return, they are often non-verbal, and the victim may be unable to describe them with words."[66] Caruth even claims that "trauma is an experience so intensely painful that the mind is unable to process it normally."[67] She defines the traumatic experience as being "unclaimed."[68] While the victim's brain stops functioning normally, "the sensory manifold keeps 'recording' sights, sounds, smells, and feelings."[69] In my opinion, this inability for people to express their trauma can explain their need to bring objects to temporary memorials, as it is a way of showing how they feel without using any words. Those spontaneous manifestations also emphasize the need for a place where they can mourn. The place is not granted an utmost importance: what matters is that people have a venue to go to and express their grief. [70]

[62] Jenny Edkins. *Op. Cit.,* p. 253.
[63] *Ibid.*
[64] *Ibid.*
[65] Lucien Fauvernier. *Op. Cit.*
[66] Joshua Pederson. "Speak, Trauma: Toward a Revised Understanding of Literary Trauma Theory." *Narrative*, vol. 22, no. 3, 2014, pp. 333-353. Web. 14 Oct. 2016, p. 334.
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *Ibid.*, p. 335.
[69] *Ibid.*, p. 335-336.
[70] Lucien Fauvernier. *Op. Cit.*

Redfield explains that the trauma, which arouse in the aftermath of 9/11, was a cultural one, due to "the pain and damage suffered by survivors, victims, and the relatives and friends of victims of this atrocity."[71] Different types of trauma could consequently be developed. Even if trauma can affect all members of a community, the trauma from which a victim or a survivor suffers is not comparable to the trauma of a victim's family or of a citizen. Furthermore, the presence of a collective trauma is undeniable but it should be distinguished from individual traumatic experiences.[72] People can react differently to their trauma in the aftermath of the attacks. The presence of citizens trying to come to Ground Zero right after the attacks could be interpreted as a form of voyeurism, but they made their way to the place of the tragedy as an attempt to deal with their trauma; they needed to see for themselves and "the reality on the ground was both incomparably worse than and not as bad as people had imagined."[73] Doss reveals that:

> people go to these sites to see and touch real-life tragedy, to weep and mourn and *feel* in socially acceptable situations. […] Ghoulish fascination with inexplicable death, with the death of innocents and unfortunates, is accompanied by feelings of guilt and gratitude. […] These feelings are ritualized, becoming collective and socially acceptable, through offerings and participation: through gift-giving and grieving at the shrine sites.[74]

This emphasizes that everyone felt compelled to do something and it brings to light why they needed to visit the site of the tragedy. In addition, silence was omnipresent on the site, and citizens stood motionless while watching the dust. They wanted to understand and they tried "to heal the wound by their presence."[75] This reveals that the consequences of 9/11 were worse than imagined, as reported by Edkins:

> The impact of what happened in New York that morning in September was not something that could be adequately encapsulated in the phrase "a terrorist attack on America." It was a series of events that produced a severe and possibly traumatic shift in a number of registers. The official rhetoric focused on the lives lost, and their re-inscription as heroic lives sacrificed for freedom or in the case of firefighters in the performance of a courageous calling. However, the traumatic

[71] Marc Redfield. *Op. Cit.,* p. 56.
[72] *Ibid*., p. 39.
[73] Jenny Edkins. *Op. Cit*., p. 260.
[74] Erika Doss. "Death, Art and Memory in the Public Sphere: The Visual and Material Culture of Grief in Contemporary America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 70.
[75] Jenny Edkins. *Op. Cit*., p. 263.

element arises not just from the number of deaths, or even from the fact that they occurred on US soil, but from the manner of those deaths. The wound is deeper and more traumatic.[76]

The terrorist attack was thus not the only factor that led to trauma. Understanding to what extent people were traumatized is highly complex and generalizing trauma is even more complicated. Kaplan observes that "as Freud pointed out long ago, how one reacts to a traumatic event depends on one's individual psychic history, on memories inevitably mixed with fantasies of prior catastrophes, and on the particular cultural and political context within which a catastrophe takes place."[77] In fact, several degrees and types of trauma are to be distinguished[78] depending on the person who suffers from it. And for September 11, the wound of the attacks was even more profound because of the places that were attacked on that day; "in targeting and in one case destroying two prominent architectural symbols of superpower, the terrorists seem to have managed to do some local damage to the process of symbolization itself."[79] The targeted places were highly symbolic to the citizens, and it can explain why the attacks shattered their feeling of security and led to trauma.

Furthermore, in his article entitled "Virtual Trauma: the Idiom of 9/11,"[80] Redfield thoroughly expounds the impact of the language when it comes to 9/11. To him, the way in which the citizens talk about that day and how they name both the event and the place of the catastrophe in New York is also a sign of the deep trauma. 9/11 or September 11 is considered as being a "name-date" and is used in English-speaking countries to talk about the terrorist attack. It appeared in the days following the events, and was mostly used in the media. It then became the only term used when evoking this tragic day.[81] This reflects the impact of the events, because having its own name is quite uncommon and it highly emphasizes the importance it had and still has on the citizens and their everyday life. The author even goes further and claims that "[naming] an event 'September 11" is to make the event into its own memorial."[82] Granting a name to an event makes the citizens always go back to the past, and yet projects them onto the future because they will always remember the event thanks to its name that is

[76] *Ibid*., p. 262.
[77] E. Ann Kaplan. *Op. Cit.,* p. 1.
[78] *Ibid.*
[79] Marc Redfield. *Op. Cit*., p. 56.
[80] *Ibid.*
[81] *Ibid*., pp. 56-57.
[82] *Ibid*., p. 60.

singular and yet common. There is a constant going back to the name and to a fear of new terrorist attacks.[83]

Similarly, the site of the former Twin Towers has been referred to as Ground Zero. As explained by Sturken in her article entitled "The aesthetics of absence: rebuilding Ground Zero," "there was a moment on September 11, 2001, when the World Trade Center in New York City became Ground Zero, perhaps at the moment when the towers collapsed downward, spewing out a cloud of debris that, as some witnesses said, 'chased' down the surrounding streets."[84] Even if all terrorist attacks are shocking, the impact of the destruction of the World Trade Center site has particularly marked the citizens because of its visual and over-mediated aspect. Redford claims that "this disastrous spectacle could seem at the time at once horrifically present and strangely unreal – 'like a movie.'"[85] He then contends that "September 11 was essentially, as 'September 11,' the spectacular attack on and collapse of the towers of the World Trade Center."[86] This can explain why the term Ground Zero seems to favor what happened in New York over the events in Pennsylvania and at the Pentagon. This term, now used as a proper name that designates the former World Trade Center towers' site, normally "refers to the impact point of a bomb or the exact locus of an explosion,"[87] which means that it is a very strong word that used to be military jargon. It actually goes back to a gloomy past – i.e. the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – making this term a very strong and negative one. He adds, that "just as 'Ground Zero' appropriates and effaces the past, it appropriates and effaces the future. Invoking the nuclear threat, it imagines the future *as* past, and *as* imaginable."[88] Naming an event with a word that bears such a negative connotation makes the citizens go back to a gloomy past that could possibly happen again in the future.

As previously mentioned, memorials are often used as a means of trying to get to grips with trauma. "In today's therapeutic cultures, this has led to a particularly literalist focus on 'recovering' trauma by 'working through' its pain and suffering and thereby coming to

[83] *Ibid*., p. 60-61.
[84] Marita Sturken. "The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero." *American Ethnologist* 31.3 (2004): 311-325. Web. 03 March 2016, p. 311.
[85] Marc Redfield. *Op. Cit.*, p. 56.
[86] *Ibid.*, p. 65.
[87] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[88] *Ibid.*

'closure' in order to restore personal (and collective) stability."[89] Citizens need to try to recover from their trauma, although it is highly complex. In addition, the symbolic aspect in building a memorial should not be neglected: it is an effective manner of asserting the values of a country, namely capitalism and nationalism.[90] Of course, loss is often at the center of debates when it comes to rebuilding at the site where events have generated a trauma. Ground Zero is a perfect example for this because not only did citizens mourn people, but also the towers.[91] Besides, the naming of the event and the places destroyed convey the idea of a never-ending war, because they refer to a horrid past, and this prevents citizens from having hope for a better future.

In my opinion, those contradictory aspects mirror the complexity of working through one's trauma. Even if citizens try to handle it by building memorials and attempt to reconnect with each other to recreate a sense of nationhood, the idea of going back to the past and constantly reliving it is always present and it prevents them from being focused on a hopeful and peaceful future. In other words, "Derrida rightly put stress on the way in which the attacks, in their precision, were traumatic insofar as they threatened a worse-to-come. If such violence could be suffered in New York and at the Pentagon, worse could happen again and anywhere else."[92]

1.3 From Monuments to Memorials: a Transition

According to Gobel, citizens from around the world have always had an "insatiable appetite for commemorating" which now results in places with a tremendous number of monuments, memorials, and memories.[93] In fact, memories occupy our brains, and monuments, as well as memorials, are a way of giving those memories materiality, hence their importance for the citizens. The amount of monuments has however drastically increased in recent years and their design has gradually evolved. In the last decades, many public monuments were erected in the United States, as well as in Europe. As Doss observes, they have evolved from the

[89] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p. 132.
[90] Sven Cvek. *Towering Figures: Reading The 9/11 Archive*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011. Print, p. 46.
[91] Tom Lundborg. "The Folding of Trauma: Architecture and the Politics of Rebuilding Ground Zero." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 37.3 (2012): 240-252. Web. 14 Oct. 2016, p. 243.
[92] Marc Redfield. *Op. Cit.,* pp. 75-76.
[93] David Walter Gobel and Daves Rosell. *Op. Cit*., p. 1.

monument to the memorial.[94] She emphasizes that the monument as it used to be known has been adapted to the needs of modern society. Therefore, memorials have become increasingly common, as their design is closer to people's feelings. Indeed, as it will be developed later, memorials are suited for the memorialization of the tragic events that need to be commemorated.

Firstly, a few general remarks regarding monuments can be given. Gobel emphasizes that monuments are not there to simply be looked at. They have to be analyzed because "complexities [and] backstories […] lie behind nearly every commemorative monument."[95] Each monument can raise questions that encourage its visitors to explore and "broaden [their] understanding of the past."[96] Monuments are strong symbols of a community's past because they embody national identity and are strong symbols of a particular society, as Gobel reminds his readers that

> at one level, simply by noticing what events and [citizens of] a community or nation has commemorated, we learn about those aspects of the past. Beyond that, as we examine the monument as a product of its own time, we can ponder questions about who did the commemorating, and when and why. And we can seek to discern what the monument meant in its own time and perhaps what it means in ours.[97]

Indeed, when a commemorative memorial is planned to be built either by the authorities or by citizens, decisions have to be made. Those will, of course, be mirrored in the design chosen. The choice to remember is a great indication of how people felt at a particular time and it reflects who they were as a community.

Secondly, the evolution from monuments to memorials can be retraced. Gobel distinguishes two different periods of intense monument building: from 1880 to 1930 (especially from 1890 to the First World War) and from 1982 until now.[98] "Statue mania" appeared during the first period. "After the divisiveness of the Civil War, countless American cities and towns vied for statues that helped them reimagine"[99] their nationalism. "Statues not only embellished the postbellum public landscape but encouraged passionate and consensual understandings of

[94] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p.5.
[95] David Walter Gobel and Daves Rosell. *Op. Cit.,* p. 37.
[96] *Ibid.,* p. 39.
[97] *Ibid.,* p. 37.
[98] *Ibid.,* p. 19.
[99] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit.,* p. 20.

nationhood."[100] The Civil War resulted in a broken nation and statues were a means of creating a feeling of unity again. At that time, monuments were dedicated to great men that could help unite the nation. During this period, they "were designed as integral parts of architectural settings: the statue, on a pedestal, graced an elevated platform or terrace that also offered seating."[101] Normally, the statue was elevated and did not encourage any implication from its visitors. It stood at a distance.[102] However, the configuration of the sites where statues were erected progressively evolved: benches started making their appearance and they were regarded as a means of encouraging the visitors to stay at the memorial and interact with each other.[103]

Then, "monuments became spatial [and] they not only embellished the public spaces of parks, squares, and streets, they also created public spaces in themselves."[104] It signifies that the statue was not the only element that composed the memorial any more: there was a physical space that the visitors were supposed to occupy and in which they had to be in movement. As noted by Gobel, the year 1982 marked the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington, D.C., and "all subsequent monuments – especially but not only war memorials – stand in its shadow."[105] After the era in which monuments honored great men, memorials appeared to honor soldiers who had sacrificed for their nation. It means that today's intense monument-building is nothing new and Doss even claims that "today's memorial mania parallels the 'statue mania' that gripped nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Americans and Europeans alike."[106]

Yet, drastic changes are to be discerned between statues and memorials as they are built nowadays. Art historian Horst Janson has classified the traditional Western monuments into three distinct categories: "the funerary monument, the monument to historical events or ideas (for example, 'liberty'), and the monument to great men."[107] They were a means of honoring great men and important events, while today, memorials "focus specifically on playing tribute

[100] *Ibid.*
[101] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Memorials as Spaces of Engagement*. 1st ed. London: Routledge, 2016. Print, pp. 1-2.
[102] *Ibid.,* p. 11.
[103] *Ibid*., p. 13.
[104] *Ibid*., p. 2.
[105] David Walter Gobel and Daves Rosell. *Op. Cit.,* p. 21.
[106] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit.,* p. 20.
[107] H.W. Janson. *The Rise and Fall of the Public Monument*. New Orleans, LA: The Graduate School, Tulane University, 1976. Print, p.1.

to the dead."[108] Memorials have a different impact now because their primary aim is to honor citizens of the nation. People feel close to those who are honored. It proclaims that "in contrast to the ennobling, authoritative, and pious monuments of the past, today's memorials are especially disposed to individual memories and personal grievances, and often attuned to tragic and traumatic historical episodes and eras."[109] Then, the style of old monuments does not correspond to what new memorials present today: "the traditional monument was typically figurative and vertical, placed high on a pedestal that mediated between the physical site it dominated and the symbolic capital it embodied."[110] In addition, monuments were "made of enduring material like marble, granite, or bronze."[111] By contrast, Gessner defines the characteristics of modern memorial design as such: "names; negative forms, underground levels, or voids; water; rock or walls; light installations; and trees."[112] Those characteristics prove that memorials are part of a new era and that they drastically differ from monuments.

1.4 Memorials: New Forms of Commemoration

1.4.1 Introduction

As previously explained, memorialization practices have evolved in recent years. In the early twentieth century, monuments have been replaced by memorials, which are either temporary or permanent. Stevens explains this by emphasizing that "the structures built were no longer exclusively to celebrate triumph, victory and greatness; they also recognized hardship, sacrifice and trauma,"[113] and they aimed to remember past events and people. According to him, due to the "absence of symbols or figurative sculptures, the intended message of contemporary memorials may be far less clear"[114] than with traditional monuments. Visitors should cognitively and physically engage with memorials. They should be active and try to interpret what they see in order to understand what the organization in charge of the memorial wanted to convey when designing it. To him, this is one of the major differences between monuments and memorials, as explained in the following lines:

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[108] Marita Sturken. "Monuments: Historical Overview." *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press: Michael Kelly, 1998. Print, p. 274.
[109] Erika Doss. *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials*. *Op. Cit*., p. 5.
[110] H.W. Janson. *Op. Cit*., p. 1.
[111] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p.37.
[112] Ingrid Gessner. *Op. Cit.,* pp. 6-7.
[113] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 11.
[114] *Ibid.,* p. 5.

> By drawing visitors close, the design features of many contemporary memorials stimulate the senses and invite exploration; they also encourage visitors to take a more active role in experiencing the memorial in a bodily manner and by leaving their own tributes. The relationship between visitor and memorial [went] from one of viewing to one of engaging in a variety of ways – by occupying, touching and hearing, and participating in acts of commemoration. In addition, more and more frequently, members of the public pursue independent acts of commemoration by creating their own memorials in public space, demonstrating another mode of engaging with memorials – by making them.[115]

This, of course, marks a difference between monuments and memorials, but also between permanent and temporary memorials, which are by nature more personal as they are built by the public, and not by an association of people or by the government. It is true that when a tragic event takes place, its over appearance in the media makes everyone feel compelled to honor the dead. Citizens consequently want to express themselves as they see others grieve. In addition, temporary memorials can be initiated by anyone because the absence of a loved one needs to be replaced by some materiality: a candle or a picture, for example. Because we miss the person who died, we need him/her to be physically present in our life with a memorial. It also happens that we remember citizens we did not know when they were alive. To me, this happens because with terrorist attacks, death is so sudden that we are shocked not only because lives were taken, but also because we realize that it could have been us or someone we knew. Furthermore, social media is generally used in the aftermath of terrorist attacks to search for missing people. Seeing pictures of them for several days before learning that they succumbed in the attacks can be touching. Seeing the face of the victims has more impact than only seeing their names, because we realize that they were simple citizens, living their life as we all do. We consequently honor the dead as citizens of the nation, and as a people whom we might have been acquainted with.

Furthermore, absence is often present in memorials and it gives freedom to the visitors. They should interpret what they see and it is not an easy task, as they are not led through this process. Gaps do not always clearly indicate the elements that are missing and it requires some effort on the part of the visitors because they should perceive this emptiness and link it to the events that the memorial commemorates. This means that several persons can provide a wide range of different interpretations, as they depend on their own perception and how the

[115] *Ibid*., p. 11.

memorial "speaks" to them.[116] I believe this characteristic emphasizes that everyone reacts differently to traumatic events. Not leading the citizens through their visit and giving their minds some space for imagination entails that the designers are open to the visitors' interpretations and to the fact that several persons might have different perceptions of the memorial. They are thus free to welcome all feelings that the visit triggers.

Those contemporary practices reveal that citizens share "new social and cultural understandings of who is valued as a person worth mourning and remembering."[117] Everyone matters and should be remembered because they belong to the nation. As opposed to former practices, recent memorials commemorate events that are sometimes tragic and they serve to "recognize individual sacrifice and victimhood."[118] A second aspect needs to be observed: this type of memorialization is public, while "modern Western social and cultural conventions insisted on private and individual forms of grieving throughout much of the twentieth century."[119] Ways of grieving have drastically changed in order to become more open, as they are currently known. Today, memorials aim to remember past events or people, and to meet this purpose, they need to be visited. Those changes are, of course, reflected in their design with the presence or absence of various symbolic elements, as will be explained in the following pages. As a matter of fact, memorials have become so open that sometimes people do not even notice that the structure that they encounter is a memorial. This can be illustrated with the Diana Memorial Fountain, which was erected in Kensington Gardens, London, and dedicated in 2004. Despite the plaque informing the visitors that the fountain is a memorial, the playful activities taking place there do not suggest that this was a space built to commemorate a tragic loss. (FIG. 1.2) This highlights a significant feature of contemporary memorials, as asserted by Stevens: "they create spaces people can enter and move through, and they support opportunities for a variety of actions, many of which generate sensory experiences beyond the visual."[120] Those characteristics thus help understand why visitors come so close to memorials when they visit them.

[116] *Ibid*., p. 49.
[117] Erika Doss. "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America." *Material Religion: The Journal of Objects, Art and Belief* 2. 3 (2006): 294-318. Web. 2 Apr. 2016, p. 295.
[118] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 3.
[119] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit*., p.93.
[120] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 1.

Fig. 1.2. Visitors sitting on the Diana Memorial Fountain in London to touch and play with the water, 2017. Photo by Lauryne Douxchamps.

Although not a new phenomenon, temporary memorials have been granted a recent prominence in many Western countries and America, especially when it comes to memorializing tragic death that involves trauma.[121] Those memorials however display other commemorations as well, including "roadside shines, pregnancy loss memorials, organ donors memorials, and spontaneous memorials erected at sites of tragic and traumatic death." [122] This type of memorial is usually prompted by "unexpected, violent, and televized death" and it is consequently no surprise that "the most visible temporary memorials in recent memory were those that developed after the death of Princess Diana in 1997, […] after the attacks […] of September 11, 2001,"[123] as well as the one that was erected in Manchester after the terrorist attack that took place after Ariana Grande's concert on May 22, 2017. Stevens defines the temporary memorials in the following terms: "These are small or large assemblages created in public space immediately following a sudden death. They are composed of flowers, candles, cards, and all kinds of additional tributes, some of which people make themselves, placed in a particular location without official sanction or direction."[124] He also adds that those temporary memorials can be erected in any public space and turned into commemorative sites. The increasing number of temporary memorials

[121] Erika Doss. "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America". *Op. Cit.,* p. 296.
[122] *Ibid.,* p. 295.
[123] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit*., p. 66.
[124] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 4.

emphasizes that "traditional forms of mourning no longer meet the needs of today's publics and prompt questions about what death, grief, and memory mean in the new millennium."[125] From my personal experience, sometimes, temporary memorials do not carry this public dimension. For instance, when losing loved ones, many feel the need to remember and to light a candle in their honor. They will also place a picture of the person in their home as a souvenir, and sometimes even put flowers next to it, because they cannot visit the grave as regularly as they wished. This is a way of keeping the dead alive in their memory. This shows that the loss of someone is intrinsically linked with a material presence that needs to be broadcasted.

According to Doss, temporary memorials are erected because they help people "mediate the psychic crisis of sudden and often inexplicable loss"[126] and they consequently follow a number of cultural codes.[127] First of all, they are a means of expressing how people feel. Moreover, the construction of a memorial enables them to eventually overcome their grief. Yocom observes that they want "to show their care and respect for the dead, and to signal their intent to remember."[128] It is important to make the loss of loved ones memorable and to "make [it] visible and public […] within the realm of social responsibility – hence, cards and signs reading 'we will never forget.'"[129] Going to gathering places also enables people to feel united in difficult times because when they visit such "sacred grounds," "they openly [demonstrate] emotional behaviors such as sobbing and hugging,"[130] which makes them feel they are united. This is even more important when strong symbols of the nation have been shattered, such as the Twin Towers, which could be found in the form of postcards at temporary memorials.[131] Secondly, the impact of the memorials on people can be explained with their proximity to the actual location of atrocities. People need to see the place and feel close to those who died. Those 9/11 memorials often trigger strong feelings because this is where the victims rest, and they are thus perceived as cemeteries.

[125] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit*., p. 64.
[126] Erika Doss. "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 298.
[127] *Ibid*., p. 306.
[128] Margaret Yocom. "'We'll Watch out for Liza and the Kids': Spontaneous Memorials and Personal Response at the Pentagon, 2001." *Spontaneous Shrines and the Public Memorialization of Death*. Santino Jack. 1st ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006. 57-97. Print, p. 80.
[129] Erika Doss. "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 299.
[130] *Ibid.,* p. 306.
[131] Margaret Yocom. *Op Cit.,* p. 76-77.

Following this idea, in her article entitled "'We'll Watch out for Liza and the Kids': Spontaneous Memorials and Personal Response at the Pentagon, 2001" published in 2006, Yocom narrates her feelings and perception of the temporary memorial that was erected near the Pentagon after 9/11. She firstly raises the question of the behavior that should be adopted when visiting such a place. How do visitors perceive other people photographing the site? While touring the location, she was afraid of being perceived as a voyeur.[132] Of course, many visitors stood motionless to admire the different objects and messages that formed the memorial.[133] She further claims that the art left reflects people's feelings, which could not be expressed in words. As will be done further in this dissertation, the objects should consequently be analyzed to see what is emphasized in the messages and what the materiality tells us about how citizens felt.[134]

In addition, memorials that are built to honor the victims of terrorist attacks should be regarded as specific units. Building memorials for traumatic events requires a particular savoir-faire in order to mirror their atrocity and help citizens mourn. Building a memorial for the victims of terrorism is highly complex. According to Zuber, notwithstanding their granted status of heroes, they cannot be considered as equal to soldiers because they did not voluntarily sacrifice for the nation.[135] Those memorials are an essential component of the mourning process citizens need to go through after traumatic events because this is where the nation remembers. Doss observes that "for family members and survivors, they are sacred sites of bereavement and, often, burial. However, for politicians, they are ideological rallying grounds, because building a memorial is reasserting the strength of the country, as well as leading the citizens to remember those events. For millions of tourists, they are 'authentic' destinations marked by tragic death and traumatic loss."[136] Those particular places of gathering are consequently essential for many visitors, not only for those directly concerned by the terrorist attacks.

According to Doss, following these particular needs, the architectural style that suits the spirit of terrorism memorials the most accurately is minimalism.[137] Stevens argues that since this

[132] *Ibid*., p. 60.
[133] *Ibid*., p. 64.
[134] *Ibid*.
[135] Devin Zuber. "Flânerie at Ground Zero: Aesthetic Countermemories in Lower Manhattan." *American Quarterly* 58.2 (2006): 269-299. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 6 Feb. 2016, p. 272.
[136] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit.,* p. 122.
[137] *Ibid.,* p.126.

type of design does not "offer [anything] to look at, the visitor's attention is drawn instead to their own non-visual sensory experiences, their own actions and those of other visitors and their direct, embodied experience of the physical context surrounding the artwork."[138] This architectural choice reveals the therapeutic aims of terrorism memorials. They enable citizens to "work through" their trauma[139] thanks to the architecture that "simultaneously evokes [the] disorientation [due to trauma] and resolves it."[140] Because trauma cannot be omitted in the building and visiting of memorials, an "affirmation of hope, healing, renewal and closure" is to be witnessed "in design elements such as reflecting pools, waterfalls, manicured lawns, and clusters of trees."[141] Most importantly, terrorism memorials have the difficult role of representing absence, which can be rather challenging,[142] as it will be explained further in the dissertation with the National September 11 Memorial. Moreover, minimalism lays emphasis on lived experience and requires some engagement by the audience.[143] It generates "strong feelings of social relevance and public 'ownership,'"[144] two characteristics that will lead to "the recovery and reaffirmation – the remaking – of individual and collective harmony,"[145] which are essential in the aftermath of traumatic events. Furthermore, "these memorials serve to offset the threat and fear of terrorism and its rupturing of American invincibility by reproducing national narratives of social stability, unity, and endurance."[146] They are an efficient way of uniting people again. Because those memorials focus on the victims only, the perpetrators of terrorism are omitted, a silence that reveals evasion[147] regarding events that traumatize people. Even if citizens want and need to remember lost ones, at the same time they want to forget the atrocity of the attacks and they turn "victims into heroes and martyrs."[148] Because those memorials are specific in their need and the feelings they have to create for the visitors, the presence and absence of several elements can be reflected in their design as it is going to be explained. Their aim is to prevent memorials from looking barren, as monuments did. Their design should provide the visitors with some sensory experience and it should entail a physicality that will help them grasp the scale of the tragedy.

[138] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 41.
[139] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit.,* p. 137.
[140] *Ibid.,* p.133.
[141] *Ibid.,* p.146.
[142] *Ibid.,* p.143.
[143] *Ibid.,* p.127.
[144] *Ibid.*
[145] *Ibid.,* p.133.
[146] *Ibid.,* p.122.
[147] *Ibid.,* p.141.
[148] *Ibid*., p.166.

1.4.2 Objects and Materiality

Whereas absence can be mirrored in a memorial's design with the effective absence of an element such as the destroyed building, objects, or people,[149] the presence of objects is often to be witnessed at contemporary memorials, be they permanent or temporary. At the former, it can take the form of a flower or sometimes a museum in which objects are presented. However, this characteristic is obviously emphasized at temporary memorials, where visitors freely bring personal objects. Doss confirms this assertion and argues that temporary memorials focus on material/symbolic objects. "The palpable stuff of which [they are] made both describes and defines them."[150] They are a good representation of what Nora meant when he argued that "'modern history is above all archival.'"[151] It means that when they go to a memorial, visitors need to touch the material of which it is made of. There is a sensorial experience that former monuments did not offer.

Moreover, it can be observed that "[mourners] place [faith] in *things* to negotiate complex moments and events, such as traumatic death."[152] They use all sorts of objects from their everyday life in memorials, like for the temporary memorial that was erected at Kensington Palace (London) after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in 1997: "bouquets of flowers (real and artificial), small stuffed animals, balloons, votive candles, condolence cards, and more."[153] Those objects are highly symbolic with, for example, flowers mirroring the brevity of life, and cards, which enable visitors to correspond with the deceased.[154] Most of the time, the offerings brought are similar to the ones that can be found at cemeteries. Similarly to those places, the visitors of memorials behave as if they were visiting a grave, because the construction has been erected for the dead.

The temporary memorial for the Manchester attack in 2017 (FIG. 1.3) reflects those characteristics, as it was initiated by the citizens who brought objects from their everyday life to the place of the attack. Many gathered to have a look at the immense carpet of flowers that lay on the ground in St Ann's Square in honor of the victims. In addition, many blue and red candles had been brought. Those were in the colors of the nation, because in the aftermath of

[149] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 43.
[150] Erika Doss. "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 298.
[151] *Ibid.*
[152] *Ibid*., p. 299.
[153] Erika Doss. *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials*. *Op. Cit.,* p. 14.
[154] Erika, Doss. "Spontaneous memorials and contemporary modes of mourning in America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 299.

traumatizing events, citizens generally get together to try to work through their trauma. Nations are generally even more united than before they were targeted. This is also an attempt to show the terrorists that even though they tried to destroy the unity of the nation, people get together. Furthermore, many balloons were also in the Square, as akin to flowers, they symbolize the brevity of life. Those symbols mirror what happened, while honoring the dead. Balloons and flowers will die, like the victims did. This is the reason why they are often brought to spontaneous places of commemoration. Another very important symbol that was present at the memorial is the bee. It actually appears across the city, as "it was first used as a symbol for the city during the Industrial Revolution, intended as a tribute to Mancunians' work ethic and community spirit."[155] The insect's symbolism is thus extremely strong for the city, which explains why it was reused in this context: Manchester was attacked, and the bee helped the citizens to feel as a community again, as they should live "in colony" like the insect does. As mentioned by Perraudin, this justifies why around 10, 000 people around the world got a bee tattoo in memory of the attacks.[156] They needed to reassert their togetherness and show that they were part of the community.

Fig. 1.3. Temporary memorial in Manchester after the bombing on May 22, 2017 at Ariana Grande's concert, 2017. Photo by Jeff J. Mitchell – Getty Images.

[155] Frances Perraudin. "10, 000 Get Bee Tattoo to Raise Money for Victims of Manchester Bombing." *TheGuardian.* June 23, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jun/23/bee-tattoo-raise-money-victims-manchester-bombing, accessed on June 29, 2017.
[156] *Ibid.*

This temporary memorial highlights how people feel compelled to remember today. In addition to the messages of hope, love and empathy for the victims and their families, some were addressed to Ariana Grande, at which concert the bombing took place, as in: "Ariana, please don't apologise. The concert was beautiful. WE DANCED. WE LAUGHED. WE LOVED. Manchester is strong. Our thoughts go to everyone affected. […]"[157] This message points to what is most important after terrorist attacks: citizens should remember to keep having fun, to keep loving, and not to be afraid. This is one of the reasons that explains why the singer organized the benefit *One Love Manchester* concert: she wanted to raise money for the casualties, as well as prove that even if she and the people who attended her concert are traumatized, love is stronger and this is what should remain from those tragedies that keep happening.

Then, Doss postulates that similar actions take place at permanent memorials as well. She exemplifies this assertion with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. She claims that the persons who visit the memorial leave "flowers, flags, letters, poems, photographs, teddy bears, dog (identity) tags, wedding rings, high school yearbooks and other offerings; many […] trace the names that are inscribed on the monument's black walls."[158] A saying that also holds true for the 7 July Memorial in Hyde Park (FIG. 1.4), which was erected in honor of the victims of the bombings that took place on that day in London in 2005. There, many flowers are put either on the ground or attached to one of the pillars that each represents one victim. As each casualty has his/her own part of the memorial, it offers visitors the possibility to leave personal offerings. This happens, because, as previously stated, it is similar to a tomb, and flowers are generally brought to cemeteries in order to show that the victims are not forgotten. The objects that are placed at permanent memorials are similar to the ones which temporary memorials are made of. In fact, Stevens claims that "this layering of the personal and immediate over the more abstract and permanent is facilitated when memorial design accommodates the leaving of offerings,"[159] as it is the case in London, for instance. He then adds that the objects that are left add something to the visit: there is a continuous commemoration that is highly personal.

[157] Rob Davies, Mark Sweney and Frances Perraudin. "Manchester Benefit Gig: 'Opportunists and Touts' Try to Get Free Tickets." *TheGuardian*. June 1, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jun/01/manchester-bombing-tribute-concert-tickets-to-go-on-sale, accessed on June 29, 2017.
[158] Erika Doss. "Death, Art and Memory in the Public Sphere: The Visual and Material Culture of Grief in Contemporary America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 66.
[159] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 32.

Fig. 1.4. Flowers behind the July 7 Memorial in Hyde Park, London, 2017. Photo by Lauryne Douxchamps.

Because of how common those objects are, they "flood the memories of their visitors and trigger personal associations."[160] The presence of objects is a way of binding the living and the dead through their memories. In addition, even if those memorials reflect absence, "the dead themselves remain very much alive: visibly present in the photographs, clothes, and possessions left by mourners."[161] Death and negative images are however absent from memorials: "images of victims in pain, dying or dead are generally banned, and references to the circumstances of their deaths, or the traumatic struggles of survivors and rescuers, are generally taboo."[162] In order to heal, people need to focus on positive aspects. Building a temporary memorial is an easy task, as they are made of personal and inexpensive objects that people bring while visiting the place. This materiality is however not always seen positively. Sometimes, "their excessive physical and emotional properties are deemed 'too much' and even fetishistic."[163] Indeed, people are physically and mentally present at such sites. In this sense, it is not surprising that some people who did not manage to visit the temporary memorial at the Pentagon after 9/11 "sent a tracing of their hand or foot"[164] in order to be a part of the memorial. Visitors are emotionally moved by memorials. They often have to walk through the memorial, and they touch the objects that were left. It "[affects them] on multiple

[160] Erika Doss. "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 299.
[161] Erika Doss. *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials*. *Op. Cit.,* p. 30.
[162] *Ibid.,* p. 29.
[163] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit.,* p.68.
[164] Margaret Yocom. *Op Cit.,* p. 79.

levels."[165] Furthermore, Yocom emphasizes that "being present involves many acts of attention available to memorial visitors, among them doing, seeing, caring, and forming both individual and shared memories."[166] It means that visiting the site will enable them to be part of the community, and as for terrorism memorials, it will emphasize their feeling of nationalism.

In the end, similarly to other types of memorials, temporary memorials serve as help for the memory. Americans want "to remember the recently, suddenly dead: to make their loss visible and public; to render their deaths memorable – never to be forgotten."[167] It even goes further, when a permanent memorial is built after the spontaneous one. It however does not help resolve a very important issue: should temporary memorials be saved? Greenspan mentions that this is a very new challenge for historians who grapple with this sudden materiality and who have to decide whether memorial archives should be created or not.[168] When mourners contribute to a memorial, they express their feelings. The various objects that are brought end up forming a unity. Therefore, moving them would amount to altering the memorial and the interpretation that could be made of it. Thereby, Greenspan highlights that not many museums have made the decision to include objects in their exhibitions for 9/11. Instead, pictures of the temporary memorials are often displayed, as those permitted to capture the moment, without altering the nature of those places of commemoration.[169] By contrast, after the terrorist attack at the Bataclan in Paris on November 13, 2015, many of the drawings and letters have been saved by the *Archives de Paris*.[170] As the archival process can be long and fastidious, it is impossible to have access to those yet. It can however be expected, that those could be part of exhibitions to transmit memories to future generations. In my opinion, this practice is surprising, as it alters the primary nature of spontaneous memorials, which is to be temporary. They however permit to understand how citizens felt in the aftermath of the attacks because they are authentic. They can therefore be useful for future generations of citizens, as well as historians who will analyze them.

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[165] Erika Doss. "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America." *Op. Cit.,* p. 300.
[166] Margaret Yocom. *Op Cit.,* p. 79.
[167] Erika Doss. *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials*. *Op. Cit*., p. 15.
[168] Elizabeth Greenspan. "Spontaneous Memorials, Museums, and Public History: Memorialization of September 11, 2001 at the Pentagon." *The Public Historian* 25 (2003): 129-132. Web. 03 March. 2016, p. 130.
[169] *Ibid.*
[170] Lucie Soullier. "Attentats du 13 Novembre: le Mémorial du Bataclan aux Archives de Paris." *LeMonde.fr.* December 14, 2015. http://www.lemonde.fr/attaques-a-paris/article/2015/12/14/le-memorial-du-bataclan-aux-archives-de-paris_4831270_4809495.html, accessed on June 29, 2017.

Next to these objects brought by people during their visit, visual evidence of the damage done can also be witnessed at certain memorials. This is to make the visitors aware of what happened and it gives an insight into the past. As mentioned by Stevens, this objective was present at many 9/11 memorials in the United States, as well as in other parts of the world. He emphasizes that the objects or pieces coming from the former Twin Towers

> show in touchable, material form the damage wrought. Steel fragments of varying sizes and shapes – burnt, twisted, chipped, rusted – from the structure of the Twin Towers form all or parts of these memorials. The Port Authority makes these remnants available, from its storage in an JFK airplane hangar, to any group able to play for their transport with the organization's commitment to make them part of a memorial that is open to the public and free of charge. More than one thousand pieces have been distributed ranging from 6 inches to 53 feet.[171]

Sometimes, those are to be found in museums at the memorial site. This means that even if the memorial's design engages with absence, there is still a presence of objects related to the traumatic events. Why are those exhibited in museums? I believe that they can help grasping the immensity of the events. They also play on the visitors' feelings. It is shocking to witness that huge buildings were transformed into dust, and that only a limited number of material pieces could be found. If the towers amounted to nothing after the attacks, people realize that it was even worse for the victims. Providing pieces of the collapsed buildings will enable future generations to understand what happened, and this is also a way of keeping a memory, a physical trace of what happened. Without this, the memorials, or the pictures, the past would simply be forgotten. Providing many museums with a piece of the World Trade Center shows the intent to make the event count: it is part of the history of the country, and it should therefore be remembered forever.

1.4.3 Words and Names

Another major feature of contemporary memorials, especially permanent ones, is the presence of names. Engraving the names of the victims for which the memorial is built is a new characteristic that distinguishes memorials from monuments. This is featured on many contemporary memorials, like the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington, D.C., erected in 1982 and various 9/11 memorials including *Empty Sky* in New Jersey (FIG. 1.5). Bodnar

[171] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 69.

claims that this practice emphasizes feelings of nationalism.[172] This characteristic is linked to the willingness of the memorials' architects to "[locate] the names of those who are being remembered within reach so that visitors can easily touch them."[173] According to Stevens, this enables the family and friends of the victims to go through their grief and "to do so in a more personal and physically intimate way."[174] It is similar to a gravestone and gives the victim's loved ones a place to mourn.

It is however important to bear in mind that formal memorials normally only mention the names of the victims, even if the wrongdoers died as well. Stevens mentions that sometimes visitors try to include the names of the perpetrators at informal memorials, but since it is often a source of contestation and debate, they end up being removed.[175] Gobel also maintains that today's memorials present what he refers to as logorrhea: "they are covered with words by their builders, who seem to lack confidence in the ability of visual images to convey their messages."[176] Even if modern memorials tend to include names, this is also a subject of great controversy regarding who counts and whose name should be included.[177] Furthermore, naming practices emphasize the individuality of the victims. Everyone matters in modern history and memorials are not a privilege only granted to generals and presidents anymore.[178] This individuality is not only to be observed in the presence of the victims' names; it sometimes goes further. The Pentagon Memorial, which will be analyzed further in this dissertation, is a good example because the name and age of each victim is inscribed on each bench.[179] It means that today, the focus is firstly laid on the individual, which will then supposedly lead to the unification of the nation.[180]

[172] John Bodnar. "Public Memory in an American City: Commemoration in Cleveland." *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*. John R. Gillis. 1st ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994. Print, p.79.
[173] *Ibid.*
[174] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 27.
[175] *Ibid*., p. 65.
[176] David Walter Gobel and Daves Rosell. *Op. Cit*., p. 12.
[177] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit.,* p.151.
[178] *Ibid.,* p.150.
[179] *Ibid.,* p.152.
[180] *Ibid.*

Fig. 1.5. Presence of the victims' names at *Empty Sky*, a 9/11 memorial in New Jersey, 2013. Photo by Joiseyshowaa.

Similarly, the presence of words or drawings left by visitors can be observed at many temporary memorials because this means of expression is deemed essential after a tragedy. As mentioned by Doss, this was for example the case at the temporary memorial that was erected at Columbine High School after the shooting on April 20, 1999. Many of the visitors wrote notes that mentioned warnings or that contained prayers for a better future for the country.[181] Sometimes, the items that are present indicate the names of the victims, but this is not a common feature for temporary memorials. The notes left usually broadcast a diversity of voices. The visitors use them to express their thoughts about the memorial or the events, which means that sometimes, political statements are to be witnessed next to messages that express condolences and grief.[182] It is also not uncommon to find words or quotes on permanent memorials. Those will influence how the visitors interpret the memorial; they will be led through the use of words chosen. For example, at the Mardasson Memorial in Belgium, the history of the Battle of the Bulge is engraved on the construction to help visitors understand why and for whom it was erected (FIG. 1.6).

[181] Erika Doss. "Death, Art and Memory in the Public Sphere: the Visual and Material Culture of Grief in Contemporary America." *Op. Cit.,* pp. 67-68.
[182] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 75.

Fig 1.5. Account that can be read on the Mardasson Memorial in Bastogne, 2017. Photo by Lauryne Douxchamps.

However, not all contemporary memorials that are erected to commemorate terrorist attacks broadcast this characteristic. The individual is not always granted its individuality. This is the case for the memorial that was inaugurated in Brussels on the one year anniversary of the terrorist attacks of March 22, 2016. The names of the victims are not mentioned on the memorial, as it is dedicated to all the victims of terrorist attacks, whether it was in Belgium or anywhere else in the world.[183] Similarly, the commemorative plaque for the victims of the attack at Brussels Airport contains the following message: "In memory of the victims of the terrorist attacks of Tuesday 22 March 2016. We will remember them. Always." (FIG. 1.7) In my opinion, it means that, as it is the case in the United States, those words mention that the victims will never be forgotten, and we will always go back to those times of horror, but here, in Belgium, the victims are seen as a whole, whereas in the United States, they are granted their status of individual.

[183] "Maelbeek: Un Monument de 20 Mètres de Long Dédié à Toutes les Victimes d'Actes Terroristes." http://bx1.be/bruxelles-ville/maelbeek-un-monument-de-20-metres-de-long-dedie-a-toutes-les-victimes-dactes-terroristes/, accessed on March 30, 2017.

Fig. 1.7. Commemorative plaque for the victims of the terrorist attack at Brussels Airport on March 22, 2016. Photo by Christelle Leroy.

This aspect is also emphasized at the memorial for the victims of terrorist attacks that was erected near Maelbeek (FIG. 1.8). Although it was planned and built near the underground station where one of the bombings took place in Brussels on March 22, 2016, it is dedicated to all victims of terrorism and not only to the ones in Brussels. This memorial is rather shocking because its design is made of several plaques that contain fake bomb impacts. To me, the fact that it was built for all victims highlights that since terrorist attacks have become so pervading, memorials are built for all victims, and their individuality is not deemed important at those places. However, other types of commemoration mention their names. For instance, the victims of the terrorist attacks in Belgium are honored in an online memorial. It was first published in *Le Monde* and *La Libre Belgique*, and then both magazines hosted it on their website with the intent to honor the victims and make sure that future generations will not forget about the dangers of fanaticism.[184] The individuality of the victims is highly emphasized, as their names, a picture of them, and a summary of their lives are provided, making the readers feel close to them and enhancing the feeling that they could have known

[184] "Mémorial des Victimes des Attentats de Bruxelles." http://dossiers.lalibre.be/memorial-bruxelles/, accessed on June 29, 2017.

them. This practice does however not suffice, as citizens also erected a temporary memorial, which highlights that mourning online is not enough; a physical presence is needed.

Fig. 1.8. Memorial for the victims of terrorist attacks in Brussels, 2017. Photo by Lauryne Douxchamps.

1.4.4 Symbolic Elements

Water and light are important symbols that are a common feature of contemporary memorials that are erected to commemorate tragic events, because, as claimed by Doss, they symbolize hopefulness and regeneration.[185] Firstly, water and reflecting pools are elements that are often included at contemporary memorials, as noted by Gessner.[186] When linked to religion, water can be considered as being sacred and that symbolic characteristic is also true for the places at which memorials are built. It can add an acoustic element to the memorial, which depends on the design of the fountains and pools that constitute the memorial. To my mind, water also brings movement to memorials, as it is endlessly flowing. Depending on the design of the pools and the fountains, different sounds will be created. It adds a presence and life to

[185] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit.,* p. 146.
[186] Ingrid Gessner. *Op. Cit*., p. 8.

memorials that are designed to honor people who lost theirs. Stevens exemplifies this idea with the Diana Memorial Fountain in London and writes that "visitors put their hands in the fountain's flow to feel its current, as the water varies in shape, speed, pressure and turbulence according to the changes in the depth, width, slope, and surface texture of the channel."[187] Even if it is impossible to shape water as we would want to, it encourages the visitors to move, touch and use some of their senses, as it also creates an acoustic sound that will impact them. Not all memorials that include water feature this characteristic. The Memorial to the Sinti and Roma Victims of National Socialism that was erected in Berlin in 2012 exemplifies this (FIG. 1.9). Here, water adds life to the memorial, but it is not an acoustic presence. It reflects its surroundings, which are made of trees that also symbolize life. Their cycle mirrors the citizens' lives and they will eventually die. When visitors come around the pool, they are also provided with a reflection of themselves, which can trigger feelings.

Fig 1.9. Water at the memorial in honor of the victims of national socialism, 2014. Photo by Mike Peel.

Secondly, the symbolism of light that is majorly present in the Bible can be reflected in the design of memorials. It usually conveys the idea of the removal of darkness and it is consequently deemed positive. Wilkins mentions that light can be used as a metaphor that would mean salvation and life,[188] and it is the aim that is followed when a memorial is

[187] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 131.
[188] J. Michael Wilkins. "Light" *Biblestudytools.com*, http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/light.html, accessed on April 5, 2017.

erected. Light also symbolizes hope and it gives a presence, which can help the citizens to imagine that a bright future awaits them. Gessner observes that light installations are an important feature of memorials and they "usually illuminate [them] at nighttime,"[189] which grants some life to the memorial.

1.4.5 Nature

In the 2000s, it became popular for memorials to be erected at a site that would enable them to be surrounded by nature.[190] Stevens mentions that many 9/11 memorials were built in town parks, as it was already the case for small-scale war memorials.[191] In addition, the design of the memorial usually serves as a guide for the visit. Those types of memorials that Stevens refers to as "spatial memorials" are still erected today and this phenomenon was emphasized after 9/11 because "the US Department of Agriculture's Forest Service adopted the term 'living memorial' for their program that supports community landscape projects to memorialize the September 11 events and their victims. These include single trees, groves of trees, new parks, forest improvement, community gardens and landscaped town centers."[192] Consequently, many memorials have grass as their background landscape. Furthermore, many trees are planted to add some life to the hard material that is used to build the memorial. Gessner shares the idea that "the planting of trees continues a tradition of signifying liberty, rebirth and resistance,"[193] which emphasizes the symbolic aspect of this element when added to the site of a memorial. Sometimes, a tree survives the catastrophe. As will be explained further, it was the case at Ground Zero after 9/11. If the memorial is built where it took place, it will not be removed, and in this case, it represents endurance and survival, values which are important in those troubled times.

1.4.6 Visitors' Physical Experience

As opposed to statues that are placed high on a pedestal, memorials are designed in ways that invite its visitors to engage and feel close to them. For this purpose, they are often found at

[189] Ingrid Gessner. *Op. Cit*., p. 8.
[190] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 18.
[191] *Ibid.,* p. 13.
[192] *Ibid*., p. 16.
[193] Ingrid Gessner. *Op. Cit*., p. 8.

ground level in order to encourage this physical proximity and render them easily accessible. Today, visitors do not look up to observe memorials; instead, they need to look down. This is also true for temporary memorials for which objects are directly left on the ground, as mentioned by Stevens:

> when member of the public initiate informal memorials immediately after tragic deaths, they often place […] items directly on the surface of sidewalks, steps, plazas and lawns. The easy accessibility, blankness and ubiquitous locations of the ground surface of everyday public space make them convenient canvases for all kinds of memorializing.[194]

In addition, those "spatial memorials" often offer a design that presents "a variety of tactile and auditory experiences"[195] to its visitors, for example by touching the surface of the memorial.

At the Mardasson Memorial (FIG. 1.10) that was erected in Bastogne, Belgium and dedicated on July 16, 1950, in memory of and thankfulness to the American soldiers who have lost their life during the Battle of the Bulge, freeing Belgian citizens, the design allows visitors to physically come close to the structure. They do not have to remain at a distance from the construction, as they can go around it, inside it, and even on it if they walk up the stairs that will provide them with a view of the surroundings. The memorial is in the shape of a star – symbol of the United States, for which each state's name is engraved around the memorial. As opposed to the American flag where each state has its own star, here a single star stands for all states, which mirrors the unity of the nation. The center is in a circular shape, which emphasizes this idea of unity, and the history of the Battle of the Bulge, as well as the military units who took part in the operation can be read. The visitors can freely walk inside the structure of the construction in order to read the inscriptions. As they are rather high, visitors can however not touch them, as opposed to more recent memorials that allow them to touch the names or texts that are engraved on the memorial – a practice which is often witnessed at 9/11 memorials. If they walk up the stairs to go on top of the memorial, they get a view of the surroundings, and they can also see maps that present the different villages that were impacted by the battle. Being able to walk on the construction is a practice that would not have been imaginable with monuments, and this proximity is characteristic of memorials.

[194] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 20.
[195] *Ibid*., p. 25.

Seeing the various maps makes us realize the impact of the war on the surroundings, and this is probably the reason why visitors are invited to go upstairs: to get a view of the surroundings to be able to imagine the scale of the battle. Furthermore, underneath the memorial there is also a crypt, which visitors can enter and where they can leave offerings. Being this close to the memorial makes them engage themselves in their visit, as they are moving. Remaining at a distance, they grasp the height and size of the construction, which makes us feel tiny. We feel startled by the visit, as we realize that many have lost their life there.

Fig 1.10. Mardasson Memorial in the shape of a star and the American flag, nation for which the construction was erected, 2017. Photo by Lauryne Douxchamps.

In conclusion, memorialization has evolved and changed over the years. Citizens need to build memorials in order to remember events that have impacted them and that still make their history. This is all the more emphasized with traumatic events like 9/11 because memorials enable citizens to mourn and to be assured that the lost ones will live forever in people's hearts and thoughts. Today, they yearn and need not only to remember, but also to feel and be a part of memorials, which distinguishes them from the former monuments: they have moved from being passive to being active by their closeness to the memorial, the sensory experiences and the action of erecting temporary memorials themselves. Now, they contribute to, but also feel memorials because this is how they need to remember lost citizens: The contrast between absence and presence regarding the various features presented in this

chapter is an essential part of memorials today and it will be the focus of this master dissertation which compares the various 9/11 permanent and temporary memorials chosen. Those elements will be analyzed in order to uncover how they manage to convey absence when memorializing 9/11. This absence represents the lives that were lost and the important landmarks that were destroyed.

Chapter 2: 9/11 Permanent and Temporary Memorials

As previously stated, because of the impact of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, numerous permanent and temporary memorials were erected in the aftermath of the events. For my dissertation, I have decided to limit the scope of my analysis to three permanent memorials and four temporary memorials. The choice was made according to their proximity to the places that were targeted on that day. Firstly, for the permanent memorials, the analysis will focus on the memorials that were built on the different sites that were targeted on that tragic day – i.e. the National September 11 Memorial, the Pentagon Memorial and Flight 93 Memorial. In addition, many temporary memorials were erected all around the United States. This analysis will however concentrate on the ones that were close to the sites of the tragedy. Consequently, the temporary memorials are Tribute in Light, Flight 93 Temporary Memorial, Pentagon Temporary Memorial and some memorials that appeared around Ground Zero after the attacks. In the present research, the National September 11 Memorial, whose design is entitled *Reflecting Absence,* will be contrasted with the other ones. This memorial is unique because instead of building a traditional monument that entails verticality and presence, holes were dug in the footprints of the Twin Towers. Building on the idea of absence, this analysis will explore how the other monuments manage to convey absence when memorializing 9/11. Emphasis will be laid on the contrast between absence and presence when it comes to honoring civilians. As will be developed in this chapter, materiality was a major issue in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks because of its contested presence at the temporary memorials, as well as in the various museums that opened to commemorate the events. Whereas absence can represent the lives that were lost and important landmarks that were destroyed, presence can, for instance, be conveyed through materiality and symbols. The analysis of the various memorials aims to interpret how this presence of objects and of various elements in the design can convey absence and remembrance when it comes to memorializing a traumatic event that impacted citizens of a country on such a massive scale. Before being analyzed and compared, the various permanent and temporary memorials will be broadly presented in the present chapter.

2.1 Temporary Memorials

Fig. 2.1. Spontaneous memorial at Union Square in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on 9/11, 2001. Photo by Donald Lokuta.

The horrible nature of the attacks on September 11, 2001 deeply marked many American citizens who felt compelled to mourn as early as possible.[196] Therefore, several temporary memorials were erected around New York, because the site of the attacks was not accessible to the public. As a consequence, many New Yorkers gathered, notably in Union Square, where a temporary memorial was erected (FIG. 2.1).[197] On the picture, many typical elements of temporary memorials can be witnessed. Among them are many candles. Another important component of those memorials is the presence of the American flag, as well as nationalist messages such as "let us unite." The flag is the symbol of the nation, and it was essential after 9/11 because the unity of the nation had been shattered and passers-by needed to express that even if the terrorists aimed at destroying their feeling of togetherness, the attacks and the following commemorations actually brought them closer. In New York, the spontaneous memorials were firstly used in an attempt to find loved ones that had disappeared:[198] "The spontaneously created photographic clusters […] were full of the pictures of the missing and

[196] Margaret Yocom. *Op. Cit*., p. 76.
[197] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit*., pp. 94-95.
[198] Sven Cvek. *Op. Cit*., p. 48.

were supposed to serve people to identify and eventually find their loved ones."[199] However, once it had become clear that there was no survivor left, "these places were turned into memorials, places of mourning for those who had been lost."[200] This is how the various temporary memorials were erected in the city. Quickly, at Union Square, "continuous vigils to honor the victims began, and the park was lined with candles, photographs, flags, letters, poems, and children's drawings,"[201] as can be seen on the picture on the previous page (Fig. 2.1) Those various manifestations of personal and emotional feelings were how citizens commemorated the victims of 9/11.[202] Other memorials were created around the city as well. Once Ground Zero was fenced, many messages, prayers and various objects were brought.[203] Similarly, a lot of pictures of missing people were hung in the subway and "the miles of platforms became a primary space for collective memory."[204] Zuber describes this particular temporary memorial as such:

> Thousands of posters and pictures of missing people began to appear within hours after the towers' collapse, but unlike other ephemera displayed in the subways, they remained in place for months thereafter, disappearing slowly and only as the materials disintegrated. They also became sites of ritualized mourning, with flowers and messaged periodically taped onto their fragile surfaces. The Manhattan commute thus became a daily visual contact with the dead, the underground transformed into a veritable underworld.[205]

Kaplan claims that this array of images represents a "need for closure, [as well as] the awfulness of not knowing if a loved one [was] dead, and if dead, if one would ever have a body to mourn over."[206] As mentioned above in Zuber's description of the temporary memorial, the pictures of the missing remained untouched for several months in the underground until they disintegrated. I believe that this symbolizes that removing the pictures was too traumatic and hard, as it marked the acceptance that the persons pictured on the photographs were never coming back. Similar to the mourning process that takes time, the pictures gradually disappeared in order to resort to everyday activities, even if this past will always remain present and will overlook the future forever. Of course, it was similar for the

[199] *Ibid.*
[200] *Ibid.*
[201] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit*., pp. 94-95.
[202] Setha M. Low. "The Memorialization of September 11: Dominant and Local Discourses on the Rebuilding of the World Trade Center Site". *American Ethnologist* 31.3 (2004): 326–339. Web. 03 Mar. 2016, p. 329.
[203] *Ibid.*
[204] Devin Zuber. *Op. Cit*., p. 280.
[205] *Ibid.*
[206] Ann E. Kaplan. *Op. Cit*., p. 7.

temporary memorials that consist of flowers or objects that are not long lasting. As the memorials disappear, citizens have to accept that the nation has suffered loss, but that life goes on.

Second, United Airlines Flight 93 crashed in a field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.[207] *Angel Patriots: the Crash of United Flight 93 and the Myth of America* is a book that was written by Riley and that was published in 2015. In his chapter entitled "The Sacralization of Shanksville," he focuses on the temporary memorial. As soon as United Airlines Flight 93 crashed, the inhabitants started expressing their compassion by creating spontaneous memorials outside their houses.[208] Even if they could normally not access the site, as it was turned into a federal crime scene,[209] visitors still needed to see for themselves. In the days following the crash, many of them gathered around the site to express their sympathy toward those passengers who were seen as heroes. Furthermore, "like Union Square, the crash site became a gathering place for those seeking to mourn and pay their respects."[210] Riley argues that "the emergence of the phenomenon as a widespread, global practice in the face of traumatic death is certainly a recent phenomenon."[211] He further quotes Joy Satherwagstaff and writes that:

> These spontaneous memorials are understood as "intentionally arranged formations and displays of material culture… that emerge at sites of death or other public sites of mourning [and constitute] a means for publicly paying respects to the dead while producing numerous social affects… including participation in imagined communities of mourning, belonging, closure, and spiritual or emotional healing."[212]

After the attacks, it was essential for citizens to be able to visit the place, as well as leave a trace of their presence at the memorial, as can be witnessed with the many objects that were left behind (FIG. 2.2). While visiting Flight 93 temporary memorial, people "had a direct sightline down the hill to the point where the plane hit."[213] At first, the memorial was built as the visitors pleased, without any rearrangement. However, once the FBI had completed its

[207] *Ibid.,* p. 101.
[208] Alexander T. Riley. *Angel Patriots: The Crash of United Flight 93 and the Myth of America*. NYU Press, 2015. Print, p. 76.
[209] Anne Madarasz. "Offerings." *Western Pennsylvania History* 2011: 37-41., p. 39.
[210] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit*., p. 101.
[211] *Ibid*., p. 76.
[212] *Ibid*.
[213] *Ibid*., p. 79.

investigation, the site was fenced and meticulously arranged.[214] "Many [left] an offering, a small token chosen in haste, a work of art that [had] been months in the planning." Providing visitors with a view on the site where many have lost their life enhances the feelings that they have. Grasping the immensity of what has happened touches them. Being able to see the place renders commemoration practices stronger.

Fig. 2.2. Flight 93 Temporary Memorial, 2001. Photo by Aude.

Madarasz writes that the number of written messages, photographs, objects and flowers, most of them left anonymously,[215] was tremendous, as demonstrated on the picture (FIG. 2.2). "Each item reflect[ed] the visitor's thoughts and feelings about or understanding of the events,"[216] as will be developed in the analysis of this place of commemoration. Many messages expressed gratitude towards the passengers. Similar to other temporary memorials, flags were highly present at the Flight 93 temporary memorial.[217] In addition, most of the objects left were either patriotic or religious, and some "tributes [showed] great thought and investment of time and resources such as painted artwork, signs crafted from wood and metal, and quilted pieces."[218] A lot of objects were purposely left as a way of "thanking the passengers of Flight 93 for their bravery, for the lives they likely saved that day when they

[214] *Ibid*., p. 39.
[215] Anne Madarasz. *Op. Cit*., p. 39.
[216] *Ibid*., p. 37.
[217] *Ibid.*
[218] *Ibid*., p. 39.

brought the plane down before it reached its intended target, and for making the world safer for their children."[219] It means that the messages conveyed by the visitors were ones of thanks and hope, rather than resentment and anger.

This reveals that the memory around 9/11 is still strong, even today, as people have been coming to the memorial every day ever since.[220] Further, Riley raises the question of the reasons that drove visitors to leave objects on the site. In his opinion, they needed to connect themselves to the site of the tragedy.[221] This was even more the case for Flight 93, as the passengers sacrificed themselves. They are thus perceived as heroes and Riley also argues that, "although they are heroes and not gods, and therefore cannot be physically resurrected, they nonetheless symbolically rise again in the memorial and thereby remain in relations with the rest of [the visitors]."[222] Because they died as heroes, visitors felt compelled to "return the good deed and pay homage"[223] to them in the best way possible and this implies leaving objects on the site.

However, the team that was detached at the site decided that all items left would be collected and saved,[224] which can raise the question of the temporary aspect of the memorial that Greenspan addresses in her article entitled "Spontaneous Memorials, Museums, and Public History: Memorialization of September 11, 2001 at the Pentagon." Even if she only focuses on the temporary memorial at the Pentagon, her sayings can be applied to other temporary memorials as well. She states that "public historians have played a role in the memorialization effort by collecting (or not collecting) memorial objects from the destruction site, curating exhibits with these objects, and creating memorial archives."[225] She thus goes on to say that the various temporary memorials that were erected on the visitors' behalf generated many questions for the historians, as they did not agree on what the future of this sudden materiality should be. The major issue was whether museums should collect and exhibit the objects that were left at the temporary memorials. According to her, "both the decision to remove and preserve memorial objects from the sites and the decision to exclude these objects from

[219] *Ibid.*
[220] *Ibid*., p. 37.
[221] *Ibid*., p. 86.
[222] *Ibid.*
[223] *Ibid*., p. 89.
[224] *Ibid.*
[225] Elizabeth Greenspan. *Op. Cit*., p. 129.

collections raise ethical concerns."[226] The objects were brought to the site of the tragedy by the mourners as a means of expressing their state of mind after their feelings of unity and security had been shattered. In the end, the question of the preserving of the objects remained contested: some museums collected them and others decided to display photographs of the various spontaneous memorials instead. Either way, the victims remain commemorated and the spontaneous memorials live on.

The third place that was targeted on 9/11 was the Pentagon. Akin to New York and Shanksville that were already detailed in the previous pages, citizens came "to show their care and respect for the [victims], and to signal their intent to remember"[227] directly on the site on September 11, 2001 and in the following months. "Visitors […] traveled […] to leave objects, read memorial messages, and take photographs."[228] As will be developed further in the dissertation, the subsequent presence of objects that were left to form the memorial is thus comparable to the one at the Flight 93 crash site. As observed by Yocom, on September 22, 2001, the memorial was already quite large and it was divided in two parts: "One was a wall of messages […]. The second was a spreading array of flowers, wreaths, candles, and posters […]." By November, a third part was added to the memorial. As the Pentagon was being rebuilt, there were heavy metal fences that visitors made the decision to use to leave their messages.[229] In addition, the victims were seen as individuals, as their names were inscribed on a plaque that was displayed on the site of the temporary memorial. Similar to the other temporary memorials already detailed, Yocom mentions that the visitors did not depart without leaving messages, posters, flags, flowers and various kinds of objects like candles and teddy bears that made them feel closer to the victims.[230] Again, Greenspan mentions that the American flag, symbol of unity and patriotism, was present in mass.[231] She also adds that silence ruled the visit at the memorial, as a form of respect to the victims. Many visitors stood motionless to read the various messages and watch the various objects that had been left.[232] Of course, as will be detailed in the analysis of this memorial, creative expressions were a major part of the memorial and it was used by people as a means of expressing how they felt,

[226] *Ibid.*
[227] Margaret Yocom. *Op. Cit*., p. 80.
[228] Elizabeth Greenspan. *Op. Cit.,* p. 129.
[229] Margaret Yocom. *Op. Cit*., p. 61.
[230] *Ibid.*, p. 62.
[231] Elizabeth Greenspan. *Op. Cit*., p. 130.
[232] Margaret Yocom. *Op. Cit*., pp. 62-64.

when they could not manage to express it with words. In the end, what people sought when deciding to visit the memorial was "to try to comprehend what felt so incomprehensible."[233]

As opposed to the other temporary memorials already described here, *Tribute in Light* (FIG. 2.3) is an annual one. The two blue streams of light that represent the Twin Towers[234] lit New York's sky for the first time in March 2002 on the sixth-month anniversary of September 11[235] and have illuminated the city every year on the anniversary of the attacks ever since.[236] The memorial "[can] be seen from up to sixty miles away on clear nights."[237] It "was envisioned by several artists and architects immediately after September 11 and was intended to pay tribute to the dead."[238] Although it "quickly became a symbol of endurance and hope, uniting those directly affected by the attacks with people from around the world witnessing the glowing skyline,"[239] its status often remains contested, as it seems to mourn the absence of the towers rather than the victims. In fact, many citizens "were mourning the buildings themselves,"[240] as could be seen from the various images that were left at temporary memorials and in which the towers frequently appeared.

Fig. 2.3. Tribute in Light, 2010. Photo by Bob Jagendorf.

[233] *Ibid.*, p. 79.
[234] Ingrid Gessner. *Op. Cit.*, p. 9.
[235] Marita Sturken. *Op. Cit.,* p. 319.
[236] Ingrid Gessner, *Op. Cit.*, p. 9.
[237] Robert Fanuzzi and Michael Wolfe. *Op. Cit.,* p. 110.
[238] Marita Sturken. "The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero." *Op. Cit.*, p. 319.
[239] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit.*, p. 105.
[240] Jenny Edkins. *Op. Cit.*, p. 264.

2.2Permanent Memorials

The National September 11 Memorial in New York is probably the most famous memorial that pays tribute to the victims of 9/11 because it is rooted in the location of the former Twin Towers whose destruction took everyone's breath away. The memorial that was inaugurated on the tenth anniversary of the attacks[241] "is dedicated to the 2, 983 people who lost their life in the September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993 terrorist attacks."[242] The first terrorist attack that targeted the World Trade Center took place in 1993, when a band of Islamist terrorists made a rental van explode in a garage below the southern wall of the North Tower. It had made six victims.[243] The memorial started being planned right after the attacks and it was at the center of much controversy, as explained by Blais and Rasic.[244] As opposed to the other permanent memorials that will be detailed further, in New York, architects wanted to build "an all-encompassing memorial site, inclusive of victims' names from the terrorist attack on World Trade Center in 1993, the crash of American Airlines Flight 77 into the Pentagon, the passengers and crew of United Flight 93 and those who died at Ground Zero,"[245] because they knew that many visitors would come to New York, and it seemed to be the right place to commemorate the death and remember all victims.

Michael Arad won the design contest organized with *Reflecting Absence*[246] whose most prominent feature is the two pools that were dug to represent the footprints of the former Twin Towers. In addition, the name of each victim is engraved on bronze parapets surrounding the pools. Blais and Rasic claim that the question regarding the arrangement of the names was the source of many debates.[247] The final decision was made in late 2006. Arad decided that the names should "be arranged in accordance with geographic and familial ties, links with co-workers, and the specific wishes of the victims' loved ones."[248] As a consequence, the victims' names were firstly arranged according to the place where they were when the attacks took place and then they are grouped with the people to whom they were linked. In addition, light that symbolizes life is a very important symbol in the memorial. It is

[241] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit*., p. 219.
[242] *Ibid*., p. 5.
[243] *Ibid*., p. 32.
[244] *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[245] Karen Wilson Baptist. "Incompatible Identities: Memory and Experience at the National September 9/11 Memorial and Museum." *Emotion, Space and Society* 16 (2015): 3-8. *SCOPUS.* Web. 14 Feb. 2016., p. 4.
[246] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit*., pp. 110-111.
[247] *Ibid*., p. 138.
[248] *Ibid*., pp. 166-167.

particularly true with the names of the victims. "As the sun sets, the names are lit from within, transforming each letter from a void in bronze to a light amid darkness."[249] Finally, in order to create a memorial that would look "more hospitable and less barren", Arad "was asked to team with an experienced landscape architect, Peter Walker."[250] As a result, the memorial features lots of green spaces as well.[251]

Secondly, the Flight 93 National Memorial is located in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, where United Airlines Flight 93 crashed. Gessner mentions that the first parts of the memorial were dedicated on September 10, 2011.[252] Because this Memorial is located in a rural area, "an elaborate effort to integrate [it] into the surrounding environment"[253] was made. Before envisioning it, a mission statement containing the essential features for the future memorial was published. Those included:

1. Honor the heroism, courage and enduring sacrifice of the passengers and crew of United Airlines Flight 93;
2. Revere this hallowed ground as the final resting place of 40 heroes who sacrificed their lives so that others will be spared;
3. Remember and commemorate the events of September 11, 1001;
4. Celebrate the lives of the passengers and crew of Flight 93;
5. Express the appreciation of a grateful nation forever changed by the events of September 11, 2001;
6. Educate visitors about the context of the events of September 11, 2001; and
7. Offer a place of comfort, hope and inspiration.[254]

The aforementioned rules are reflected in the final design developed by Paul and Milena Murdoch.[255] According to the official website, the first areas that were open to the public are the Visitor Center Complex, the Memorial Plaza at the crash site and then Memorial Groves, Allée, and Wetlands Bridge.[256] The Visitor Center Complex enables visitors to learn more about the events: they can find a timeline of the events, they can hear parts of the recordings,

[249] *Ibid.*
[250] *Ibid*., p. 138.
[251] *Ibid*., p. 147.
[252] Ingrid Gessner. *Op. Cit*., p. 3.
[253] Alexander T. Riley. *Op. Cit.,* pp. 159-160.
[254] *Ibid*., p. 163.
[255] *Ibid*., p. 164.
[256] "Places to go." https://www.nps.gov/flni/planyourvisit/placestogo.htm, accessed on December 17, 2016.

relive some moments from the media, which can generate strong feelings for the visitors.[257] Then, "the Memorial Plaza marks the edge of the crash site, which is the final resting place of the passengers and crew."[258] The Wall of Names, "bordered by red and sugar maple trees that was to form a semicircle or crescent that conformed in shape to the natural contour of the field where the plane went down,"[259] is located in the Memorial Plaza. It is the central element of the Memorial[260] and it was designed in a way that enables visitors to come as close as possible to the crash site, which "was somewhat distant from the temporary memorial."[261] The Sacred Ground, however, remains to be contemplated from a distance.[262] The architects still have plans to add another part to the memorial. They are planning to dedicate the Tower of Voices in 2017.[263] "It is currently planned to be a 93 foot tower containing forty wind chimes. It will be an auditory tribute. Placed near the new entrance on US Route 30, it will serve as a welcoming beacon to visitors arriving at the memorial."[264]

Thirdly, Doss writes that the Pentagon Memorial was designed by Julie Beckman and Keith Kaseman and it was dedicated in Arlington on September 11, 2008.[265] A small memorial and a chapel are present inside of the building. However, the proper memorial "is located adjacent to the building, where much of the wreckage was located and where the victims were brought in the immediate aftermath."[266] The memorial in itself "occupies a 2-acre site about 165 feet from where American Airlines Flight 77 hit the building and features 184 cantilevered stainless steel benches, each engraved with the name of one of the victims of the crash."[267] The names of the victims are incorporated in the design of this memorial as well and here, "the names are engraved on wing-shaped benches […] As will be developed in Chapter 4, pools and light are present at the memorial as well, and they are located "below each bench."[268] As will be explained further, this is a process of individualization of the victims.

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[257] "Inside the New Flight 93 Visitor Center in Somerset County." http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2015/09/inside_the_flight_93_visitor_c.html, accessed on April 11, 2017.
[258] "Places to go." https://www.nps.gov/flni/planyourvisit/placestogo.htm, accessed on December 17, 2016.
[259] Alexander T. Riley. *Op. Cit*., p. 164.
[260] *Ibid*.
[261] *Ibid*., pp. 169-170.
[262] *Ibid*., p. 171.
[263] "Plan your visit." https://www.nps.gov/flni/planyourvisit/placestogo.htm, accessed on February 19, 2016.
[264] *Ibid.*
[265] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit.,* pp. 137-140.
[266] Robert Fanuzzi and Michael Wolfe. *Op. Cit*., p. 105.
[267] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit*., pp. 137-140.
[268] *Ibid.*

Chapter 3: Materiality at Temporary Memorials

Memorialization practices imply that the absence of loved ones is often expressed in public by erecting memorials. In this chapter, the four 9/11 temporary memorials presented earlier will be analyzed by contrasting materiality and absence. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, temporary memorials were a means of expressing the feelings and the loss that the citizens experienced. This is, of course, reflected in their agency and in the various elements of which they are made. Carlson further adds that the presence of spontaneous memorials in New York in the aftermath of the attacks transformed the act of walking around the city as "one sometimes traded stories and at other times walked in silence encountering the markers of loss: signs, flowers, faces."[269] The same feelings could be felt at Shanksville, Pennsylvania, where United Airlines Flight 93 crashed, and at the Pentagon. How does the erection of a spontaneous memorial impact the citizens? Various elements will be analyzed in this chapter including rituals, the visitors' proximity, the individuality of the victims, the materiality at memorials, the symbolism of various objects and the messages written by the visitors. Does this presence help the visitors in the process of grief? Do the objects left have a meaning and symbolism? The following analysis will attempt to show that even if they all share similarities, as pointed out by Greenspan, "each [temporary memorial] tells a unique story."[270] Furthermore, Doss adds that

> If wildly divergent in subject and style […] these commemorative sites collectively represent what [she] call[s] 'memorial mania': the contemporary obsession with issues of memory and history and an urgent, excessive desire to express, or claim, those issues in visibly public contexts. Contemporary acts, rituals, or performances of memorialization are often exorbitant, frenzied, and extreme – or manic. Their pathos and inconsistency are not surprising: memory itself is often unpredictable and unstable, and rituals of memorialization are often prompted by emotional states of being such as grief, guilt, and gratitude.[271]

She thus emphasizes that because memorials are the result of personal feelings that arise after tragedies, they all are different, even though they are similar in a sense since they can be seen as being extreme or manic. This can be explained by the fact that many do not grasp the

[269] Marla Carlson. *Op. Cit*., p. 396.
[270] Elizabeth Greenspan. *Op. Cit*., p. 130.
[271] Erika Doss. "The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials." *Op. Cit*., pp. 7-8.

materiality that is behind memorials. They are thus perceived as being too materialistic, as will be developed in this chapter.

3.1 New Rituals

In his article entitled "Rituals around Sudden Death in Recent Years," Gustavsson[272] deals with how citizens have coped with sudden death in the recent years in comparison with how they did before. Because "life is expected to proceed through childhood, youth, adulthood and old age,"[273] commemoration practices are enhanced when someone suddenly dies at a younger age, as it is the case when they are victims of terrorist attacks. He thus defines the notion of ritual in the following terms: "[it] presupposes the performance of actions and the repeating and carrying out of these actions in a public social context. The actions also have a deeper symbolic meaning for the participants."[274] It is consequently clear that temporary memorials, that have been granted a recent prominence are part of a new ritual: not only do citizens gather to express how they feel, but also because it has become common practice to do so, especially when there is no body to mourn over or to burry in a consecrated ground, as often was the case with 9/11. Therefore, memorials started being built because there was "a wish to emphasize the importance that the dead men had in local history despite their not having been buried in their home ground"[275] – aims that were also pursued in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in America, because oral tradition that used to be common is not sufficient anymore to transmit memories to future generations. Thus, "memories that were formerly found only in oral narrative tradition, have now received a tangible, physical shape. […] In this situation, history has been revitalized by means of the newly erected memorial stones,"[276] and more recently with temporary memorials, that are not permanent but that permit to honor the dead. Gustavsson adds that "the fact that a memorial marking can remain to be cared for over a long period of time may be of actual benefit to the next of kin."[277] Whereas visiting the actual grave can be too sorrowful, temporary memorials are deemed less personal and they offer the whole community a place to mourn and to be solidary. Although the author writes that recently young people have started adopting new methods to grieve – i.e. posting

[272] Anders Gustavsson. *Op. Cit.*
[273] *Ibid*., p. 23.
[274] *Ibid*., p. 24.
[275] *Ibid*., p. 27.
[276] *Ibid*., p. 28.
[277] *Ibid*., p. 31.

messages online to express their compassion,[278] temporary memorials are still erected, because being physically present offers advantages that the Internet does not, such as talking to other people, or bringing intimate offerings. Writing messages can however permit to express intense emotions more easily. Furthermore, he adds that erecting a memorial for the victims entails that there is "a belief in the affirmative continuation of existence after death, [which] can obviously help in the traumatic grief process,"[279] since it is as if they were still present. Moreover, he claims that "solidarity and collectivism have become important keywords in the approach to traumatic situations at the expense of individuality and privacy. This is a major innovation in the study of rituals around sudden death in recent times,"[280] which explains why many memorials are erected in the aftermath of terrorist attacks.

3.2 Physical Experience of the Visitors

By nature, temporary memorials encourage the visitors to have a physical experience. When visiting them, the citizens are consequently close to them both physically – as they bring or touch the objects – and emotionally when they are moved by this materiality and by the messages left. Doss contends that "[…]their meaning lies especially in their affective dimensions, and particularly in their cultural negotiation of public grief."[281] Memorials are used by the citizens as a means to deal with their emotions. This is the reason why she also argues that

> memorials […] are the physical and visual embodiment of public affect. They are, to paraphrase Ann Cvektovich, a public "archive of feelings" and as such can be considered "repositories of feelings and emotions" which are encoded not only in their material form and narrative content but also "in the practices that surround their production and reception."[282]

Not only do memorials help their visitors, but they also provide them with a production, that will help them feel they are united. This form of commemoration is normally performed rather freely, but it can sometimes be organized. In the aftermath of 9/11 at the Pentagon, the visitors could leave offerings where they wanted. By contrast, in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, at

[278] *Ibid*., p. 35.
[279] *Ibid*., p. 37.
[280] *Ibid*., p. 42.
[281] Erika Doss. "The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials." *Op. Cit*., p. 8.
[282] *Ibid*., p. 11.

the temporary memorial for United Airlines Flight 93, they were invited to attach their objects on a fence that "measured 40 feet long and 10 feet high, by chance corresponding to the 40 passengers and crew members who died."[283]

According to some videos, unlike all expectation the atmosphere was not continuously mournful at the memorials. While silence was ruling at several of them, the one that sprang up at Union Square created a different and unique atmosphere. McKim notes that "local musicians occupied the square throughout the period playing impromptu concerts and creating an atmosphere where solemnity was mixed with what could almost be called festivity,"[284] as people "[…] sang, chanted, and joined candlelight vigils and prayer groups."[285] This shows that even though citizens gathered to honor the dead, remaining quiet was too solemn, and playing music enabled to express themselves and to bring life to a place that had witnessed atrocities. By contrast, at the Flight 93 temporary memorial, the visit was different as the visitors were invited to sit on benches bearing the names of the victims. They had been offered by a local school.[286] (FIG. 3.1.) However, when sitting on those, they could not contemplate the memorial. Instead, they faced the field in which the plane crashed and they remained seating. This place offered visitors the possibility to have a longer visit at the memorial. This, of course, enhances the fact that, as seen on pictures, they could talk to each other, or instead remain silent to contemplate the memorial. According to Hamill, the temporary memorial in Shanksville remained for seven years and it offered people a place of reflection. It was terminated by a land dispute, before being replaced by the permanent memorial.[287]

[283] Anne Madarasz. *Op. Cit*., p. 39.
[284] Joel McKim. "New York's Spontaneous 9/11 Memorials and the Politics of Ambivalence." *Borderlands e-journal* 9.2 (2010): 1-20. Web. 25 Oct. 2016, p. 8.
[285] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 100.
[286] Sean D. Hamill. "Land Dispute Moves Memorial for 9/11 Victims across a Pennsylvania Road." *NYTimes.com*. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/28/washington/28memorial.html, accessed on June 28, 2017.
[287] *Ibid.*

Fig. 3.1. Benches with the victims' names at Flight 93 Temporary Memorial, 2001. Photo by Aude Vivere.

The materialistic nature of temporary memorials also encourages the visitors to engage physically with them, as they are not only made to be seen from a distance; they should be physically felt and this is why they touch the offerings. Doss indicates that memorials "[…] are especially meaningful because of their essentially kinesthetic dimensions."[288] Moreover, as observed on pictures, the visitors often have a look at the various objects that were previously left, which marks a personal and intimate engagement.[289] When performing this act, they emotionally engage in their visit. Touching the objects makes them realize that this materiality stands for people who have died and this helps them go through their grief. This is even more characteristic of temporary memorials as they are generally erected near or at the place of the tragedy. The visitors often speak with others to try to get to grips with what is beyond understanding. Furthermore, the dead remain very much alive through this materiality and the objects, that will be analyzed in this chapter and that only focus on the positive aspects, as those places are designed to help people say goodbye and heal. In Union Square, pictures showed that boxes of tissues were available for those who needed them. This entails that visitors were free to express how they felt, even if it involved crying. As Joy Satherwagstaff observes, temporary memorials encourage "participation in imagined

[288] Erika Doss. *The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials*. *Op. Cit*., p. 40.
[289] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 32.

communities of mourning, belonging, closure, and spiritual or emotional healing."[290] When visiting the site of the tragedy, citizens attempt to grieve and to understand the scale of the events. Being reunited in particular places where they pay their respects to the dead can help them in this process.

In her article about the spontaneous memorial at the Pentagon, Yocom, who is specialized in folklore,[291] also claims that the implication of the visitors differed from one memorial to the other. As opposed to the Twin Towers, the visitors did not mourn the Pentagon. "In the memorials that sprang up after September 11 in New York City, postcards, newspaper photos, and hastily made models of the World Trade Center Towers were everywhere, as people mourned the loss of a beloved city building"[292] to replace absent corpses, as they were part of the rubble of the collapsed towers. In fact, "when [visitors] did mention the Pentagon, they linked the building to the Towers."[293] Their symbol was more imprinted in people's minds than the Pentagon. She even goes on to say that "they stood for American exceptionalism and capitalism, for better lives in a new world, for genius and enterprise and more."[294] Furthermore, they symbolized the place where dreams could come true. The Pentagon is a building that is less known and not as spectacular.[295] Consequently, "if people did not come to protest or to mourn the Pentagon building, the mementos they left suggest that one of the reasons they came was to be present at the site, both as individuals and as members of a group of mourners,"[296] which implies that they needed to be part of a group. Mourning individually did not seem to suffice, as this large-scale tragedy was national.

3.3 Individuality of the Victims

As previously explained, the victims can be granted their individuality through various elements at memorials. Due to the materiality that constitutes them, temporary memorials are inherently personal and intimate. Thus, the individuality of the victims is generally expressed through objects. Naming practices are highly common, because this is a process of individualization. In addition, various objects can be linked to the victims and this emphasizes

[290] Alexander T. Riley. *Op. Cit.,* p. 76.
[291] http://mason.gmu.edu/~myocom/yocomroad/main.htm, accessed on July 7, 2017.
[292] Margaret Yocom. *Op. Cit*., p. 76.
[293] *Ibid*., p. 77.
[294] *Ibid*., p. 78.
[295] *Ibid*., p. 77.
[296] *Ibid*., p. 79.

this aspect as well. According to Hilker, recognizing that victims are seen as individuals is important because "the dead are indistinguishable from one another, [making] the absent equally absent."[297] This is particularly true for 9/11 because not all bodies could be recovered.

First, due to their status of heroes, the victims of United Airlines Flight 93 were highly individualized by the visitors through their naming and also through the objects left at the temporary memorial, as some of them were rather personal and even specifically crafted for them, as will be explained further. Riley takes this idea into consideration in his book entitled *Angel Patriots: The Crash of United Flight 93 and the Myth of America*, in which he posits the view that the materiality present in Shanksville marked the need for ritual. When someone dies, mass and burials are common. They are however often restricted to the family of the victim. When events such as 9/11 happen, many citizens want to support the families, as they know that theirs could have been impacted as well, and because the media has broadcasted many images that make them feel they are part of the tragedy. Riley then adds that

> though [their] death […] is obviously not an act of sacrifice in the purely religious historical sense, we might well call it an act of 'auto-sacrifice.' The passengers are here placed carefully into a framework of meaning wherein they become willing martyrs for a set of values which, in death, they come to symbolically represent in material form at the memorial. They move from their initial status as profane, unremarkable, quotidian individuals to become sacred entities through their own violent destruction.[298]

This clearly emphasizes why the victims of United Airlines Flight 93 have been granted a status that was expressed through the leaving of many personalized objects. For instance, at the memorial, a row of "Angels of Freedom," one for each victim, could be seen. (FIG. 3.2.) Each one wore the American flag, several stars and the name of the dead person. They were decorated with personal objects that belonged to the victims or that were crafted for them, which again accentuates the individual and personal aspect of the offerings that were mostly in the colors of the nation. Among the objects, necklaces, flower necklaces were left. They were in blue, white and red. Sometimes, a picture of the victim was underneath the angel to emphasize its individuality. To Riley's mind, this was the "most intriguing bit of flag

[297] Anne Hilker. "The Comfort of Melancholy: Understanding the Experience of Absence at American Memorials." *The Journal of American Culture* 37.1 (2014): 29-36. Web. July 1, 2017, p. 29.
[298] Alexander T. Riley. Op. Cit., p. 88.

symbolism at the memorial […].”[299] He adds that “[each angel] offered a near perfect summary of the civil religious narrative. They bore the totem flag symbols, colors and patterns.”[300] They were “symbols of the dreadful power of the American nation over life and death.”[301] It means that on the one hand, the angels honored the victims that were given a new body, but on the other, they were a means of expressing the power of the nation that will not surrender, but that will keep its lost citizens in memory. Thus, crafting those angels was a means to make the victims present at the memorial. Even if their bodies do not lie there, as it would have been the case in a cemetery, those angels make them be physically present at the commemoration site. This again emphasizes that materiality is used to replace the loss of loved ones.

Fig. 3.2. Several “Angels of Freedom” at Flight 93 temporary memorial, 2001. Photo by Amanda Addox.

Second, the individualization of the victims was not as strong at the other temporary memorials. At the Pentagon, the visitors did not leave many personal pictures. However, a plaque with the names of the victims alongside with a photograph of the burning towers was displayed on the site. On the other hand, in New York City, it was much more complicated to individualize the victims, as when the temporary memorial was erected, the list of the dead

[299] *Ibid*., p. 97.
[300] *Ibid*.
[301] *Ibid*., p. 99.

had not yet been established. However, many pictures and names were present because the primary aim of the erection of the memorial was to find the missing ones, many of whom ended up having lost their life. It was consequently dedicated to all the victims of the attacks on 9/11 rather than to each individual that had lost his/her life.

3.4. Materiality

As already stated, materiality is typical of temporary memorials, as they are built thanks to the objects that the visitors bring when coming to the place, either where the catastrophe took place, or another area where it was possible for them to gather, as they could not access the site of the tragedy. The accumulation of all the offerings that are pieced together constitutes this materiality that builds the memorial. Part of this belongs to the citizens' and victims' everyday life. They are inexpensive, which renders the building of spontaneous memorials rather easy. Although this materiality that composes memorials remains emblematic, as it is present at all of them, it still bears a strong symbolism that is often linked to the victims. Furthermore, as stated by Doss, "temporary memorials are the creative products of human thought and emotional need that help mediate the psychic crisis of sudden and often inexplicable loss. The material culture of grief that they embody demonstrates the faith that contemporary audiences place in things to negotiate complex moments and events, such as traumatic death."[302] This materiality is thus needed to be able to mourn, and this explains why it constitutes memorials.

First, many of the objects were personalized. Various pictures and customized crafts could, for example, be witnessed in Union Square. Stevens explains that there were "strings of hand-folded origami paper cranes, a Japanese tradition that has come to symbolize peace, […]"[303] which had been shattered by the terrorists. Therefore, citizens wanted to restore it, as shown with these offerings. Conversely, at the Flight 93 temporary memorial, more emphasis was laid on the victims seen as individuals. Inevitably, some personal objects such as caps, t-shirts, as well as license plates were brought to the memorial. Many of these bore the American flag: hats, ball caps, beaded flag pins or even motorcycle sculptures. Those objects can be perceived as being unique because some belonged to the dead. Others were personally chosen by the visitors according to what would have pleased the victim for which they were

[302] Erika Doss. "The Emotional Life of Contemporary Public Memorials." *Op. Cit*., p. 15.
[303] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 91.

brought. Moreover, most of them reflected positivity as they were linked to activities that are important to the Americans, baseball and motorcycle, for instance. Consequently, the objects did not only restore the strength of the nation, they also promoted the idea that citizens would keep on performing those activities.

Second, emergency workers were honored for their service. In Pennsylvania, on a fireman jacket, several names could be read and the message "we remember FDNY – 343;" this number corresponding to the number of firemen who perished on 9/11.[304] This is even more personified, as names are mentioned, and yet, another aspect is added: firemen are valued for the service they offered their country. They are thus seen differently from the other victims, as this object conveys it. They are granted a special status, that of heroes who served their nation. Surprisingly, they are honored at the Flight 93 temporary memorial, even if they died in New York. In addition, a tremendous amount of various badges coming from rescue services departments was on display. Among them a variety of states and cities could be noticed: Ohio, Los Angeles, New York and so on. Similarly, the jacket of a paramedic was exposed at Union Square. Furthermore, rescue services were also represented there with toys – i.e. police cars and firemen trucks. It was important for the citizens to mark their gratitude for the work that the emergency workers have done and also for the courage that they have demonstrated in those difficult times. Even though they have lost their life in action, they saved many others, a sacrifice that citizens have acknowledged at the memorials.

Then, many objects that are present in the citizens' everyday life were brought to the memorials and they displayed various symbolic meanings. At the Pentagon temporary memorial, a tremendous amount of toys had been brought. Some were directly linked to the atrocity of the events, such as the many planes that either hung on a tree or lay underneath it. The tree symbolizes life and rebirth, while the planes stand for the weapons that the terrorists used. This is linked to the events: many victims have lost their life while being on a plane, and putting those in a tree shows that they remain alive at the memorial. Bringing those to the memorial is however not completely positive, as they are reminiscent of the atrocities that took place. Another very typical object was the teddy bears that were present at all temporary memorials, as they convey love, care, and tenderness. They are a means of sharing the idea that people should open their hearts and love, rather than bear resentment. At those places of

[304] "The Unofficial Home Page of FDNY." http://nyfd.com/9_11_wtc.html, accessed on May 20, 2017.

commemoration, the focus is laid on positive thoughts and feelings (i.e. love and security) and not on anger or hate towards the perpetrators. Children usually have teddy bears and they help soothe them when they feel sad or angry; feelings that were shared by the citizens after 9/11. This confirms Sturken's idea that teddy bears carry the effect of infantilization. "[They] are thus primarily objects that are intended to provide comfort to people, to convey the message that one can and will feel better,"[305] as "[they embody] the recognition of pain and [they offer], above all, the promise of empathy, companionship and comfort."[306] They actually allow the mourners not to feel alone, as "the teddy bear [does not] promise to make things better; it promises to make us feel better about the way things are."[307] Consequently, she claims that "comfort culture and the consumerism of kitsch objects of emotional reassurance are deeply connected to the renewed investment in the notion of American innocence."[308] Teddy bears, similarly to other objects, can thus be perceived as having therapeutic dimensions. At the Pentagon, some were in the colors of the nation, while others bore messages, the American flag or a costume (for example, the one of a fireman) and others were symbolic.

[305] Marita Sturken. *Tourists of History*. 1st ed. Durham: Duke University Press, 2007. Print, p. 6.
[306] *Ibid*., p. 7.
[307] *Ibid*.
[308] *Ibid.*

A white teddy bear (FIG. 3.3.) wore a black ribbon, which is a symbol of remembrance and mourning, as black is the color that is worn at funerals.[309] This particular bear also appeared with an American flag and a red and white daisy. This type of flower connotes innocence and hope,[310] which is clearly linked to the events as the victims were innocent and the nation has hope for a better future. In addition, white also shares this idea of innocence, as well as peace, whereas red stands for the blood of the dead, which symbolizes the victims. With this bear, they are not seen as individuals, but as a unity, since they are the heart of the flower. Through the use of simple objects, visitors can thus manage to share important ideas.

FIG. 3.3. Teddy Bear with flags at the Pentagon temporary memorial, 2001. Photo by Rudi Williams.

In addition, some balloons were present in Union Square, as well as at the Pentagon where feelings of patriotism were expressed with the sentence "I love the USA" printed on it. (FIG. 3.4.) Similarly to flowers that will be analyzed in another section of this chapter, balloons symbolize the brevity of life. This explains their presence at temporary memorials, since those are erected after traumatic events in which lives were lost. As opposed to the other objects that are not necessarily temporary, balloons and flowers are. This characteristic explains why they are suited to this type of commemoration. Furthermore, as can be seen on the picture, at the Pentagon, the objects lay on the ground and there was no structure. However, a board had been placed to allow visitors to leave messages. They can be seen contemplating what has been previously brought, which entails a kind of communication that permits them to remain silent while visiting the place. Being there invites them to communicate with others and to feel a presence: both of the community and the victims.

[309] Michael Ferber. *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Print, p. 28.
[310] Ad de Vries. *Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery*. Amsterdam [u.a.]: North-Holland, 1984. Print, p. 127.

FIG. 3.4. Various objects including balloons at the Pentagon temporary memorial, 2001. Photo by Rudi Williams.

The destruction of the Twin Towers that were highly symbolic has particularly marked the world. It is consequently not surprising that images of them were present at temporary memorials. However, as opposed to the Pentagon temporary memorial where pictures of the World Trade Center Towers were present, none had been brought in Shanksville. Indeed, the focus seems to have been laid on the victims instead. Looking from a distance, the most noticeable aspect was the amount of American flags, whose symbolism will be analyzed further in this chapter. Despite this absence at Flight 93 temporary memorial, it seems obvious that the Towers were present through the use of pictures in New York. One of them bore the message "we will prevail," showing a strong wish not to surrender, but to remain united. Moreover, someone had brought a piece of steel coming from one of the collapsed towers. "Piece of World Trade Center II" was written next to it. To my mind, showing such a piece heightens the feelings of the visitors and the impact that the catastrophe had on them, which explains why they were put in the National September 11 Museum. This presence of pictures and pieces of the buildings contrasts with the design that was later chosen for the National September 11 Memorial in New York, where the primary feature is the two voids that represent the absent Twin Towers, as will be exposed in the next chapter.

Some religious objects such as crosses were also brought. They symbolize that Americans still place faith in their grieving process, and that they hope that God will bless their country. At the Flight 93 temporary memorial, a huge wooden cross, brought by a local pastor, James Vandervort of the Christian Missionary Alliance,[311] was on the site. It was "ten feet in height and draped with the white cloth that in many Christian denominations signifies the risen Christ."[312] There were also some statues of the Virgin Mary that lay on the ground. This aspect could also be witnessed in New York with the presence of many crosses. Although former rituals that were linked to religion have been replaced by new ones that include the bringing of objects, some citizens still want to express their faith, as it will help to have a positive view for the future, as well as believe that there is something after earthly life. In addition, even though praying will not bring the victims back, performing this act gives hope to bring some comfort and peace of mind to those who have lost a loved one.

3.5 Symbolic Elements

3.5.1 Flowers

Flowers convey a wide variety of meanings. Their symbolism depends on their color and on their variety. Due to the high number of different flowers present at the various memorials, the scope of this analysis will limit itself to a few species and colors that seemed to be the most meaningful and the most common at the various places of commemoration. Traditionally, they mirror the brevity of life, an aspect that is evident when erecting a place to remember those who have tragically and brutally lost theirs. However, at the Flight 93 temporary memorial, many of the flowers were artificial, which challenges this aspect. It could represent the visitors' wish to make the temporary memorial last longer, and to prevent the flowers from dying, as opposed to the victims for whom they were brought. As will be exposed in the following lines, the various memorials were quite similar regarding flowers. At all of them, the dominant colors were those of the nation (i.e. blue, red and white), as well as yellow.

The most striking aspect regarding flowers was the visitors' intent to express feelings of patriotism and unity through the colors chosen. Each one carries its own symbolism. While

[311] Alexander T. Riley. *Op. Cit*., p. 78.
[312] *Ibid*., p. 79.

blue conveys the idea of peace and hope,[313] white expresses purity and faith.[314] Although traditionally, red indicates deep love and passion,[315] it can also denote courage, respect and admiration.[316] All the feelings expressed through those colors are often conveyed at temporary memorials. Carnations were present at all of them and their symbolism normally depends on their colors. When being white, they express innocence and pure love,[317] reminding that the victims will always be loved and remembered, and that they were innocent. They mostly appeared in red, meaning that the heart is aching and that admiration and deep love is expressed towards the victims. They were numerous at the Flight 93 temporary memorial where they took the form of flower crowns, either in a circle or heart shape, augmented with ribbons in the colors of the American flag. This emphasizes the symbolism that the heart of the whole nation was aching, and that the citizens were united in those troubled times, during which they wanted to express their admiration for the dead who had lost their life. White, the color of purity and faith, was expressed with the presence of lilies and roses. The former is commonly associated with funerals and it implies that "the soul of the departed has received restored innocence after death,"[318] whereas the latter "[honors] a friend or a loved one in recognition of a new beginning or a farewell."[319] Both those species can be used to express that the mourning process has started, as they are a means of saying goodbye to the dead and accepting that they will never come back and that life goes on. This feeling was also expressed through the last color with blue marguerites that could be observed at Union Square. This flower species suggests the idea of new beginnings,[320] which can symbolize that thanks to the memorial, Americans will manage to grieve, express their feelings and start living again. It can be said that this plant is perennial,[321] which means that it "lasts for more than two growing seasons."[322] It adds the aspect that this plant is strong, as the citizens should be.

[313] Michael Ferber. *Op. Cit*., p. 31.
[314] *Ibid*., pp. 233-234.
[315] *Ibid*., p. 169.
[316] "Flower Color Meanings." http://www.flowermeaning.com/flower-color-meanings/, accessed on May 18, 2017.
[317] Ad de Vries. *Op. Cit*., p. 82.
[318] "Meaning & Symbolism of Lilies." http://www.teleflora.com/meaning-of-flowers/lily, accessed on May 18, 2017.
[319] "The Rose Flower: its Meanings and Symbolism." http://www.flowermeaning.com/rose-flower-meaning/, accessed on May 18, 2017.
[320] Ad de Vries. *Op. Cit*., p. 127.
[321] "Blue Marguerite." https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/blue_marguerite, accessed on May 18, 2017.
[322] "Perennial." http://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/american/perennial_1, accessed on May 18, 2017.

Next, memorials did not particularly focus on the bad or political sides of the events. They were primarily erected to offer a place to mourn and provide positive feelings that would enable the citizens to feel united and to restore their faith in a better future, without forgetting the victims. This idea was expressed with the various yellow flowers at the different sites. They typically denote life, happiness and the return of the sun in the spring, as well as pride and friendship.[323] Obviously, the idea of joy and happiness does not seem to suit memorials. However, this emphasizes that although, at that moment, the nation was profoundly sad, hope for better days was typical of memorials. It means that the symbolism portrayed by yellow flowers echoes the one that is expressed with light at memorials, as will be developed further in this chapter. In addition, those flowers can be used to convey the idea of pride, which was strong for the passengers of United Airlines Flight 93, as they voluntarily sacrificed their lives to save others. Consequently, many sunflowers, which bear a resemblance with the sun and light up the area, were brought to the various temporary memorials. They were a means of expressing the admiration for the victims, as well as seeking positivity and strength in the aftermath of the events.[324]

Lastly, chrysanthemum flowers that are typically brought to cemeteries were of various colors, such as pink and white, as can be seen in this picture at the Pentagon. (FIG. 3.5.) They were highly common at all temporary memorials. They etymologically mean "golden flower" and they customarily proclaim support from family and loved ones and they can help cheer up a sad person.[325] The flowers could be seen as a metaphor: the gloomy events represent the beginning of winter, that is not always seen positively, and yet, there is hope in a better future, since the flowers can be used to support others when they are trying to recover from a life-changing event. America has changed after 9/11, but the citizens have managed to overcome the tragedy and move on with their lives.

[323] Michael Ferber. *Op. Cit*., pp. 244-245.
[324] Ad de Vries. *Op. Cit*., p. 449.
[325] *Ibid*., p. 98.

FIG 3.5. Chrysanthemum Flowers and Army Flag at the Pentagon temporary memorial, 2001. Photo by Rudi Williams.

3.5.2 Flags to Express Unity and Remembrance

Many flags, each filled with their own symbolism, were present. However, the various memorials differ in the importance given to them. At Union Square, the American flag marked its presence. Nonetheless, it seems that it was not as numerous as at the Pentagon or in Shanksville. This object filled with symbolism is generally present to display unity, patriotism and strength.[326] Even if strong symbols of the nation (i.e. the World Trade Center and the Pentagon) were targeted, citizens stand together and prove that they are strong and that they will remain united for their country. Consequently, many flags were displayed, either in a traditional form, or in various objects or drawings. Madarasz goes even further and claims that "[the messages present on some of the flags] demonstrate the power of the flag to serve as a blanket of comfort to a nation, a family, a mother, in trying times."[327] Furthermore, Kaplan shares this idea and observes that "(at least in New York around where the catastrophe had happened) the flags were also a way to indicate empathy for those who had lost relatives and friends, and a shared trauma about the shock to the United States."[328] Bratta adds that in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks, flags were ubiquitous and to him, "to be patriotic was to display the flag, and refusal to display the flag was unpatriotic,"[329] as it "[functions]

[326] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic, *Op. Cit*., p. 101.
[327] Anne Madarasz. *Op. Cit*., p. 40.
[328] E. Ann Kaplan. *Op. Cit.,* p. 9.
[329] Phillip M. Bratta. "Flag Display Post-9/11: A Discourse on American Nationalism." *The Journal of American Culture* 32.3 (2009): 232-243. Web. July 2, 2017, pp. 232-233.

symbolically as a unifying national force."[330] To his mind, it is typically used to express patriotism, which is highly important when the nation has been targeted, as it refers to ideals such as "freedom or liberty, democracy, individualism, equality or egalitarianism, and the American Dream,"[331] ideas which are essential to restore the strength of the nation and to distinguish itself from the others. The American flag was deemed important after 9/11 because "the characteristics of bravery, courage and strength, along with a self-titled hero are depicted in the waving of the flag. The moving live flag indicates that the country is still alive."[332] In fact, "the flag enforces [the] national consciousness and sentiment and allows Americans to believe they need to stay strong and triumph over their attackers through their unity."[333] Because the flag is considered as highly important by the Americans, they display it everywhere, and for 9/11 they even created other flags that were based on this one, as they also share the idea of patriotism, while honoring the victims and remembering events that are part of the history of the nation.

Conversely, even if many nationalities were represented among the victims, this aspect was not mirrored in New York through the use of flags, while it was the case for Flight 93. Even if they were outnumbered by the colors of the United States, a Japanese, an Australian and a German flag (FIG. 3.2.) were present to honor the nationality of the victims – an aspect that individualizes the victims, as their citizenship is recognized. Next to that, the ones present at the Pentagon represented the force of the nation, rather than the thought towards the events: there was the flag of the United States Marine Corps and the one of the United States Army. Again, this personalized use is linked to whom the memorial honors. Here, "most of the people killed in the terrorist attack on the Pentagon […] were soldiers and Army civilian employees."[334] The flag consequently honors their career and their service for their country.

Moreover, Riley mentions that the memorial dedicated to the victims of Flight 93 that was erected in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, "certainly suggests [the] sacred status [of flags]," as "the memorial [ones] directly tie the national symbolism of the traditional stars and stripes into the specific events of 9/11."[335] This emphasizes that this place of remembrance is

[330] *Ibid*., p. 233.
[331] *Ibid.*
[332] *Ibid*., p. 237.
[333] *Ibid.*
[334] Rudy Williams. "Spontaneous Memorial to Terrorists' Victims Grows Daily." http://archive.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=44811, accessed on May 7, 2017.
[335] Alexander T. Riley, *Op. Cit*., p. 91.

particularly full of symbolism regarding flags and this distinguishes it from the other memorials that were analyzed. Many commemorative flags were brought to the site. Four of them will be analyzed: the 9/11 Remembrance Flag, the Flight 93 Hero Flag, the 9/11 National Remembrance Flag and the Freedom Flag. The changes made to the original flag permitted to express feelings and pay homage to the victims in a different and original way.

First, the 9/11 Remembrance Flag (FIG. 3.6.) was present in Shanksville and it is full of symbolism, as demonstrated with the following quote:

> [It] was designed to honor and remember the thousands of heroes lost on September 11, 2001, who knowingly or not, gave up their lives for our freedom. When such a historical event as this takes place, it is our duty as American citizens to ensure that our future generations keep these memories alive; not dwelling on the sadness and devastation that occurred, but learning from the circumstances and making every effort to prevent similar tragedies in our future.[336]

Fig. 3.6. The Remembrance Flag.

This emphasizes that the flag was not only designed to remember and honor the citizens who died on that day, but also to ensure that the events would never be forgotten, because as previously stated, we need those *lieux de mémoire* to remember[337] and to build the identity of a nation.[338] Events such as 9/11 are part of the history of the nation, and if there is no physical trace to remember them, they will be forgotten in the future. However, this impulse to remember should not be given a negative connotation. Of course, the flag will always send

[336] "Remembrance Flag." http://web.archive.org/web/20071017110744/http://remembranceflag.com:80/index2.html, accessed on May 11, 2017.
[337] Pierre Nora. *Op. Cit*., p. 12.
[338] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p. 48.

back to the past, instead of looking at the future, but what has to be recalled should not be the terrorist attack, but what ensued, i.e. "how [the Americans] all united together, physically, emotionally, monetarily, and willingly… risking [their] lives, if necessary, for the freedom of [their] children and [their] children's children." Thus, following this intent to remember, many symbolic aspects should be brought to the fore. The first element that can be noticed is the colors. Even though the design does not mirror the one from the traditional flag, the colors do and they share an idea of nationalism and patriotism. However, they are augmented in the sense that they were not chosen at random. The largest part is in red, which symbolizes blood. This feeling of nationalism is all the more emphasized with the sentence "God bless America," "a slogan that has been adopted to represent the hope and faith of [the] nation,"[339] that stands in this part. Many citizens died and this is represented with the color of their blood. By contrast, the Americans remain faithful to religion and still praise God to bless their country and prevent such a tragedy from happening ever again. Then, blue symbolizes peace and unity,[340] making the wish both for the victims to rest in peace and for the citizens to live united in a peaceful country. The circle shape emphasizes this idea, as "instead of fear and helplessness, Americans united, to comfort grieving hearts and restore shattered dreams."[341] In addition, white also shares this idea, as well as the one of purity,[342] accentuating that the victims were pure and innocent and that their death was unfair. Next to this, the three places targeted are represented: the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and then the blue part, symbolizing the sky and the action of the passengers of United Airlines Flight 93 that took place in the sky before crashing in a field in Pennsylvania. Of course, the four stars stand for the four airplanes that were hijacked on 9/11. Each tower is represented by a star, then one is inside the Pentagon and the last one appears in the blue part is United Airlines Flight 93.[343]

[339] "Remembrance Flag." *Op. Cit.*
[340] Michael Ferber. *Op. Cit*., p. 31.
[341] "Remembrance Flag." *Op. Cit.*
[342] Michael Ferber. *Op. Cit*., p. 234.
[343] "Remembrance Flag." *Op. Cit.*

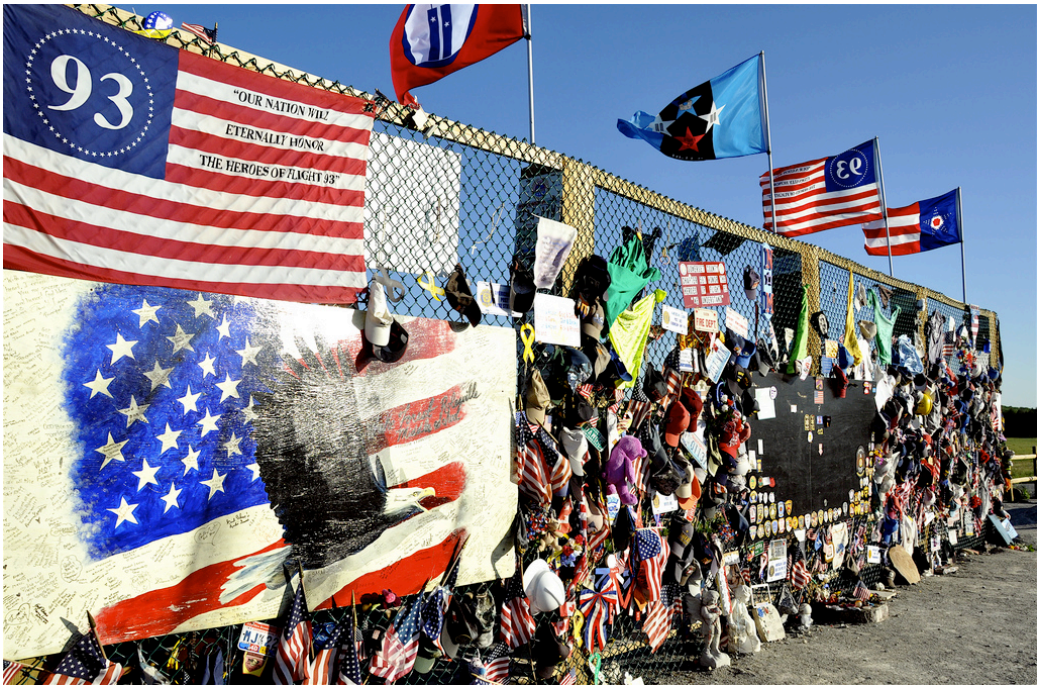

Fig. 3.7. Flight 93 Hero Flag (upper left corner) and various other flags at Flight 93 temporary memorial, 2001. Photo by Kevin Burkett.

Second, the Flight 93 Hero Flag (FIG. 3.7.) was designed to honor the heroes who voluntarily sacrificed their lives to save others. This is the one whose design is the closest to the traditional flag. The basic features are kept: the red and white stripes with the blue square in the upper left corner. The number "93" replaces the usual fifty stars, which are represented in a circle around it. Again, this circle-shape demonstrates the unity that Americans displayed in the aftermath of the events. The presence of the message "our nation will eternally honor the heroes of Flight 93" is also to be noticed. The victims of Flight 93 do not have the same status as the ones who died at the Pentagon and in New York City. None of the victims deserved to die, but the ones of Flight 93 are considered as being heroes. They made the plane crash and prevented the hijackers from reaching their target. This act probably saved many lives and they should therefore be thanked for that. Their act is acknowledged and they are clearly remembered as heroes, as the victims of the other places did not have their own flag. They only appeared on flags where all the places targeted on that day were included.

Fig. 3.8. The 9/11 National Remembrance Flag in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, 2001.[344]

The 9/11 National Remembrance Flag (FIG. 3.8.) is the third one that was present at Flight 93 temporary memorial. The colors that dominate are light blue and black, even if some red and white are present as well. First, black symbolizes fear, evil, and death.[345] It thus mirrors the attack on the United States, as well as the death of the various victims. This is emphasized by the fact that the four stars that represent the hijacked planes, as well as the name-date, are situated in this part of the flag. This color also marks the sorrow for the lives that were taken on that day. Then, the two extreme parts are in light blue, the color that is the symbol of peace, tranquility and unity.[346] This particular use displays that peace will be restored and that America has remained united in those darks times. It also "represents the color of the state flags for each state where a plane was downed – New York, Pennsylvania and Virginia."[347] The stars of the two flights that were aimed at destroying the Twin Towers touch this blue color. This is a means of showing that even if strong symbols were destroyed, the nation will not surrender and the citizens remain hopeful for a united and peaceful future. In addition, the different stars were not represented using the same color, a choice that, again, bears some symbolism. Red that means aggression, danger and blood,[348] was used for Flight 93, as the passengers died with the status of heroes. They knew there was danger and that they had to take action and they decided to attack the hijackers on the plane (i.e. aggression), which

[344] http://pabook2.libraries.psu.edu/palitmap/Flight%2093%20Memorial.html, accessed on May 1, 2017.
[345] Michael Ferber. *Op. Cit.*, pp. 28-29.
[346] *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.
[347] "9/11 National Remembrance Flag." http://www.911remembranceflag.com, accessed on May 11, 2017.
[348] Michael Ferber. *Op. Cit.*, p. 169.

resulted in their death with blood. Blue was chosen for the Pentagon, Headquarters of the United States Department of Defense, as it can symbolize security,[349] which is what the building is supposed to reflect. This is what was targeted and shattered on that day. Lastly, purity, peace and reverence are expressed through the white color, which symbolizes that the victims were pure and that they are now resting in peace. The reverence part is to show respect and thankfulness for the actions of the rescue workers that displayed a tremendous courage and force on that day. It should be added that the four stars are linked, as they are touching each other, and this is another symbol of unity.[350]

Lastly the Freedom flag (FIG. 3.9.) could be witnessed at the Flight 93 temporary memorial. Again, the three national colors are present and the symbolism is quite similar to the other flags previously detailed. The lives that were lost are represented by a white star which is surrounded by five white bars that form the Pentagon. Again, blue symbolizes unity, peace and security, which also shares the idea that the Americans are directed towards a better future, while constantly going back to the past, as it should not be forgotten. The red and white stripes bear a strong symbolism, as their design was thoroughly studied when created, as presented in the analysis found.[351] The small red stripes up and at the bottom respectively represent the blood of the victims at the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania, while the two bigger red stripes stand for the Twin Towers.[352] And then, similarly to the 9/11 National Remembrance Flag previously dealt with, white represents thankfulness for the service of the rescue workers.

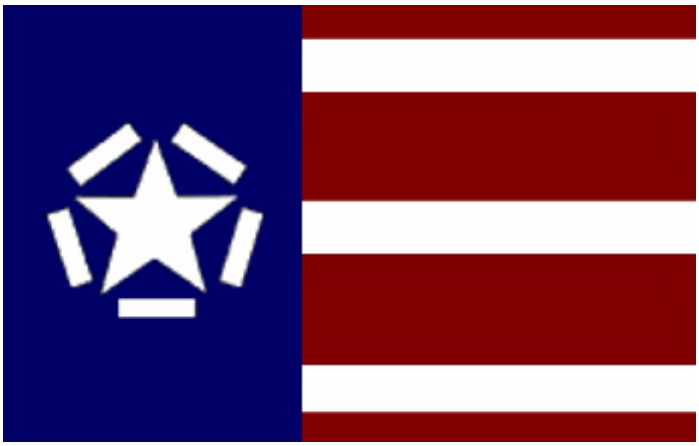

Fig. 3.9. Freedom Flag.[353]

[349] *Ibid*., p. 31.
[350] "9/11 National Remembrance Flag." http://www.911remembranceflag.com, accessed on May 11, 2017.
[351] http://www.bhsbees.com/911_memorial_flag_details.jpg, accessed on May 11, 2017.
[352] *Ibid.*
[353] http://www.freedomflagfoundation.org, accessed on May 2, 2017.

The different flags share some similarities. All of them are based on the traditional flag of the United States, as the creators have played with and modified several elements that are originally to be found. These reinterpretations demonstrate a keen sense of imagination. First and foremost, the colors of the nation – i.e. blue, white and red – have been included in the various designs, as the traditional flag was previously used as a means to reassert national values in the aftermath of the events. Therefore, the same aim is pursued with the four modified flags, for which the colors were augmented to amplify their symbolism. Furthermore, the fifty stars that originally represent the States of the country appear differently in those reinterpretations of the flag. In the Remembrance Flag and the 9/11 National Remembrance Flag, the four hijacked planes, are each represented with a star. It means that the victims are regarded as a group, and not seen individually, as is the case at the various memorials. This is all the more emphasized on the Freedom Flag, as all of them are presented with one star only.

In addition, the stripes that represent the former thirteen British Colonies that became independent in 1776, the date that marks the independence of the United States are not present in all these flags, which stands for the fact that the country will never be free of terrorist attacks. However, as they have been kept on the Flight 93 Hero Flag, whose design is the closest to the original one, it again emphasizes the status of the victims of United Airlines Flight 93 who sacrificed their lives to save others; they permitted their nation to be more free and less in danger. This is highlighted with the 93 that is surrounded by the 50 stars that represent the states: thanks to their courage, the whole nation was protected. Thus, the citizens gather to honor the passengers and crewmembers, as written on the flag. The circle that stands for the unity of the nation is also to be witnessed on the Remembrance Flag, and this is expressed on the 9/11 National Remembrance Flag with the four stars that are touching each other. For the Freedom Flag, the stripes have been kept, but they have acquired a new meaning, since they stand for the places that were targeted, as has been previously explained.

3.6 Messages to Express Peace, Hope and Unity

At memorials, the presence of written texts usually takes the form either of the victims' names or of various written messages left by the visitors who needed to express how they felt and that represent a diversity in opinions. Most notes were religious and personal; they avoided

anger, hate and political ideas. As will be explained, many conveyed messages of thankfulness, hope, unity and patriotism.

First, at Flight 93 temporary memorial, most notes were addressed to the heroes that had taken action against the terrorists. Those were messages of thankfulness towards the victims in Shanksville, with for instance, "you made us believe in heroes," or "thanks Angels."[354] In addition, the phrase "let's roll" was typical of this particular memorial. It was present on t-shirts and on various other objects. It actually pays homage to Todd Beamer, a passenger of United Airlines Flight 93. He had managed to make a call from the plane. Those are the last words that he pronounced, as these were the ones that he uttered when he and other passengers entered the cockpit to prevent the hijackers from reaching their target. "Let's roll" consequently echoes the tremendous courage broadcasted by the passengers who decided to take action against the hijackers.[355] A plaque displayed it with a longer message that mentioned the courage of the passengers and flight crewmembers. It reads the following:

> Let's roll in memoriam - Those gallant passengers and flight crew members of United Airlines Flight 93 that on September 11th 2001 defeated the coward terrorist hijackers and their intended purpose. Blessed are the peacemakers… for their heroism has allowed freedom to go on ringing. We honor you… We admire you… We salute you… and we shall never forget. May this land remain forever… America the beautiful.[356]

Those lines truly emphasize the status of the passengers. Here, the terrorists are mentioned, but they are depicted negatively, and they are seen as cowards. This is to highlight even more that those citizens did not remain passive, and that thanks to their courage their nation can be free, as also presented in this note: "Flight 93 We ride in freedom because of your sacrifice."[357] At the other memorials, messages mentioned the victims, but they were not granted a specific status, except in New York, where a message written in the colors of the nation read: "Thank you to all the rescue workers. Our hearts and prayers are with the

[354] "Tributes and Archives." http://www.honorflight93.org/memorial/memorial-today/?fa=tributes-archives, accessed on May 20, 2017.
[355] Jim McKinnon. "The Phone Line from Flight 93 was still Open when a GTE Operator Heard Todd Beamer Say: 'Are you Guys Ready? Let's Roll'" *Old Gazette.* September 16, 2001. http://old.post-gazette.com/headlines/20010916phonecallnat3p3.asp, accessed on May 6, 2017.
[356] "Flight 93 Temporary Memorial, Shanksville, PA." https://rhodaschuler.com/flight93/, accessed on May 20, 2017.
[357] http://pabook2.libraries.psu.edu/palitmap/Flight%2093%20Memorial.html, accessed on May 16, 2017.

victims."[358] Here, the efforts of the emergency services are recognized, and they are given importance.

Second, religious messages were written at the memorials. A lot of them conveyed the idea of hope that could be provided by God. As a matter of fact, no messages full of hatred towards Islam were present. However, some encouraged the visitors not to feel hate towards any community. For example, "Jewish voices united against anti-Arab racism" could be read in New York. The mentioning of "anti-Arab racism" is highly important here, because when terrorist attacks take place, they are the community that generally receives hate from the citizens. Thus, here, Jewish people marked their wish not to hate Arabs, as they are not responsible for what happened. The highly frequent "God bless America" was present at the various temporary memorials. It was drawn on a banner at the Pentagon, probably crafted by children at school. The message was written in the colors and design of the American flag. Again, this phrase, which is typical of Americans, emphasizes their feeling of patriotism. They stand together and united as a nation and God will protect them. Furthermore, God was not always mentioned, but Americans had faith in a better future and in humanity, as noted here: "May Peace prevail on earth. May peace be in the USA. May the USA's divine missins [sic] be accomplished. Americans are divine beings. Humanity is divine."[359] Although the terrorists who organized the attacks did not have good intentions, and were consequently not divine, Americans are. They will accomplish the missions that God has given them; and those do not include killing others, as jihadists pretend that Allah has ordered them to do. While many messages overtly mentioned religion, sometimes, it was done in an indirect way. For example, at the Pentagon, the note "September 11. Never give up. Never give in. Never forget. Never again"[360] was attached on a cross, which conveys the idea that Americans have faith in their future, a tomorrow in which such attacks on them would never happen ever again.

Then, a lot of messages marked the wish to always remember. Visitors wanted to ensure that the sacrifice of the heroes of Flight 93 would never be forgotten, as indicated in the following message: "Dedicated to the brave Americans on Flight 93 that sacrificed their lives in the face

[359] *9/11 Union Square Vigil*. 2001. Video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iERGrh7koDM&index=3&list=PLXpWGAcYnn9rLpNN8W7FEgBxfwmJWkyCR, accessed on May 7, 2017.
[360] Rudy Williams. *Spontaneous Memorial to Terrorists' Victims Grows Daily.* http://archive.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=44811, accessed on May 7, 2017.

of terrorism. Your actions shall never be forgotten and you shall forever remain in our prayers."[361] Similar ideas were present at the Pentagon, with for example, "we miss you today – we missed you yesterday – we will miss you tomorrow" and "your sacrifice will not be forgotten."[362] Of course, memorials are erected to be able to grieve, but also because they serve as *lieux de mémoire*. Without any physical materiality, memories are simply not passed on. Thus, ensuring that the victims are not going to be forgotten is essential.

As temporary memorials are built by the citizens and not by politicians, they focus on peace and unity, rather than on expressing political views. This aspect of the temporary memorial at United Airlines Flight 93 crash site was analyzed by Riley. According to him, "direct political commentary [was] rare, although an implicit nationalist politics in support of the war efforts in Afghanistan and, later, Iraq [was] frequently encountered."[363] At the Pentagon, behind a bulletin board, someone had written: "America is still free and will never accept terrorism."[364] Here, the word "terrorism" is mentioned. It was usually not the case, as most messages conveyed positive ideas. This note cannot be deemed negative. However, mentioning this word sends back to the events. Thus, the tragedy and the perpetrators were rarely mentioned in the messages. At Union Square, a passer-by had written "our grief is not a cry for war,"[365] which emphasizes that no matter how many lives were lost, vengeance does not seem right. In fact, many messages conveyed the idea of peace: "Love thy poor – immigrant – Jewish – addicted – gay – Muslim – Old – atheist neighbor."[366] Everyone should stand together, as the various "let us unite," "love one another" and "peace and love" showed. Even in those hard times, the various memorials enabled the citizens to gather and to feel their strength as a nation. As one of the note with a picture of the Twin Towers mentioned, "the American spirit stands immortal."[367]

Lastly, foreigners visited the different places. They often left messages in their own language. At the Pentagon, a family from Guatemala wrote the following: "Viva freedom. Guatemala love [sic] USA. Nuestro dolor con las personas que han perdido a sus familias. Dios salve

[361] *9/11 Union Square Vigil*. 2001. Video. *Op. Cit.*
[362] Rudy Williams. *Op. Cit.*
[363] Alexander T. Riley. *Op. Cit.,* p. 84.
[364] Rudy Williams. *Op. Cit.*
[365] *9/11 Union Square Vigil*. 2001. Video. *Op. Cit.*
[366] http://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-the-outpouring-of-love-and-compassion-after-911-was-seen-daily-at-26080973.html, accessed on May 20, 2017.
[367] *9/11 Union Square Vigil*. 2001. Video. *Op. Cit.*

America. We love USA,"[368] which can be translated into the following words: "Long live freedom. Our pain goes with the people who have lost a family member." They also drew the American flag on the note and wrote "Peace and love," as well as the date "Sep. 18 - 2001". The attacks had an impact not only in the United States. Many felt compelled to stand with the American citizens in those troubled times. They thus visited the various places to express solidarity and empathy. Because many have witnessed the events on television, they were involved and they know that their country could have been the target of the jihadists as well.

3.7 Light as Life

Light, with its symbolic presence and meaning, is often part of memorials. Gustavsson mentions that "such brighter symbols […] will help to lighten the bleakness of the shock that has been experienced."[369] At temporary memorials, it often takes the shape of candles left by the visitors. This mirrors the candles that are present at burials because they symbolize hope and life. The dead relive and are present through the candle's flame. In my opinion, light also expresses calmness and peace, and it can help soothe one's spirit when grieving. In addition, it is synonymous with new beginnings, as each morning, the sun brings the light that is necessary to start a new day.

The three 9/11 temporary memorials analyzed did not grant a similar importance to light. Whereas candles were totally absent at the Flight 93 temporary memorial and quite rare at the Pentagon temporary memorial, they were present in great numbers at Union Square were vigils were held (FIG. 3.10.).[370] In fact, candles seem to be the most common object that was brought to this memorial. They were similar to the ones usually left at cemeteries, they appeared in different colors and some of them bore an image of the Virgin Mary, which marks the wish to bring religion to the memorial. As seen on videos, while lit at night during the vigils, they truly added a peaceful atmosphere to the park, as well as a presence to replace the absence of lost ones.

[368] Rudy Williams. *Op. Cit.*
[369] Anders Gustavsson. *Op. Cit*., p. 32.
[370] *9/11 Union Square Vigil*. 2001. Video. *Op. Cit.*

FIG. 3.10. Many candles, flags and flowers at the temporary memorial in Union Square. Photo by John Reilly.

Of course, light sometimes marks its presence differently. It is the case with the temporary memorial "Tribute in Light," (FIG. 3.11.) originally named "Towers of Light" that lit New York's sky for the first time in March 2002, and that has become an annual memorial as it illuminates the city each year on the anniversary of the attacks. According to Blais and Rasic, it "quickly became a symbol of endurance and hope, uniting those directly affected by the attacks with people from around the world witnessing the glowing skyline."[371] When it first made its appearance, the temporary memorial was on the one hand positively regarded as expressed by Kaplan: "I liked the Twin Towers of Light that were turned on that day. They seemed a gesture that was strong yet peaceful, as against the violence that has characterized much of the response of the United States."[372] On the other hand, Sturken claims that it generated much tension, as it seemed to mourn the absence of the buildings, rather than that of the victims.[373] To my mind, it is true that since the two beams of light mark the precise location of the former Twin Towers, it is impossible to deny that the memorial commemorates the hole that their absence makes in the city's landscape. However, as light marks a presence and symbolizes the removal of darkness, it suggests that even if a symbolic landmark was destroyed, hope and faith are still present. Consequently, even if at first the memorial could be interpreted as downsizing the death of thousands of persons and only mirroring the absence of the towers, to me, the presence of the victims is represented in this

[371] Allison *Blais and Lynn Rasic*. *Op. Cit*., p. 105.
[372] E. Ann Kaplan. *Op. Cit*., p. 17.
[373] Marita Sturken. "The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero." *Op. Cit.,* p. 319.

powerful light. In addition, it should be borne in mind that, as written by Sturken in her article entitled "The Objects that Lived: the 9/11 Museum and Material Transformation,"[374] dust became a very important symbol after the attacks. In fact, when the buildings collapsed, they turned into dust and the victims that were never recovered belonged to this sacred substance and made one with the buildings. Furthermore, to my mind, it means that the dead could not be dissociated from the World Trade Center's rubble. Edkins shares this thought and writes that "the victims died as objects, *indistinguishable from*, and trapped in, the buildings in which they had worked. Not only did they die, they were wiped out, 'disappeared', eradicated without trace. What was lost was not just lives and bodies but a landscape."[375] With this thinking, it seems logical, that even if it is not clear at first glance, this memorial does mourn the victims, and not only the buildings. In the end, "Tribute in Light" seems to share the idea that hope remains and that the nation keeps on remembering lost ones through the use of light. After those dark times, America will rise again, as "light does overcome gloom."[376]

FIG. 3.11. "Tribute in Light" that illuminates New York's sky. Photo by Kenn Mann.

[374] Marita Sturken. "The Objects that Lived: The 9/11 Museum and Material Transformation." *Op. Cit.,* pp. 14-16.
[375] Jenny Edkins. *Op. Cit*., p. 263.
[376] Ashish Bose. "Zeroing on Ground Zero." *Economic and Political Weekly* 37.14 (2002): 1321-1322, p. 1321.

In conclusion, as presented in the previous pages, the presence of many objects and elements are typical of temporary memorials. As Madarasz points it out, "many [visitors] leave an offering, a small token chosen in haste, a work of art that has been months in the planning. Many leave a flag of some sort. Each item reflects the visitor's thoughts and feelings about or understanding of the events of September 11, 2001."[377] In the end, it seems that the visitors brought those objects in order to bind themselves to the events. The whole nation has been impacted and the citizens needed to feel that they were connected to the victims and that they were present for their families. Although this materiality can raise questions towards the commercial aspect behind temporary memorials, it should be remembered that each object bears some symbolism, as previously stated. This assertion holds true for the previous analysis, as the different temporary memorials distinguish themselves in their physical presence. In addition, Sturken further claims that in the United States, consumerism has long been seen as a kind of therapy. Furthermore, "throughout American history, consumer culture has also played a central role in the shaping of concepts of citizenship and national identity."[378] Therefore, the objects that constitute temporary memorials can be regarded as a means to help the Americans overcome their grief, as well as expressing their feelings when words did not suffice.

[377] Anne Madarasz. *Op. Cit.,* p. 37.
[378] Marita Sturken. *Tourists of History*. *Op. Cit*., p. 14.

Chapter 4: From Temporary to Permanent

The previous chapter has emphasized that when death is tragic and traumatizing, citizens spontaneously erect temporary memorials. In the case of mass disasters, such as 9/11, permanent memorials are often erected in order not to forget the victims and to provide citizens with a place to mourn and to gather. Following this intent, Blais and Rasic claim that in the aftermath of the events, "the most often expressed desire was for a fitting sense of permanence – a gravitas and material that would last, ensuring that hundreds of years from now, the names of the men, women and children killed on September 11, 2001, would remain."[379] For this tragic event, although memorials have been built all around the United States, Gessner states that

> the sites of violent terrorist impact in Manhattan, Washington, and Shanksville were immediately perceived as the definitive sites of mourning, and public discourse called for their later translation into locations for ritualized practices of commemoration around constructed memorials. Public discourse rendered them *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory, as Pierre Nora defines them.[380]

In fact, this supports the idea that permanent memorials are not only erected to honor the victims, but also because they provide an official site of memory, a place that will enable the citizens to remember the events eternally. Places to commemorate the victims are deemed necessary in this era that Doss defines as suffering from what she calls "memorial mania." In her article entitled "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America," she mentions that "challenging Freudian understandings of mourning as something to be 'worked through' quickly and privately, new modes of mourning are public and continuous, embodying growing beliefs in the inseparability of life from death and the endless, although not pathological, presence of grief."[381] This emphasizes the idea that in our era, mourning is endless, and this explains why memorials are more numerous than they used to be.

[379] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit.,* p. 186.
[380] Ingrid Gessner. *Op. Cit*., p. 1.
[381] Erika, Doss. "Spontaneous Memorials and Contemporary Modes of Mourning in America." *Material Religion* 2.3 (2006): 294-318. Web. August 10, 2016, p. 295.

This chapter focuses on the three 9/11 memorials that have been built at the places of the attacks and that have been presented in Chapter 2. The National September 11 Memorial that is located in New York is dedicated to the 2, 983 persons who died on September 11, 2001, as well as on February 26, 1993.[382] The two other memorials honor the victims of those particular places; they are not all encompassing. Consequently, the Pentagon Memorial is dedicated to the 184 victims of the Pentagon and American Airlines Flight 77,[383] and Flight 93 National Memorial honors the 40 passengers and crewmembers who died when their plane crashed in a field in Pennsylvania.[384]

In the following analysis, the focus will be laid on their design and the various elements that visually constitute them, including the diverse symbolic components that have been included at the different places. It could have been expected that they would not be personalized and would only be made of lasting material. However, similarly to temporary memorials, visitors often leave objects – a practice which is sometimes encouraged thanks to the design chosen for the memorials. Due to the ever-changing nature of the materiality that is present at the commemorative places, this analysis is not comprehensive and it presents a scope that is limited by the analysis of pictures and objects that were left at the memorial at a particular period and that disappeared afterwards to be replaced by other offerings.

4.1 Symbolic Designs

Although the three memorials were all erected to honor the victims of the terrorist attacks that took place on September 11, 2001, their designs differ significantly, as each memorial focuses on different elements. They nonetheless all share one characteristic: they were primarily built to give citizens and the victims' families a place to mourn. This is indeed emphasized in New York, as Ground Zero is the final resting place for many victims. When the towers collapsed, they were transformed into dust. As claimed by Sturken, in her article entitled "The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero," the dead are part of this rubble, which is deemed sacred, as the bodies were never recovered.[385] Furthermore, memorials ensure that the

[382] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit*., p. 5.
[383] "9/11 at the Pentagon." http://pentagonmemorial.org/learn/911-pentagon, accessed on June 3, 2017.
[384] "A common field one day. A Field of Honor Forever." https://www.nps.gov/flni/index.htm, accessed on June 3, 2017.
[385] Marita Sturken. "The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero." *Op. Cit.,* pp. 313-314.

dead will never be forgotten, as they will be visited by many future generations who will be made familiar with this important event in the history of the United States.

First, the spatial organization at the Pentagon Memorial is rigorous and well structured. Shaughnessy writes that 184 benches that were each built over a small pool constitute the memorial.[386] Those benches were placed on a white and grey ground, which permits to create a contrast: when looked at from a distance, it can be noticed that the lighter paths form a pentagon. The fact that the benches lie inside and around this pentagon-shape symbolizes that they represent the victims who died at the Pentagon on that tragic day. Moreover, each casualty has her/his own bench. However, the design of the benches is different from traditional benches and can be interpreted as being in the shape of wings (FIG. 4.1). In my opinion, this could be a reference to the fact that the dead are now seen as angels who were given the possibility to fly and rise to heaven. Their souls are elevated towards something substantial that human beings cannot reach. Those wings are the symbol of freedom and the angels have flown to a place where they now rest in peace. However, their presence at the memorial highlights that they are guardian angels for their families and loved ones. This design thus echoes the "Angels of Freedom" that were present at the Flight 93 temporary memorial. In addition, those wings can symbolize the ones of the planes in which many 9/11 victims have lost their life on that day, which is problematic. In this sense, what happened on that day is addressed without linking it to the atrocities, as wings are positive elements and they are better suited to the spirit of memorials than a plane that has crashed would have. This can although be shocking for the visitors who are reminded of the atrocities. While the benches can be positively regarded as replacing the victims, their wing-shape is too close to the one of planes, which is not positive, as they were the weapons used by the terrorists. The impression that the benches represent wings is accentuated with their position, as not all of them were placed in the same direction – an aspect that was not chosen at random, as will be explained further in this chapter.

[386] Larry Shaughnessy. "Nearly Complete Pentagon Memorial tells Story of 9/11." http://edition.cnn.com/2008/US/05/23/pentagon.memorial/index.html, accessed on May 25, 2017.

Fig. 4.1. Benches, water, light and trees at the Pentagon Memorial, 2011. Photo by Joel Kubicki.

The design of the Flight 93 National Memorial differs from the one that was chosen for the Pentagon Memorial. As indicated by its appellation, i.e. the Wall of Names, the major part of the memorial consists of a white wall on which the victims' names have been engraved (FIG. 4.2). This color connotes the idea of purity and peace, which means that the victims now rest in peace and are pure angels in heaven.[387] Even though contemporary memorials are supposed to avoid making the visitors look up to contemplate them, this characteristic cannot be held true for this particular one, as the wall is higher than people. However, this can have an effect on the visit: the height can be perceived as being too impressive, which renders the memorial impersonal. The visitors will thus not come as physically close as at the Pentagon National Memorial. In fact, it looks like a cemetery and it is completely impersonal, as each victim has the same "tomb." What is surprising is that those "tombs" are vertical, whereas they are horizontal in actual cemeteries. This memorial consequently distinguishes itself from other contemporary memorials because it is vertical, as monuments used to be in the past. The victims of United Airlines Flight 93 were considered as heroes because of their action against the jihadists: their status of heroes is thus similar to the one that soldiers, for which many monuments have been erected, had been awarded. This can explain why this particular memorial is closer to the design of monuments.

[387] Michael Ferber. *Op. Cit*., pp. 233-234.

Fig. 4.2. Wall of Names at Flight 93 National Memorial, 2012. Photo by Jdsteakley.

By contrast, in New York the destruction and the ensuing hole left by the Twin Towers were shocking, as the collapsed buildings left a hole in the skyline. It is consequently not surprising that the design of the National September 11 Memorial (FIG. 4.3) mirrors the absence of the victims as well as the one of the important landmarks that were destroyed. The two voids that mark the exact location of the footprints of the Twin Towers are the major characteristic of this memorial.

Although the focus has been laid on absence with various holes in the design, there is still the presence of a memorial, as well as materiality with diverse objects in the museum, which can raise questions towards how this is supposed to mirror the absence of loved ones and of the demolished landmarks. The memorial contrasts with its surroundings: the two pools that were dug assert the absence of the Twin Towers, as they are encircled by tall buildings. Of course, the place was designed in a way that remembers and honors the victims, but the designers also aimed to rebuild this area of the city and bringing life to it. Because of the scale of the terrorist attacks and the media coverage, the world felt compelled to honor the victims. As a consequence, the National September 11 Memorial has become a tourist place that attracts millions of visitors each year. However, the aspect of remembrance seems to have been kept, as this place is rather personal, with the names of the victims and the possibility to leave offerings, as will be developed further.

Fig. 4.3. One of the two voids at the National September 11 Memorial that is surrounded by many buildings, 2011. Photo by Kai Brinker.

Memorials are designed in a way to ensure that the visitors will be physically close to them. This feature is particularly undeniable at the Pentagon Memorial, as visitors can freely walk around the benches. They can go close to them in order to read the names and leave objects if they wish. Although memorials are sometimes perceived as being equal to cemeteries as they offer a place to mourn, the visitors' physicality at the Pentagon seems to be different. In fact, as many pictures show, some sit on the benches, others lie on them, or even take family pictures while sitting. In addition, children play and run around (FIG. 4.4). They would never behave in this way when visiting a tomb, which means that the memorial is not perceived as being as sacred, probably because the bodies do not rest there. Nancy Nee, who lost her brother in the attacks raises questions about this behavior saying that "some people forget this is a cemetery" and that "[she] would never go to the Holocaust Museum and take a selfie."[388] However, the visit to the memorial can still be moving, as some visitors cry when being close to the benches. By contrast, at the memorial in New York, where many victims rest, silence is more present. Even though, as seen on pictures, tourists also take selfies, as if they were

[388] Associated Press in New York. "9/11 Memorial: Instead of a Quiet Place of Reflection, Kids are Running around." *TheGuardian.* September 11, 2014. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/11/9-11-anniversary-memorial-new-york, accessed on May 5, 2016.

visiting a place that is not symbolic, most of them pay attention and seem to grasp the gravity of what happened.

Fig. 4.4. Children playing on the benches at the Pentagon Memorial, 2013. Photo by Pat Benic/Abaca Press/MCT.

Furthermore, the physicality of the visitors can be witnessed at the National September 11 Memorial, as well as the Flight 93 National Memorial. At the former, it is encouraged, as it seems to have been deeply thought of when designing the place. The visitors can easily come close and touch the victims' names that are engraved through the parapets. Stevens even mentions that "narrow tubes of water on the underside of the parapets warm [the] panels in cold weather and cool them in hot weather"[389] to ensure the comfort of the visitors when touching the names. Then, they can freely wander around the pools to grasp the immensity of what is missing – both the victims and the buildings – as they can feel their smallness in comparison with the enormous footprints of the collapsed towers (FIG. 4.3). Many visitors can be seen expressing their feelings: they pray, cry over the name of the person they have lost, they hug, they bend towards the parapets or even draw the inscription, which is possible, as the names have not only been engraved in the material. Instead, they have been carved, so that people can easily transfer them onto a sheet of paper.

[389] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit.,* p. 27.

Then, at the latter, the design enables visitors to come close to the Wall of Names, as well as get a view on the field where United Airlines Flight 93 crashed. According to Riley, "the intention of the design is for visitors to be able to closely approach the crash site, which was always somewhat distant and removed from the temporary memorial."[390] Murdoch, the designer also claims that "the Sacred Ground, which he calls the 'Cemetery, the final resting place,' is inevitably, and rightly, the focal point."[391] However, because the victims died in the field, the place has been made sacred and the visitors cannot access it. In fact, "the area is off limits to all except family members of the victims, and even they require special escort into this symbolically powerful area […]."[392] Regarding the memorial, despite the height of the wall, people can easily touch or even sometimes kiss the victims' names, as they are engraved at a distance that adults can reach effortlessly. In addition, a series of benches is present at the memorial, which can remind one of the ones at the temporary memorial. However, the names of the victims are not engraved on them. They are consequently less personal, but they still provide visitors with a place to sit and give them the possibility to contemplate the field in which the passengers and the plane's crew members have lost their life.

4.2 Expressing Feelings through Objects

Sometimes, the construction in itself does not seem to be sufficient for the visitors who consequently bring objects with them when they visit the place. This materiality adds a personalized aspect to the memorial. In a sense, it also makes it live, as those objects' presence will be limited in time and this means that the memorial will always be different. Of course, the objects brought to the permanent memorials are quite similar to the ones at the temporary ones. The Pentagon Memorial seems to be particularly suited to the leaving of offerings, as each victim is represented with a bench. The structure thus makes it uncomplicated to leave mementos. At the Flight 93 National Memorial, objects simply lie on the ground near the Wall of Names, underneath the name of the victim for which the offerings are brought. While room for objects seems to be unlimited at the aforementioned memorials, in New York, they have to be left on the parapets, which are slightly inclined, and not much space is provided between the names either.

[390] Alexander T. Riley. *Op. Cit*., p. 169.
[391] *Ibid*., p. 167.
[392] *Ibid*., pp. 171-172.

As the objects present at the various memorials often compare with the ones of the temporary memorials, teddy bears are indubitably often left. They are indeed visualized as being calming and soothing, promising that the current situation will get better, as pointed out by Sturken.[393] She further claims that this particular object has always borne an important symbolism in America. Teddy bears also express feelings of tenderness for the victims. At the Pentagon Memorial, many can be observed, as many pictures have shown: a monkey teddy bear with many flowers or a dog teddy bear surrounded by many flowers as well and an American flag. In addition, one had the sign "angel on duty," which emphasizes the status given to the victim who died while serving his/her country. At the Flight 93 National Memorial, strong feelings of patriotism are expressed through the use of toys as many of them wear a ribbon in the colors of the American flag (FIG. 4.5). Personalized teddy bears, such as a Winnie The Pooh, lay near the victims' names at the National September 11 Memorial. Although teddy bears are commonly associated with children, here, they bear a strong symbolism. They are not only brought for the younger victims, but for everyone. While being easy to buy, they also bring a personalized aspect to the memorial. People, and mainly children, get attached to those toys that they carry everywhere with them. Using teddy bears restores some innocence back. At the same time, it brings comfort to the visitors and it offers a presence to the victims.

Fig. 4.5. Tributes left by visitors at the Flight 93 National Memorial, 2012. Photo by James Steakley.

[393] Marita Sturken. *Tourists of History*. *Op. Cit*., p. 7.

Additionally, as memorials normally only mention the names of the victims, some family members bring framed pictures. At the Pentagon, they can easily be put on the benches, next to flowers, which makes the place look like a cemetery. In Shanksville, this aspect is also illustrated. Next to a picture laid the words "Hilda Marcin 1922-2001" that are similar to the ones that would be engraved on a tomb. Moreover, they were attached on flowers and on a pendant of the Virgin Mary, which can also be common at burial places. Other pictures could also be observed. At the National September 11 Memorial, for example, some photographs of the former Twin Towers had been brought, while in Shanksville, one of a plane was among the objects. Further, at the Flight 93 National Memorial, many religious references are present. This aspect is probably emphasized at this memorial because the passengers and crew members sacrificed their lives, and the visitors may want to mark that they acted thanks to the courage that God has awarded them. Consequently, varied crosses are brought to the place. One of them was black and "with God" was written in white on it. This reminds that the innocent victims are in heaven in the presence of God and that they rest in peace.

Then, the objects are frequently highly personalized and directly linked to the victim's life or interests. At the Memorial in Washington D.C., some books lie on the benches. The visitors can sometimes be spotted reading them. For instance, there was O'Brian's *Master and Commander*, which was probably a book that the victim used to enjoy reading. Next to the book stood two white roses and an American flag (FIG. 4.6). In New York, pictures show that some balloons were flying for someone's birthday and Reese's biscuits had been brought as a gift for one victim, which marks that the visitors choose their offerings according to what they know would have pleased the person. Following this intent to please the victims, many crafts are brought to the Flight 93 National Memorial. One was made of branches, fake sunflowers – which convey hope for better days – seashells with the name of the dead, and the picture of him with a dog. At this memorial, a toy convertible car could also be spotted, which reflects the intent to please the victim, as he/she probably enjoyed cars.

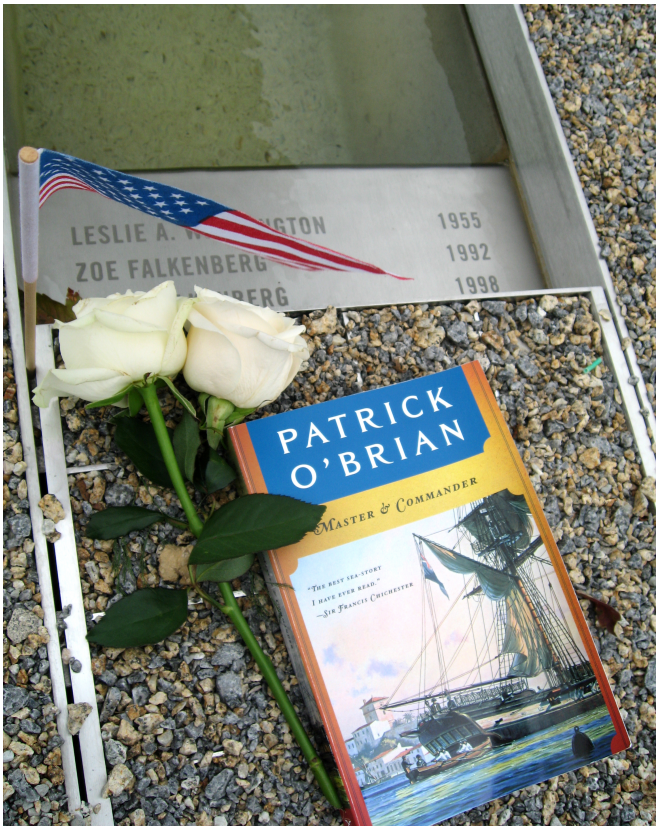

Fig. 4.6. Mementos and names of the victims' loved ones on one of the benches at the Pentagon Memorial, 2008. Photo by John J. Kruzel.

The special status of the victims was sometimes expressed at the Flight 93 National Memorial and in New York, through the presence of badges – similar to the ones at the temporary memorials – or other offerings that serve to mark the work that they were practicing. At the former, since the passengers and crew members of United Airlines Flight 93 sacrificed their lives to save others, their status of angels is often expressed in the offerings, with for example, crafts in the form of angels or yellow, blue and red rubber wristbands on which the word "brave" is inscribed in white. This reminds that the victims were brave as they gave their life for their nation. Feelings of patriotism are obviously expressed with the presence of various flags in many different forms. Personalized handmade crafts often bear the colors of the nation. In Shanksville, the patriotism is heightened as some of them are cut in the form of the country. To me, the fact that the victims were innocent emphasizes that they should be recognized as individuals. Some did sacrifice for their nation, and others are recognized because they helped many through to their work when they were alive. Some visitors really get involved in the choice of their offerings. A distinction is to be made between personal offerings and those that have a commercial dimension. Crafting something personal takes

more time and probably permits to express feelings more easily, while buying an object is easy, and not always as personal.

4.3 Addressing Loved Ones at Memorials

While personal words of the visitors are a common practice at temporary memorials, they are not as pervading at permanent ones. Names and words by the monument-makers are often included to explain their aims or serve as a guide to the visit. This is the case in New York City and in Pennsylvania, where the memorials seem to have been built as tourist destinations, an aspect that will be analyzed further in this chapter. Although personal notes are not very common, as explained previously, they still remain present. Because of the narrow space between the names at the National September 11 Memorial, they are not as numerous as at the two other sites.

At the entrance of the Pentagon Memorial, a plaque with the engraved message "on September 11, 2001, acts of terrorism took the lives of thousands at the World Trade Center in New York City, in a grassy field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania and here at the Pentagon. We will forever remember our loved ones, friends and colleagues"[394] can be read. The mention that they were colleagues marks that their work is also given importance, since they were working at the Pentagon and were employees of the State. On the other side of the commemorative plaque the following acknowledgement can be read: "Pentagon Memorial – We claim this ground in remembrance of the events of September 11, 2001. To honor the 184 people whose lives were lost, their families, and all who sacrificed so that we may live in freedom. We will never forget."[395] No mention of religion or negative aspects is present. The only wish is to honor the victims and ensure that they are never going to be forgotten.

Next to the official engravings, personal notes are sometimes left by the visitors who want to express their feelings and who wish to deliver messages to the dead. In fact, they seem to be even more personal than the ones that had been left at the various temporary memorials previously analyzed, where they rather seemed to convey feelings of peace and patriotism.

[394] http://archive.defense.gov/photoessays/PhotoEssaySS.aspx?ID=929, accessed on May 21, 2017.
[395] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_view_of_the_Pentagon_Memorial_in_Arlington,_VA.,_Sept_1409 11-D-DT527-059.jpg, accessed on May 21, 2017.

Here, the words are directly addressed to the dead. A few examples from the Pentagon can be cited. Firstly, the following note was attached to an orange gerbera: "Dearest Patty, this memorial is a beautiful place where we can come and remember the fun times we shared. We miss you. Linda, Kevin, Jasmine and Jenna."[396] It was written on a white sheet on which red and blue pieces of paper had been glued. The message addresses a particular person and the writers did as if they could speak to her through the memorial, which is comforting. The note is in the colors of the nation as well. Similarly, "thinking of you. I miss you and love you baby Clara. PS: Happy 13th Birthday. Love, Cousin Toni"[397] could be read. This illustrates that even though the loved one died, the memorial is used as a place to deliver messages. Then, at one of the victims' benches, "Sept 11, 2015. Still missing you" was written. The year after, a similar note for this particular person was left again with some flowers: "Karl… still missing you [heart drawing] Sept 11, 2016."[398] It appeared next to a family picture and an individual portrait. In New York, the messages share an intent to remember and to show that the families need to go to the memorial, as this is the resting place of their loved ones, such as in "I was here Andrea. Love u mom" or "I still love NY" with the two "L" taking the form of the Towers,[399] as they were an important symbol of the city.

In addition, some personal messages mentioning the profession of the victims, in order to thank them for their service could be found. For instance, at the Pentagon: "Still flying in our hearts and prayers."[400] This one was from the American's Flight Attendants and it was evidently to honor Mary Jane Booth, as it had been put on her bench. She was a flight attendant on the plane that crashed. Then, a picture of the American flag with the shadows of the firefighters had been left at the memorial. Next to it, the words "always in our hearts" had been written. Some similar notes had been left at the Flight 93 National Memorial, where the victims are seen as heroes: "Thank you, you will always be heroes" written on an American flag or "for your heroic act on that tragic day"[401] attached to purple flowers. Moreover, a message was written on a porcelain board: "For a Very Special Nurse. You are truly blessed

[396] http://archive.defense.gov/photoessays/PhotoEssaySS.aspx?ID=929, accessed on May 21, 2017.
[397] http://www.gettyimages.be/fotos/pentagon-memorial?family=creative&license=rf&phrase=pentagon%20memorial&alloweduse=availableforalluses&excludenudity=false&sort=best#license, accessed on May 21, 2017.
[398] https://www.tripadvisor.fr/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g30242-d1916442-i222479756-Pentagon_Memorial-Arlington_Virginia.html, accessed on May 21, 2017.
[399] http://darkroom.baltimoresun.com/2013/09/america-commemorates-the-12th-anniversary-of-the-september-11-attacks/#1, accessed on May 21, 2017.
[400] http://archive.defense.gov/photoessays/PhotoEssaySS.aspx?ID=929, accessed on May 21, 2017.
[401] https://absolutelyabbey.wordpress.com/2012/09/18/a-visit-to-the-flight-93-national-memorial/, accessed on May 21, 2017.

with the gift of giving… devoting a life to helping others, and doing so in such a genuine and caring way is appreciated by all."[402] For once, the profession of nurse is evoked, which highlights that the person was caring and that helping others was her priority. Thus, the family probably wanted to broadcast her devotion.

Even though political or heinous messages are not common, some still bore these meanings at the Flight 93 National Memorial. Someone had brought a picture of Osama Bin Laden with the message "WANTED dead or ~~alive~~." A keychain was attached on it and the following words were written "GOD. Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference. AMEN."[403] Furthermore, other ones restored peace. A picture of Einstein with the quote "no problem can be solved from the level of consciousness that created it. – Albert Einstein"[404] served this purpose, as it means that retaliation and vengeance are meaningless.

4.4 Individualization of the Victims

The national September 11 Memorial in New York is the only one to be encompassing. While it was erected to honor all the victims of the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and on February 26, 1993 without taking the place of their death into account, the two other memorials were primarily built as a means to honor the citizens who died there. All the aforementioned memorials recognize the victims' individuality and this takes place through various elements in the design. For 9/11 it was of tremendous importance to recognize the individuality of the victims at memorials, as they "must substitute for visiting a grave because no remains were found."[405] In the case of violent terrorist attacks like 9/11, the bodies are not always recovered. Therefore, there is no individual anymore. They all died as a whole and memorials are used as a means to restore their individuality.

The first means of individualization is to be witnessed in the inclusion of the victims' names in the various designs. Doss reports that naming is a practice that strengthens national unity,

[402] *Ibid.*
[403] *Ibid.*
[404] *Ibid.*
[405] Quentin Stevens and Karen A. Franck. *Op. Cit*., p. 96.

as it "is an act of claiming, an assertion of inclusion; to be named is to be acknowledged."[406] At the Pentagon National Memorial, each bench bears the inscription of the person from American Airlines Flight 77 or inside the building for which it lies. In addition, the names also appear at the entrance of the memorial, next to a message that explains why it was built. The names are arranged in alphabetical order, with the inclusion of the victims' date of birth and their military rank (with the mention "retired" if it was the case), when they were not civilians. This seemed to be important, because many of the victims inside the Pentagon were working when they died. Therefore, this is a way of thanking them for their service. At Flight 93 National Memorial, each victim has his/her own part of the Wall of Names. Besides their identity, their profession is mentioned if they were working on the plane only, with for example the words "flight attendant" written underneath the name (FIG 4.2). Then, similarly to the board that is present at the Pentagon, there is a panel with the pictures of the victims, their names and their profession – only if they were working on the plane – and where they came from.

Further, as it was previously mentioned, the victims' names are carved into the parapets that surround the two pools at the National September 11 Memorial. The individualization is rather strong and is manifested in the arrangement of the names. Furthermore, the mention "and her unborn child" next to one of the names was added, which reflects an intent to remember everyone individually. Then, this Memorial is particular since it honors all victims regardless of where they lost their life. Because of the amount of names that had to be included in the design and the fact that many victims were working for the emergency services, the agency of how to carve them through the parapets was controversial.[407] In New York, it was problematic because "more than 40 percent of families had not received remains from their loved ones and the site was seen as a final resting place for so many."[408] In the end, it was decided in late 2006 that the names would be arranged according to the place where the victims had lost their life. In addition, if the family wanted, they could ask for the name of their loved one to lie next to one of a friend or colleague who also perished on that day. Then, "within each grouping, the names of colleagues are together. First responders' names are organized by headings indicating their agencies and units."[409] In New York, the fact that the

[406] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p. 150.
[407] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit*., p. 138.
[408] *Ibid*., pp. 160-161.
[409] *Ibid*., pp. 166-167.

bodies were not recovered emphasizes the individualization process. Naming the victims was the only means to restore their individuality.

Another particular feature is that the names are not simply engraved. These holes undoubtedly emphasize the absence that was left by the victims. Moreover, they give visitors the opportunity to easily leave mementos when visiting the memorial (FIG. 4.7). To me, this arrangement is more personal than at Flight 93 National Memorial, where the offerings lie on the ground, since hanging objects on the Wall of Names is not a possibility. Furthermore, in New York, the space left between the names enables the visitors to leave individual offerings to whom they want: sometimes pictures of the victims appear next to their names, same happens for pictures, flowers, and flags. Whereas most of these gifts are left by the visitors, the team that works at the memorial also intends to individualize the victims. Each year on the birthday of each one of them, a white rose is placed in their name. In addition to that, they post a picture of the flower on Twitter and write a blog article that gives a few facts about the person and where s/he was killed.[410] This was initiated in 2013 by a volunteer who claimed that this would give visitors the possibility to become acquainted with the victims, as well as connect with them. Since all the names are inscribed on the National September 11 Memorial, before opening to the public, every morning a staff member checks the birthday list and a white rose is placed in the name. It is George Mironis, a museum volunteer and 9/11 survivor, who usually requests to take care of this task, as "for him, it is a way to honor the friends and co-workers he lost 15 years ago."[411] It illustrates again that new forms of remembrance emphasize the material traces to connect the visitors with the victims. The trace is left both physically and online through the use of social media, which have become an important means of expression.

[410] "Remembering Hilda Taylor." https://www.911memorial.org/blog/remembering-hilda-taylor, accessed on May 28, 2017. And "Remembering Stanley Smagala Junior." https://www.911memorial.org/blog/remembering-stanley-smagala-jr, accessed on May 28, 2017.
[411] "White Rose Signifies Remembrance of 9/11 Victims' Birthdays." https://www.911memorial.org/blog/white-rose-signifies-remembrance-911-victims-birthdays, accessed on May 28, 2017.

Fig. 4.7. Flags and flowers left at several names at the National September 11 Memorial, 2011. Photo by Y.C. Noel.

At the Pentagon National Memorial, the process of individualization of the victims is particularly visible. In addition to the engraving of the victims' names, the benches were arranged according to their age, starting with the bench of the youngest victim, Dana Falkenberg who was three years old and finishing with the one for seventy-one-year-old John Yamnicky. No distinction is made in the size of the benches. Moreover, as mentioned by Shaughnessy, the orientation of the benches varies depending on the place where the victims died. (FIG. 4.8) If they were aboard the plane, their bench was placed in a manner that when visitors read the name, they face the sky. Those for the ones who were working at the Pentagon when the crash took place face the building, making the reader see the façade that was hit on September 11.[412] The arrangement that was chosen for the benches emphasizes the individuality of the victims – it recognizes them as individuals without giving more importance to the younger victims. In addition, the idea of turning the benches, either towards the Pentagon or to the sky to show where the victims have died, also engages with the landscape and shares invisible stories. In fact, most of the victims on the plane were civilians, which was not the case for the ones who worked at the Pentagon. Consequently, this is also a way of thanking them for their service and recognizing their status. Each victim has its own bench; this is not a one-piece memorial. Although the sense of unity is not obvious at first sight, the benches are connected by their design, while also leaving individual space.

[412] Larry Shaughnessy. *Op. Cit.*

However, if people have lost family members in the attacks, their names and dates of birth are engraved on the bench as well.

Fig. 4.8. Differently oriented benches at the Pentagon Memorial, 2011. Photo by Ron Cogswell.

4.5 The Role of Symbols

4.5.1 Light as the Symbol of Life

Because of its positive symbolism of hopefulness and regeneration,[413] light is often added into the designs of memorials. It can be used as a means to add life, movement and warmth to places that would look barren and inhospitable otherwise. For this reason, there seems to be a strong wish to continually illuminate memorials at night.

At the National September 11 Memorial, light illuminates the victims' names at night. Here, the decision to make it shine through the names adds a particular symbolism, because it is as if the victims marked their presence each night. They are never left in the dark, which is generally considered negative. In this sense, they are never made invisible, they shine and they will always remain close to their loved ones. In addition, light also gleams from the two pools that replace the Twin Towers. Similarly, light is also individual at the Pentagon

[413] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania. Op. Cit.*, p. 146.

Memorial where it was inserted underneath each bench to illuminate the place at night. Thus, it adjoins the benches, which are in the shape of wings. It adds some life to this element that represents the dead. At this place, the lights appear to be yellow, which affirms the parallel it has with the sun and the idea that new beginnings are expected. Lastly, at the Flight 93 National Memorial, although the site is illuminated at night, its use is not as personalized as at the other two. Sometimes, candles are put underneath the names at the anniversary of the attacks, but this does not last all year long. Light was added at all memorials for practical reasons, as they do not close to the public as soon as the sun sets. However, the way in which it has been added at the various sites highlights that the symbolism it bears was the most important aspect when the choice of its agency had to be made. At the Pentagon, it is personal, because each victim has its own light, which enhances their status of angels, whereas in New York, light is used to fill in their absence.

4.5.2 Roles of Water

Water's symbolism is close to the one of light. It also adds some life to memorials, as it sometimes flows and it thus adds an acoustic element to a place, which would otherwise be rather silent. Sometimes, visitors also get the possibility to touch it; there is a bodily experience. Another particularity of this element, is that when included in the design of memorials, that were erected in honor of a tragic event, "gently flowing water soothes the healing wound,"[414] as written by Doss in her book *Memorial Mania*. When memorials are built for traumatic events, including water can help create an atmosphere that invites calmness and that can help through the mourning process.

Water is central to the designs of the Pentagon Memorial and the National September 11, whereas it is completely absent at the Flight 93 National Memorial. At the Pentagon, there is a pool underneath each bench, which does however not add any acoustic sound to the memorial in the sense that it is not moving, as opposed to the National September 11 Memorial. The presence of water at the memorial in New York City is highly symbolic, as it includes the idea of regeneration. The two voids are filled with water at certain periods of the year. It is for instance not the case in winter, as it would freeze. As opposed to the Pentagon Memorial, water is in movement as waterfalls go into the pools. They seem to fall from the parapets

[414] *Ibid*., p. 137.

through which the victims' names are engraved. According to Blais and Rasic, the location of the names "[gives] the appearance that, despite their heavy permanence, they are somehow floating above the water."[415] The two pools are deep and water falls into them, which means that movement is constantly present. It adds the idea of a constant renewal, as well as life, as it is endlessly flowing. In addition, the bottom end is not visible, which means that visitors do not see where it is going. It could be interpreted as being a metaphor for life. Although people cannot know what the future holds for them, hope remains as life goes on.

At the National September 11 Memorial, when water arrives in the pools, it falls into a hole that is in the form of a square, which is much smaller than the pools. It means than although it falls and it seems lost, it will be in movement again. The absence of the dead can be represented by those holes: their lives were taken, and they have left a hole in their loved ones' lives. However, they remain in their minds and will rise again in heaven. The two voids that will never be filled, even with water, as it only flows, can also represent the holes that the victims' loss has left in their families' hearts. Those two giant holes contrast with the presence of the walls that were erected to form them. There is an ambivalence in the *Reflecting Absence* design. In order to convey absence, a presence had to be built. In addition, water also adds an acoustic aspect to the memorial, as visitors can hear it fall. This means that when the pools are emptied, the memorial is wholly silenced. Moreover, it can also create a reflection of the surroundings and of the visitors, which again supplements the place with a presence.

Although water is deemed positive because it symbolizes purification[416] and, as Zuber points it out, it "might bring psychological relief in a hot, arid climate,"[417] there is controversy regarding the memorial in New York, as water is shut off during winter. Because of this aspect, the visit of the place in winter contrasts drastically with the one in summer. However, it should be borne in mind that nature also fades during this season. It means that it is undeniable that winter can bring sadness to the memorial. By contrast, winter also gives the promise of having better days in the coming months. Here, even though water is put to rest for several months, it will make the memorial live again in the future. Those elements influence the visit at the memorial and the various seasons provide a different visit experience. In fact,

[415] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit.*, pp. 186-187.
[416] Ad de Vries. *Op. Cit.*, p. 493.
[417] Devin Zuber. *Op. Cit.*, p. 286.

water can create a context that favors prayer and meditation, as it creates a calming noise and it allows the visitors to feel they can individually express themselves. When it is shut down, all other noises can be heard, which transforms the visit, as it does not seem as silent, as when water creates a calm atmosphere.

4.5.3 Flowers as Personal Offerings

As previously explained, white flowers are often to be found at the National September 11 Memorial. Besides, as it was the case at the temporary memorials, many visitors leave various kinds of flowers behind them when they leave the place because, as has been previously pointed out, memorials are similar to cemeteries in many ways. Flowers bring life to memorials and, as they quickly wilt, their brief life mirrors the victims' lives that were shorter than they should have been. When flowers are dead, they are replaced by others and this practice creates a cyclical movement at memorials. The Pentagon National Memorial encourages visitors to bring objects, as the personal benches for each victim offer a large space for offerings that include flowers (FIG. 4.11). Furthermore, the spaces between the letters that form the victims' names in New York facilitate the insertion of flowers.

Fig. 4.11. Sunflowers, water and name on one of the benches at the Pentagon Memorial, 2011. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jacob N. Bailey, U.S. Air Force.

While the colors of the nation were dominant at temporary memorials in an effort to restore the strength of the nation, permanent memorials seem to suffice to express feelings of nationalism and unity. Their construction enables to show that the nation is strong. Although buildings have been destroyed, new ones are erected, which is a sign of strength. They therefore focus on honoring the victims. Flowers in these colors are nevertheless common at Flight 93 National Memorial, probably because the victims sacrificed for their nation that treats them as heroes. Conversely, at the Pentagon, the colors are sometimes displayed in the wrapping of the flowers that is sometimes transparent with American flags and blue stars on which "USA" is written in red and white. Consequently, the dominant color at the various permanent memorials is white, which conveys purity and faith.[418] The varieties of flowers appear are similar to the ones that were present at the temporary memorials: carnations, daisies, chrysanthemum, gerberas, roses and lilies, whose symbolism has been explained in the previous chapter. The flowers that are in a different color than white are mostly pink, red and yellow, as it was the case in the places of commemoration that were erected in the aftermath of the attacks, which marks a continuum in the feelings that are conveyed by the visitors: peace, love, respect, admiration and the hope for a better future. Flowers are the easiest objects that can be brought to memorials, and it is also the least personal and least lasting. Even if flowers can be chosen for a particular person, to me, they seem less personal than the other objects that are brought to memorials. Crafting or carefully choosing a teddy bear, for example, require more implication from the visitors. In addition, because flowers quickly die, they add some melancholy to the commemoration places.

4.6 Memorials and Nature

Including nature in the design of memorials enables to lessen their cold and it counterbalances their stone-like aspect by opening them up. As trees symbolize the circle of life, it also includes this characteristic, which makes the place vary according to the seasons. Furthermore, as argued by Gessner in her article "The Aesthetics of Commemorating 9/11: Towards a Transnational Typology of Memorials," in which she describes the important elements that constitute memorials, "the planting of trees continues a tradition of signifying

[418] Michael Ferber. *Op. Cit*., pp. 233-234.

liberty, rebirth, and resistance."[419] The three 9/11 memorials analyzed here include this feature. Trees were planted at all of them to make the places more enjoyable for the visitors.

At the Pentagon Memorial, about eighty paperbark maple trees embellish and shade the area. According to Beckman, the choice to include this variety of trees was made because they have a year-round interest: "They are late-turning maples. The leaves change color a little later than the rest of the maples. So when most of the trees in Arlington have lost their leaves, these will still be a brilliant red." She also claims that the trees have cinnamon brown bark, which would contrast with a gray winter.[420] Because United Airlines Flight 93 crashed in a field in Pennsylvania, the memorial that honors its passengers and crewmembers is the greenest of all three. In fact, Doss mentions that former President Bush even signed the Flight 93 National Memorial Act making the place that spreads over 2, 200 acres,[421] a national park. Therefore, nature surrounds the memorial, as efforts were made to integrate it in its environment. Again, this characteristic is contemporary, because it is typical of the physical implication that is encouraged when visiting memorials. Visitors should walk to them and make an effort to approach it. Walking also entails that they can reflect on their thoughts before they reach the memorial and upon departure.

Similarly, for the National September 11 Memorial, the designer was asked to team with an experienced landscape architect, Peter Walker. The aim was to include trees to make the memorial more hospitable and less barren.[422] Blais and Rasic further state that the site incorporates "over 400 oak trees [that are] used to fill a landscaping pattern that, when viewed from one direction, [seems] a randomly natural forest and, from the other rose in stately, perfectly situated rows."[423] In the aftermath of the events, the whole city was covered in dust, which created much damage. Therefore, having trees grow at this exact location bears a strong symbolism: the place that was completely destroyed is reborn from its ashes. Now, this part of the memorial is so green that is it as if it was a park in the middle of those tall buildings and the bustling city. Oak trees were planted on the 9/11 Memorial plaza because of

[419] Ingrid Gessner. *Op. Cit*., p.8.
[420] Timothy Dwyer. "Groundbreaking for 9/11 Memorial at Pentagon Set." *Washington Post.* http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/06/05/AR2006060501366.html, accessed on May 25, 2017.
[421] Erika Doss. *Op. Cit*., p. 141.
[422] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit*., p. 138.
[423] *Ibid*., p. 146.

their durability and unique leaf colors.[424] Furthermore, this variety is resilient, which is also symbolic: the country and its citizens will never withstand, even if it was one of the terrorists' aims. Moreover, the most notable element of nature at the memorial is the "Survivor Tree." As indicated by its name, the Callery pear tree survived the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Under the rubble for over a month, "it was found at Ground Zero in October [that year] severely damaged, with snapped roots and burned and broken branches."[425] The tree was then "removed from the rubble and placed in the care of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation where, after years of recovery and rehabilitation, it was returned to the Memorial in 2010 to stand as a living reminder of resilience, survival and rebirth."[426] It is consequently no surprise that is has become a strong symbol of hope and healing, as well as strength and resilience (FIG. 4.12).

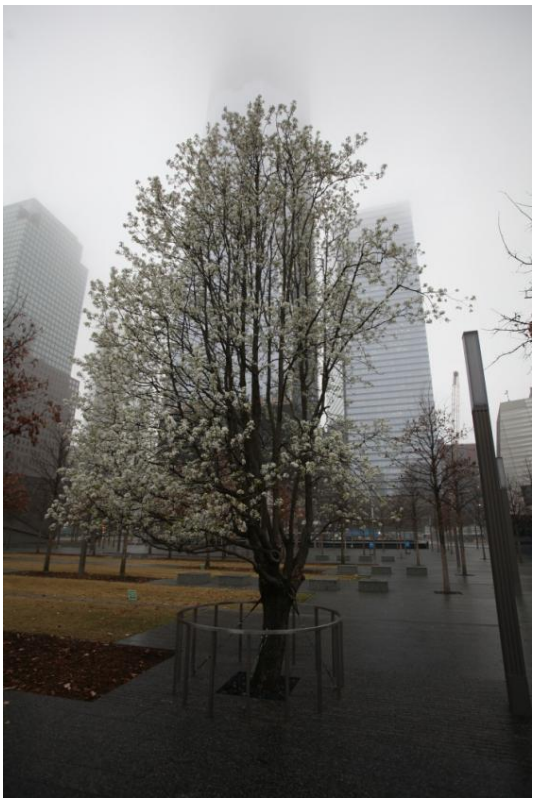

FIG 4.12. Survivor Tree at the National September 11 Memorial, 2012. Photo by Amy Dreher.

[424] "9/11 Memorial: a Tribute to the Past and Hope for the Future." https://www.911memorial.org/blog/911-memorial-tribute-past-and-hope-future, accessed on May 28, 2017.
[425] "On Arbor Day, Take Time to Notice the Trees on the Memorial Plaza." https://www.911memorial.org/blog/arbor-day-take-time-notice-trees-memorial-plaza, accessed on May 28, 2017.
[426] "Survivor Tree." https://www.911memorial.org/survivor-tree, accessed on May 28, 2017.

4.7 Memorials as Tourist Destinations

In his article entitled "Dark tourism: Why murder sites and disaster zones are proving popular,"[427] Will Coldwell approaches the notion of "dark tourism" that Philip Stone, executive director of the Institute for Dark Tourism Research at the University of Central Lancashire, defines as being "[…] any travel associated with death, disaster or the macabre."[428] In fact, Coldwell adds that "demand for macabre attractions and disturbing experiences that recreate horrific moments in history is growing – dark tourism is on the rise."[429] While it is unthinkable to erase all atrocities from history, those tourist places can be problematic because visitors do not always grasp the scale of the terrible events that took place where they go. Famous dark tourism places thus include, for instance, Auschwitz-Birkenau and more recently, Ground Zero that is linked to 9/11. Stone maintains that "'[it is] the commercialization of death.'"[430] Soon after a tragedy takes place, temporary memorials are erected and are then replaced by permanent ones, as has been stressed here. According to him, "there has been a process of commercialization from that initial demand to becoming a formal destination."[431] However, one can wonder why those places attract that much attention. Is it because citizens want to honor the dead or is it a mere curiosity? In the present chapter, it has been mentioned that the behavior of the visitors is not always in accordance with the place that they visit, in the sense that they take selfies and sometimes talk loud. Those behaviors would not be witnessed in cemeteries. Coldwell also points to this problem when quoting Feifer who says that "[…] most people are going to these places with a purity of curiosity."[432] While not everyone can be considered equal on this, it is undeniable that tourist places do attract many citizens who are curious. This does however not mean that they do not pay their respects to the dead when visiting the place. Their curiosity can also be linked to a wish to understand what happened and to learn more about the events.

[427] Will Coldwell. "Dark Tourism: Why Murder Sites and Disaster Zones are Proving Popular." *TheGuardian.* October 31, 2013. https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2013/oct/31/dark-tourism-murder-sites-disaster-zones, accessed on July 28, 2017.
[428] *Ibid.*
[429] *Ibid.*
[430] *Ibid.*
[431] *Ibid.*
[432] *Ibid.*

In these respects, Ground Zero is a dark tourism site as claimed by Stone in his article "Dark tourism as 'mortality capital': The case of Ground Zero and the Significant Other Dead."[433] He points out that "historical saliency or, in other words, an event that witnessed brutality and death as well as heroism and selflessness, perturbed a collective consciousness and, subsequently, has been touristically produced and consumed."[434] Of course, everyone is different, which means that each visitor has its own intent when going to the site. Furthermore, as claimed by Stone, "what is more important perhaps, and regardless of the initial motivation to visit, is the sense of feeling and meaning that such visits can engender, particularly that which focuses upon a consequential deliberation of life, death, and ultimately, mortality."[435] This assertion points to what has already been exposed: visiting memorials can trigger feelings and can help visitors cope with their grief. He also further claims that "Ground Zero as a space is as much about meditation, contemplation and reflection of life and living, as it is about remembering and commemorating the dead."[436]

Opening a museum next to memorials is a practice that seems to be common when memorializing 9/11, especially when they are built and thought of as tourist destinations. The primary aim of those visitor education centers is to preserve history and pass it on to future generations. This is the reason why a funding is organized to build one at the Pentagon Memorial, which currently only contains the memorial in itself. This idea was shared by Barack Obama at the opening of the museum in New York, as he uttered the following words: "[It is] an honor to join in your memories, to recall and to reflect, but above all to reaffirm the true spirit of 9/11 – love, compassion, sacrifice – and to enshrine it forever in the heart of our nation."[437] In fact museums and memorials are two distinct phenomena. While memorials stand on their own for some years, museums are generally attached to the former. They serve as a complement to the memory and they guide the visitors in their process of remembering the events.

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[433] P. R. Stone. "Dark Tourism as 'Mortality Capital': The Case of Ground Zero and the Significant Other Dead." In R.Sharpley & Stone, P.R (Eds) *Contemporary Tourist Experience: Concepts and Consequences.* Abington, Oxon: Routledge, 2012, p. 75.
[434] *Ibid.*
[435] *Ibid.*
[436] Ibid., pp. 79-80.
[437] Associated Press in New York. "Obama: 9/11 Museum 'a Sacred Place of Healing and Hope.'" *TheGuardian.* May 15, 2014. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/15/obama-9-11-museum-healing-hope, accessed on May 5, 2016.

The Flight 93 Memorial has become a tourist place, as many explanation panels guide the visitors through their visit. According to the official website, audio guides are also provided to facilitate the visit.[438] The directive signs present a map, the different parts of the memorial to visit and pictures help people visualize them. Their aim is thus to guide the visitors, which augments the touristic aspect of the site. Of course, the panels do not focus on the causes behind the attacks; they only mention what happened. Next to the different explanation boards, a visitor center opened on September 10, 2015. It includes a learning center to explain what happened on September 11. It also features a glass terrace that provides a view on the field in which the plane crashed. The mention "A common field one day. A field of honor forever" is engraved. The "honor" part of the message points to the status of those particular victims, whose tremendous courage saved many other lives. This recognition was also present at the temporary memorial. When visiting such a place, visitors want to see the site of the tragedy, but most of them also want explanations of what happened, which explains why museums are erected next to those memorials. Memorials serve as *lieux de mémoire*, they permit to transmit memories to future generations. However, those memories also entail that history should be narrated.

The September 11 Museum[439] that is situated on the site of Ground Zero next to the memorial opened in May 2014, almost thirteen years after the attacks. Sturken contends that the museum that is "housed in a vast underground space that incorporates the 'voids' of the memorial in the two footprints of the former twin towers […] will clearly have an enormous influence on the historical narrative and cultural memory of 9/11 in the years ahead."[440] Stone describes the organization of the museum, which is divided into five galleries.[441] The first one entitled "Experience the memory of the lively community that was lost" gives an account of the World Trade Center site before 9/11. "Journey through the events of 11 September 2001" is the second gallery that narrates the different stages of the terrorist attacks that took place on that day. Then, the third gallery "Rescue and recovery" focuses on the efforts that were made by the rescue services in the aftermath of the attacks. The fourth gallery serves as a tribute to the victims and it "exhibits symbolic objects of victims donated by family members, as well

[438] https://www.nps.gov/media/photo/gallery.htm?id=C4498981-155D-451F-67D9557C22AFA65C, accessed on May 26, 2017.
[439] The following analysis is based on pictures kindly provided by Manon Hausse.
[440] Marita Sturken. "The Objects that Lived: The 9/11 Museum and Material Transformation." *Memory Studies* 9.1 (2016): 13-26. *SCOPUS.* Web. 20 Feb. 2016, p. 13.
[441] P. R. Stone. *Op. Cit.*, p. 77.

as photographs of the dead and a multi-media projection of the names of the deceased."[442] The fifth and last gallery is oriented towards hope as it gives visitors the possibility "to write their thoughts and opinions on postcards," while "additional gallery space promotes narratives of tolerance and generosity as well as highlighting experiences of people who were present in Lower Manhattan on 9/11."[443]

Although the museum presents accounts of what happened on that tragic day, these stories never explain the reasons why the terrorist attack took place. They rather play on the feelings of the visitors and provide an emotional journey of individuals by focusing on the atrocities and by emphasizing what happened: pictures of the former Twin Towers, photographs of the cloud of dust that was a consequence of the burning buildings, a burned firefighters' truck, images reflecting the violence of the attacks and their consequences, the only intact window that was found in the rubble, and parts of the destroyed towers. Sturken observes that the narratives are often stories of individual survival, which are moving.[444] The objects that are exposed reveal the impact of the events. She further notes that "the 9/11 Museum has put on display two large mangled pieces of steel, each about 30 ft long, that were taken from its first point of impact, when American Airlines Flight 11 hit the North Tower."[445] When seeing those, the scale of the destruction is undeniable and it has an affective impact in the visitors, instead of focusing on explaining 9/11.

In addition to that, some art is included – a painting that includes the towers, several American Flags, hearts in various colors, the sentences "God bless America," "Keep strong," "stand together," the Statue of Liberty, firefighters holding the American flag, many people who appear to be shocked, is exposed in the museum. In fact, the emphasis that is laid on emotions in the museum in New York contrasts with Riley's idea of memorials, which are supposed to make visitors focus on remembering the victims rather than being reminded of the atrocities that took place on that day, such as the towers collapsing, the jumpers, or Flight 93 crashing in Shanksville.[446] Lastly, because the narratives that are present in the museum never focus on the causes, Farago[447] contends that the museum might fail to serve its purpose;

[442] *Ibid.*
[443] *Ibid.*
[444] Marita Sturken. "The Objects that Lived: The 9/11 Museum and Material Transformation." *Op. Cit*., p. 17.
[445] *Ibid*., p. 18.
[446] Alexander T. Riley. *Op. Cit*., pp. 57-58.
[447] Jason Fagaro. "9/11 Memorial Museum: How to Remember?" *BBC.com*, http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20140521-how-should-we-remember-911, accessed on May 23, 2017.

even if the victims are memorialized, the context is missing, which could be problematic for future generations who visit the museum.

This issue is addressed by Jonathan Jones in his article entitled "War memorials have failed – we have forgotten the chaos of fascism," in which he claims that "unfortunately, the problem is memory itself. It plays us false even in our personal lives. The idea of collective memory is fundamentally dangerous. Either it creates empty, bland expressions of vague goodwill, or, when it gets emotional, outright lies."[448] Memory is thus not reliable because our emotional state might alter how we remember particular events. It is all the more true when it involves collective memory that relies on several persons. Moreover, in a second article that is entitled "Too many memories?"[449] he points to the fact that in our era, the phenomenon of "over-memorialization" is to be witnessed. He reflects upon his visit at several Holocaust memorials in Berlin and claims:

> […] [A]lthough I walked a long time amid the concrete tombs, I couldn't see the past. I couldn't see the myriad details of cruelty and hate and barbarity to which this monument abstractly refers. I couldn't help feeling something is going on at this and other modern memorials that serves the needs and desires of the present, and has nothing, really, to do with either making restitution for the past or ensuring nothing comparable ever takes place again. Memory has taken on a life of its own. It has become the last sacred thing in a world that holds nothing sacred.[450]

This quote highlights problems that the building of memorials has to face. Even if feelings of hope that such tragedies will never happen ever again are witnessed at memorials, visitors pertinently know that in the case of 9/11 it is unthinkable. Terrorism has become so pervading that new attacks can and will take place. 9/11 was not the last attack on America, but it is important for citizens to show that they are united, and memorials also serve this purpose.

[448] Jonathan Jones. "War Memorials have Failed – We have Forgotten the Chaos of Fascism." *TheGuardian*. December 9, 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2016/dec/09/war-memorials-have-failed-peter-eisenman-holocaust, accessed on July 28, 2017.
[449] Jonathan Jones. "Too many Memories?" *TheGuardian*. January 26, 2007. https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2007/jan/26/architecture, accessed on July 28, 2017.
[450] *Ibid.*

Chapter 5: Absence and Remembrance at 9/11 Memorials

A number of 9/11 temporary and permanent memorials have been analyzed in the two previous chapters. Although they were all erected to honor the memory of the victims of the terrorist attacks that took place on September 11, 2001, and to remember the collapsed Twin Towers, the absence of both is mirrored through symbolic shapes and materialities. Consequently, one can wonder how those temporary and permanent memorials manage to convey absence and remembrance through their design, as they are replaced by the presence of a memorial. At most commemoration sites, visitors play a major role in the way the victims are remembered, since they leave mementos that are carefully chosen, and that express loss. On the other hand, building memorials is not always deemed positive, as will be explained in the following pages. Yet, even though they spark controversy, each time a terrorist attack takes place, those commemoration practices can be witnessed, which marks that they have become part of a new ritual. In this chapter, several questions will be addressed: are there some debates around the building of memorials? How do the chosen designs manage to simultaneously convey absence and remembrance? What does the materiality reflect? Are visitors reminded of the atrocities that took place? Those questions will enable to grasp why memorials are built and whether they are useful to the citizens or only to the countries for political reasons. As Gessner mentions it, "the construction of memorials relies significantly on identity politics, and on questions of nationalism and of power."[451] They are a means for the country to show its power and be stronger as a nation.

5.1 Debates around Memorials

When a bombing takes place, it has become common to erect temporary memorials as, in the aftermath of the events, the citizens who are traumatized gather to try to get to grips with the tragic death of the many victims. Those sites of commemoration are thus freely initiated by them and they do not need any permission. It has become a ritual to visit the place where the victims died and to bring intimate objects to the memorial, which ends up being a collective site of memory that is also highly personal, as individual objects are carefully chosen for the victims. By contrast, permanent memorials are the result of a long process that often generates many debates, as it was the case for the National September 11 Memorial. Its planning and

[451] Ingrid Gessner. *Op. Cit*., p. 5.

construction were controversial because, after the attacks, Ground Zero became a site of memory and mourning, which rendered its rebuilding highly politicized. This is mentioned by Sturkens in her article entitled "The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero," in which she writes that "the narratives that have been layered on Ground Zero reveal the complex convergence of political agendas and grief in this space, as if, somehow, the production of new spatial meanings will provide a means to contain the past, maintenance the grief, and make sense of the violent events that took place there."[452] As already explained in Chapter 1 and as written by Sturken, the name Ground Zero was given to the place when the Twin Towers collapsed and it is synonymous with starting point.[453] To my mind, although memory and mourning are elements which are in keeping with the objectives of memorials, the sacred status of the place probably influenced its reconstruction, as it is the final resting place of many victims. This is emphasized in New York, as the victims' bodies could never be recovered. The memorial is thus a "real" cemetery, which requires a construction that mirrors this characteristic that implies sacredness.

One can wonder why Ground Zero is deemed so sacred and which meanings lie behind this term. In New York, once it became clear that the bodies would never be recovered, the place was deemed "sacred." However, Sturken claims that "in U.S. culture, the concept of a 'sacred place' has been almost exclusively secular and national rather than religious."[454] In her article, she thus mentions that dust is a very important symbol around 9/11 because "the [two] building[s] collapsed to dust."[455] The bodies of the towers became towers of bodies. The fact that immense buildings, objects and people could be crushed and transformed into this substance raises a very important question around 9/11: the one of materiality, which was then reflected in the various memorials. In the aftermath of 9/11, dust covered the whole area and it was thus considered as a shocking and toxic substance. It was shocking because immense buildings and people had been reduced to nothing and toxic, because many were sick because of it. Although the first reaction was that it should be cleaned in order to move forward, "once it became clear that very few people had survived,"[456] it acquired new meanings including sacredness. Sturken explains that it did not only symbolize the towers, but

[452] Marita Sturken. "The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero." *Op. Cit*., p. 312.
[453] *Ibid.*
[454] *Ibid.,* p. 314.
[455] *Ibid*., p. 312.
[456] *Ibid*.

it was also considered "as the material remains of the bodies of the dead."[457] In fact, this materiality is needed in order to go through the process of grief.[458] This is why families were given urns containing dust and "some […] took comfort in thinking of their loved ones as part of the rubble."[459] Some of this sacred substance can be seen at the National September 11 Museum. Here, the presence of materiality is not contested because it is sacred. Its presence is necessary because the collapsing of the towers completely destroyed what was inside them, including many human beings. When someone dies, in order to be able to grieve, the body is sometimes replaced by some materiality; in this case, it was dust, but it can also be a picture, a flower or the other various objects that were brought to the temporary memorials. A physical approach seems to be needed, as it might help healing after such a tragedy. People cannot live with absence and thus, their loved ones have to remain on earth through objects. By contrast, the materiality generated by memorials is sometimes perceived negatively, as it was the case for Ground Zero, where many argued that nothing should be built on the site.

In addition, while dust was considered sacred in this context, the statement could also be held true for the site of Ground Zero, "as the realization took hold […] that many bodies would never be recovered."[460] Sturken further explains that the sacredness is linked to patriotism and not religion, as "traditionally, in U.S. culture, ground has been considered sacred when blood has been spilled on it."[461] Riley mentions that "an event of catastrophic death also makes sacred the places where it occurs,"[462] which holds true for 9/11. He also adds that

> In particularly immense and violent physical catastrophes such as in the case of the destruction of the World Trade Center towers, the space is deformed on a grandiose scale that cannot be missed by any onlooker, but even when deformation of the site is much more symbolic than physical, as in most of the cases, Clavandier examines, the power of the meaning of this deformation remains immense.

It means, that even though not all destructions are as noticeable as the one of the Twin Towers, if dead is experienced somewhere, the place becomes sacred, which explains why memorials are erected at this precise location. This status and what it implies was, of course,

[457] *Ibid*.
[458] *Ibid*.
[459] *Ibid*., p. 313.
[460] *Ibid*., p. 314.
[461] *Ibid*.
[462] Alexander T. Riley. *Op. Cit*., p. 38.

the source of many disputes because the inhabitants of the Ground Zero area felt they should be authorized to keep on living normally and they did not "want to live in a memorial."[463] However, because of its status, Ground Zero would have remained a cemetery, whether a memorial was built or not. Citizens would have come to the place in order to grieve. Thus, erecting a memorial has permitted to manage the visits to the site, as well as bring life to the neighborhood.

According to Sturken, "it is worth noting that throughout history ruins have often been incorporated into memorial sites to evoke the destructive power of hatred"[464] and the National September 11 Memorial is no exception, as some pieces of the destruction are on display in the museum. This emphasizes the materiality that the event cannot be detached from, and which is particular of New York, as the memorial was built where the victims rest. In my opinion, building the memorial at another location would not have borne the same meaning, precisely because of its status. Building it where the victims rest is meaningful because it provides people with a place where they can pray and mourn, which is needed to work through the trauma that has been developed in the aftermath of the events. Many come to the place and they seem to reflect on their thoughts, while physically being in contact with the memorial (FIG. 5.1). In this sense, it is different from a tomb, on which visitors would not sit or bend. However, as the memorial was designed for them to be physically close to it, it is not deemed disrespectful to touch the construction. Visiting a memorial is a kinesthetic experience: it requires an implication. Physically feeling the presence of the victims through their names on the memorial, as well as letting one's body express how it feels inside, by crying for instance, help visitors deal with their grief and trauma.

[463] Marita Sturken. "The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero." *Op. Cit*., p. 315.
[464] *Ibid*., p. 316.

Fig. 5.1. Woman reflecting on one of the parapets at the National September 11 Memorial, 2013. Photo by Justin Lane.

However, Zuber, who also evokes the various debates around the rebuilding of the site, argues that Ground Zero is "[blithely used] as an impetus for a global war on terror and the invasion of Iraq."[465] The Freedom Tower's height, which is 1776 feet high, symbolizes the date of the Declaration of Independence of the United States and, to him, it is "correspondingly tying the violence of 9/11 to the most patriotic war in American history."[466] Therefore, it cannot be denied, that memorials can be used to indirectly transmit political ideas. However I believe that the visitors will not be aware of this aspect when coming to the site. The height of the tower also marks a wish to reassert the patriotism of the nation. 1776 is the date that symbolizes when it became free. Consequently, deciding that the tower would reflect this number in its height shows that the country has become free again, even if it was the target of a terrorist attack. Furthermore, this could also bear the message that no event will prevent the United States of America from remaining a free country, which means that this idea is similar to the one shared at temporary memorials that are freely erected by the citizens. There, they express it differently, with the use of the flag, for example, which is as symbolic as the tower.

Those debates lead to the status of Twin Towers before they were targeted by the terrorists. They were the symbol of American supremacy because of their size and because of the trade that took place there everyday. However, as mentioned by Blais and Rasic, "the commercial and iconic success of the World Trade Center also tragically made it a target for terrorism,"[467]

[465] Devin Zuber. *Op. Cit*., p. 271.
[466] *Ibid.*
[467] Allison Blais and Lynn Rasic. *Op. Cit*., p. 32.

as it was an area that was thriving and that had acquired the status of "global icon."[468] In 2001, it had reached its apex, as "the complex's occupancy was at near capacity."[469] Thus destroying the Towers meant killing people, as well as reducing the trade activity to zero. Not only were lives destroyed, but the activities that took place in this area of the city were reduced to nothing, which explains the rush to rebuild on the site. The memorial offers a place to mourn, but it also allowed the neighborhood to live again.

By contrast, the omission of the names of the perpetrators in the design of the various memorials did not create any debate. As claimed by Doss in *Memorial Mania*,

> these omissions are hardly surprising; these are memorials, after all, to the *victims* of terrorism. Yet the absence of historical referents to the perpetrators of terrorism helps shroud these memorials; by effacing the agents of terror, terrorism memorials efface their intentions and encourage a blurring, or evasion, of causality.[470]

This assertion points to the fact that omitting the perpetrators' names is not trivial. This act returns to what is done in the museum: the visitors are not made aware of the causes and the intentions behind the attack. There is a veil on this part of the story.

5.2 Designs that Convey Absence

None of the designs chosen to commemorate 9/11 focuses on negative aspects such as destruction. Whereas the events cannot and will never be forgotten, because memorials serve as *lieux de mémoire*, the atrocity is not always reminded, as the primary aim is to remember the events and create places where citizens can gather and ensure that they will not be forgotten and that the memories will be transmitted to future generations. This can be linked to Doss' idea that the concepts of loss and absence differ:

> Loss connotes destruction and disappearance, whereas absence suggests vacancy and lack, or 'nonpresence' and the anxious possibility of reappearance. Contemporary preference for

[468] *Ibid*., p. 34.
[469] *Ibid.*
[470] Erika Doss. *Memorial Mania*. *Op. Cit*., p. 145.

> 'absence' over 'loss' not only suggests a general confusion about their distinctions but an inability to address their specific forms, and meanings […].[471]

As she points out, absence entails that reappearance is possible, which can lead to anxiety because there is melancholia and the fear of witnessing new attacks. Losing someone means that people will have to deal with their absence at some point. Thus, the two notions are intertwined, and it can be complicated to distinguish them. This is mirrored in the design of memorials. Although loved ones were lost, they remain nonetheless present through various elements in the design of memorials: for instance, their names or light. This is particularly visible in New York with the victims' names that were carved through the parapets and that are lit at night. However, absence is sometimes included in the design, as at the National September 11 Memorial, "the architectural design of the void intends to convey a sense of loss through the creation of negative spaces that physically appear empty. While voids cannot be defined as immaterial, they are by definition material spaces that aim to convey the absence of materiality."[472] Consequently, the two pools that stand at the footprints of the Twin Towers can be seen as an absence that is supposed to mirror loss. At first sight, it seems that the design chosen honors more the towers than the victims, however they were part of the rubble of the collapsed towers, and they are thus intrinsically linked to them. This is reflected in the design: the names of the victims are carved in the parapets that are tied to the two pools that represent the footprints of the towers. This is highly symbolic, as the victims are in contact both with the place where they died and with the other people who also perished on that day. The squares bind them together in addition to having their names close to their friends and colleagues.

Memorials' designs often generate many debates, as architects do not always know how the victims should be remembered. Families who had lost a member in the attacks made their voices heard, especially in New York, where it was highly complex to find a design that could reflect people's emotions. In fact, as Zuber observes, building a memorial after a terrorist attack is not akin to building one for soldiers who died during the war, who sacrificed themselves for their country and whose actions are deemed epic.[473] In the case of 9/11, they died because they were at the wrong place at the wrong moment. They were not heroes, except for the passengers of United Airlines Flight 93 and the rescue services, whose actions

[471] *Ibid*., p. 145.
[472] Marita Sturken. "The Objects that Lived: The 9/11 Museum and Material Transformation." *Op. Cit.,* p. 17.
[473] Devin Zuber. *Op. Cit*., p. 272.

are acknowledged at the different commemoration sites. In the various debates regarding the rebuilding at Ground Zero, the most influential voice was "a lobbying organization formed shortly after the attacks,"[474] the Coalition of 9/11 families. They did however not succeed in getting through with their ideas. In their opinion, "the most important design criteria, [reflected in the various propositions,] [was] [...] the original bedrock footprints of the two towers and the creation of a plaza around their recessed depths."[475] This emphasizes the collapse of the buildings on that tragic day and leads the visitors to wonder if it is possible to imagine a future after such destruction. Building a plaza enables visitors to walk around the memorial, as well as physically be in contact with the memorial's design, as they can touch the parapets and go close to the footprints of the former Twin Towers. Another important aspect for the lobby was green spaces. They have been included, but they are actually minimal in the final *Reflecting Absence* design, as pointed out by Zuber.[476] This emphasizes that not everyone agrees with the architecture that was chosen for New York. In fact, finding a design that everyone agrees with is impossible. The variety of the offerings that constitute the temporary memorials emphasizes that citizens need to express themselves differently. It is however impossible to please everyone when planning a permanent memorial. Thus, the design agrees with the majority, whereas the ones who are dissatisfied with it may eventually still come to the site, as it offers them a place to mourn.

The other two 9/11 memorials do not reflect absence in their design through voids, or names that are cut through, as it is the case in New York. The absence of the dead is still marked, as the victims' names were engraved at the two locations, but both memorials include constructions, especially at Flight 93 National Memorial, where the height of the Wall of Names implies that visitors have to look up. Instead of digging holes, as it was done in New York, a wall was built, which implies that there is a verticality that used to be typical of monuments. The memorial consequently seems inaccessible and it looks more like a cemetery than a memorial. However, as the construction is minimalist, the visitors concentrate more on the absence of the victims than on the construction since they do not have to analyze it and search for the meanings that were left by the monument-makers. Making this simple choice, without including elements, such as huge constructions or running water, which would have impacted the visitors creates another effect: they focus on the victims only because they are

[474] *Ibid*., p. 278.
[475] *Ibid*., pp. 278-279.
[476] *Ibid*., p. 286.

not surprised by the design, as it is the case in New York, where the voids impact them. By contrast, the design that was chosen for the Pentagon is highly symbolic, even though it does not resemble the one in New York. The presence of benches in the shape of wings mirrors the absence of the victims. Even if this particular memorial does not focus on absence, it can still be perceived as being a place of commemoration where visitors can reflect on the loss of other citizens, and where they can pay homage to them. Seeing that many benches emphasizes the cemetery aspect of the memorial, as each casualty is remembered individually with his/her name engraved on the bench. Again, it encourages the visitors' physicality, as they can even sit on the benches to reflect, pray or cry (FIG. 5.2). Having a design that includes absence is consequently not obligatory to feel that the place honors the absent victims. Thus, the National September 11 Memorial in New York is the only one that truly emphasizes this aspect, probably because of its sacred status.

Fig. 5.2. Soldier reflecting while sitting on one for the benches at the Pentagon Memorial, 2011. Photo by Pat Benic.

Furthermore, even though much debate is generated around the building of permanent memorials, as they should mirror the absence of the victims adequately, no questions are asked when it comes to the temporary memorials, as citizens are the ones who erect them. They are erected in public spaces, which are most of the time close to where the tragedy took place. If it not possible, citizens will still gather somewhere else, as the most important with temporary memorials is to be able to unite, as well as show that people are part of the memorialization process that can help them grieve. Yet, this type of commemoration involves

a great amount of materiality, which proves that absence and voids are not necessarily the best way to mirror the feelings of the visitors, as opposed to what has been decided for the National September 11 Memorial. Of course, the debates were centered on the latter, because of its status of "sacred ground." The planning of the other memorials was not as problematic. Even if they were built where the two planes crashed, the bodies do not rest at the Pentagon and in Shanksville, as opposed to Ground Zero. This does however not prevent citizens from coming to those various places and honor the victims.

5.3 Individualizing the Victims

It has already been exposed that materiality is a very important feature of the memorialization of tragic events, both at temporary and permanent memorials. The various objects brought possibly enable citizens to express their feelings when they are too traumatized to utter words. It means that, although the design of permanent memorials often puts the focus on absence, it does not seem to be enough. Moreover, a materialistic presence is left by the visitors who want to bring life to memorials. They obviously prefer concentrating on the positive aspects and on paying their respects to the dead, as they do not express any resentment or anger. Love and unity are voiced, as those feelings are essential to deal with the trauma that ensues events such as 9/11. Because the offerings (objects, flowers or notes) are personal and directly offered to one person, the individualization process is emphasized. However, this marks that today there is a strong memory industry. It can thus be wondered whether those memorials bear the same meaning, as they used to. Are they erected because it has become a habit and a tradition to do it or do citizens really want to show that they care about the victims? To me, because the fear of new terrorist attacks never leaves, it is important for people to show that they remain united. They bring objects to link themselves to the events and to pay their respects to the victims.

This characteristic contrasts with the design that was chosen for the National September 11 Memorial. Although it focuses on absence, there is a constant presence of objects, flowers and messages for the victims. Of course, objects seem to be suited to express their feelings, and this can explain why numerous temporary memorials are erected after tragic events. In fact, many of the mementos were personalized crafts. In the aftermath of the events, bringing something that had been made manually probably helped citizens to exteriorize how they felt,

as manual activities are known to be stress-relieving. Furthermore, this creativity is suited to traumatic events, since trauma prevents citizens from uttering words. Building a permanent memorial thus enables visitors to keep on bringing objects when temporary memorials have disappeared. Similarly, bringing a flower or a note allows them to show that they do not forget and that the victims remain important, no matter how many years have passed. Moreover, this practice is also common at cemeteries, which is a status that is often awarded to memorials. In fact, in his article entitled "Should Flowers be Banned from Cemeteries," Barkhman claims that "modern graves are far from humble – and more individualistic. In Kensal Green, [a cemetery in the United Kingdom,] they feature everything from a rain-soaked toy […] to framed pictures of dogs, snow globes, Chelsea T-shirts, caps and earmuffs."[477] This leads to the idea that on this aspect, memorials and modern cemeteries are similar. He then quotes Dr Kate Woodthorpe, a lecturer in sociology at the University of Bath, and emphasizes that this materiality is useful to the visitors, as "such decorations are mourners 'staking their claim' and emphasizing that their loved one was important – and an individual,"[478] which explains why the mementos are personal and directly linked to the person who died. Woodthorpe also maintains that "'there are competing expectations about grief. For some people it's about moving on. For others it's about an ongoing relationship. There is a view of stages of grief that ends with 'letting go.' Some people don't do that. They never will let go, and that is OK.'"[479] Consequently, both memorials and cemeteries serve as sites to pay homage to the victims, as well as providing a physical place where citizens can deal with their grief.

In addition to the names, the special status of the victims can be present at memorials. The passengers and crewmembers of United Airlines Flight 93 were perceived as heroes and angels at the temporary memorial. Riley further claimed that the bringing of mementos at the Flight 93 temporary memorial marks a need for ritual. He then adds that "though the death of the Flight 93 passengers is obviously not an act of sacrifice in the purely religious historical sense, we might well call it an act of 'auto-sacrifice.' They move from their initial status as profane, unremarkable, quotidian individuals to become sacred entities through their own

[477] Patrick Barkhman. "Should Fake Flowers be Banned from Cemeteries?" *TheGuardian*. January 12, 2011. https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2011/jan/12/cemetery-ban-for-fake-flowers, accessed on July 23, 2017.
[478] *Ibid.*
[479] *Ibid.*

violent destruction."[480] Because the passengers of United Airlines Flight 93 took action to prevent the hijackers from reaching their target, they were awarded a special status that required thankfulness from the visitors at the temporary memorial. Similarly to the respects citizens pay to Jesus for his sacrifice, they needed some kind of ritual for the passengers and crewmembers. This aspect is however not marked at the permanent one. Of course, their names are engraved on the Wall of Names, but the same was done for the other victims at each memorial. It means that they are not granted their special status in the permanent place of commemoration. For example, the sentence "let's roll" that was present in mass at the Flight 93 temporary memorial was not engraved at the Flight 93 National Memorial. Because of its symbolism (which was explained in Chapter 3), it could have been expected to witness the sentence written under Todd Beamer's name to emphasize the personalized aspect of the memorial even more, as it shows his courage, when he took action against the terrorists. By contrast, the rescue services that were often mentioned and thanked for their service at the temporary memorials are always awarded their special status at the permanent ones with the mention of their career near or under their name, because their tremendous courage and actions permitted to save many lives, which resulted in them losing theirs.

Then, the content of the messages varies according to the type of commemoration. The notes at the temporary ones were not addressed to a victim in particular. They rather conveyed messages of hope and peace for the whole nation because those feelings are what matters the most after a terrorist attack. It seems that many visitors brought a memento to those temporary places, whether they were linked to the victims or not. The whole nation felt compelled to show that they were present in the aftermath of the attacks. I believe that those messages convey hope because citizens know that their country can be the target of new attacks. They consequently need to write notes because they try to convince themselves that the future can still be positive and that they should keep living their life without being afraid of terrorism.

As has been shown in the previous chapter, the messages brought at the permanent places of commemoration are more personal and directly address one particular victim. Thereby, it seems that families and friends are the ones to bring materiality to the permanent memorials, whereas everyone did at the temporary memorials. Therefore, one question can be raised: since many of these offerings are brought by family members, will this tradition be

[480] Alexander T. Riley. *Op. Cit.,* p. 88.

perpetuated in the coming decades? Even if this materiality eventually completely disappears, the memorials that were built will remain forever, and they will enable to remember the victims indefinitely, even when all the persons that they have known are gone and do not visit the places anymore. This can explain why permanent memorials are built. Again, in this sense, permanent memorials are similar to cemeteries: at some point all family members disappear, and tombs are abandoned.

5.4 Affective Impact

At temporary memorials, it was rare to witness any direct reference to the attacks; the focus was laid on remembering the victims and trying to get to grips with the immensity of the tragedy by expressing oneself and by bringing objects and talking with other people. This can be explained by the fact that those commemoration sites appear right in the aftermath of the attacks. Because the wound is too recent, citizens focus on the victims rather than on the perpetrators or the catastrophe. Whereas permanent memorials do not mention the atrocities either, it is generally the case at the visitors' centers that have opened next to them. As was previously explained, pictures of the catastrophe, as well as destroyed objects or parts of the buildings are shown and visitors are thoroughly reminded of what happened. Although, a piece of one of the collapsed towers was on display at the temporary memorial in New York, the atrocities were never present. Therefore, museums contrast with the intent to only remember: they want visitors to understand what has happened, even though part of the story is missing, as the absence of explanations regarding the reasons behind the terrorist attacks is obvious.

While the designs of the various memorials focus on remembering the victims and try to adequately reflect their absence, without staying stuck in the past and making the visitors relive the atrocious events, the museums play on their feelings. Riley emphasizes the idea that memorials should focus on the remembrance aspect only, as he states:

> A memorial is, among other things, a mask. Its primary task is to hide the horror of the event it memorializes; more specifically, it cloaks the destructive effect the event had on the bodies of the dead. In this and other ways, a memorial calls us to *forget* as much as to remember. Chief among the things we are called to forget is the terror of the thought of human bodies being ripped to pieces, instantly, without warning, and with no chance for reprieve or

> salvation. We are called to forget that their fate will be ours, perhaps not so dramatically, but just as finally.[481]

This marks that remembering does not necessarily entail to constantly be linked to the atrocities. Of course, the events are essential because they are part of history, but because they could happen anywhere and anytime, it is important not to scare the citizens and to lead them to honor the victims without always going back to the terrorist attacks. Moreover, since the reasons behind 9/11 seem to be hidden from the visitors, as seen on many pictures, it seems that the stories told in the museum are not completely honest. In order to be able to understand complicated events correctly, it is essential to explain why they took place, which is avoided for 9/11.

In New York, as the design of the National September 11 Memorial is highly specific, it can be interpreted as pointing to the atrocities that took place. Sturken maintains that the footprints of the Towers, that were the target of the terrorist attacks, have become highly symbolic.[482] Consequently, "*Reflecting Absence*, [designed] by Michael Arad and Peter Walker, fully inscribes this hierarchy of space, with the footprints designated as solemn and unique spaces."[483] In her opinion, the importance awarded to the footprints is ironic, as they "were truly unremarkable while the towers stood."[484] She argues that the need for a presence of the footprints can reflect "a kind of working through their absence."[485] Even if they appear as being central in the final design, this was not clear from the beginning, as many "politicians immediately claimed that to not rebuild [the destroyed towers] would be seen as a sign of weakness."[486] The absence of the towers and this hole in New York's skyline keeps haunting the citizens.[487] Following this idea, Sturken emphasizes that "Daniel Libeskind can be said to have won the design competition precisely because of his ability to negotiate this terrain fraught with aesthetics and mourning."[488] He managed to build a design that was a memorialization, and not a reconstruction of what had been destroyed. In addition, "Libeskind's triumph was to present himself not as an architect but as a mourning citizen, and this presentation resonated not only with the families of the dead but also with the public at

[481] *Ibid.,* p. 165.
[482] Marita Sturken. "The Aesthetics of Absence: Rebuilding Ground Zero." *Op. Cit*., p. 317.
[483] *Ibid*., pp. 317-318.
[484] *Ibid*., p. 318.
[485] *Ibid*.
[486] *Ibid*.
[487] *Ibid*., p. 319.
[488] *Ibid*., p. 320.

large."[489] However, to me, even if the final design seems to be in accordance with the families' wishes for the resting place of their loved ones, seeing those tremendous holes always points to the absence of the towers, reminding the citizens of the atrocious events and probably making them replay the images of the collapsing towers that they have seen in real life or on television on that day. Furthermore, those two giant voids can be interpreted as being wounds that will never close and heal and that will always bring the visitors back into the past, instead of focusing on the future.

[489] *Ibid*., p. 321.

Conclusion

This master dissertation has attempted to show that although building memorials can be controversial, their presence is needed: they are often the final resting place of many victims. Trauma has become public and the impact of 9/11 was global, which transforms the memorials into global cemeteries. The victims' families consequently often come to pray, spend some moments in silence at the place that is their loved one's grave or simply remember and ease their pain. This can be explained by the need for a community that is compelling in troubled times: the presence of others is needed and citizens thus gather. Furthermore, as shown in Chapter 5, the building of memorials that serve as *lieux de mémoire* will ensure that future generations will be made familiar with the events that have marked their country's history. A comparable phenomenon is present with the materiality that is brought: temporary memorials disappear to be replaced by permanent ones, at which similar objects are also brought. When those mementos stop being left at the various places, the constructions will remain, and this is the reason why they are essential. They however remain sites of contest, as some citizens believe that "the more appropriate response to the overwhelming tragedy is silence."[490] Unfortunately, the memorials analyzed mostly focus on mourning. None of them deals with the political implications and the causes that lie behind terrorist attacks, which means that a part of the history is missing.

In fact, building memorials has become so common that rushes to memorialization generally follow terrorist attacks. Sturken thus claims that our time is "characterized by a preoccupation, […] even, an obsession, with memorialization,"[491] which transforms the space of dead into a site of tourism, as has been exposed here.[492] According to her, Ground Zero now "define[s] present-day in New York City as a place wounded and defended, a place that looks backward toward its moment of trauma, a place ruled by memories of the past."[493] This goes back to one of the aims that are sought when building a memorial. Remembering the dead entails that visitors will always go back to what has happened in the past, no matter how absence is reflected in the design. As presented in the dissertation, most of the objects brought are similar and they imply an intimate relation with the dead. Furthermore, visitors engage in

[490] Devin Zuber. "Flânerie at Ground Zero: Aesthetic Countermemories in Lower Manhattan." *American Quarterly* 58.2 (2006): 269-299. *MLA International Bibliography*. Web. 6 Feb. 2016, p. 294.
[491] *Ibid.*
[492] *Ibid*., p. 323.
[493] *Ibid*.

their visit with their senses as they touch the memorials and the objects. While helping the citizens to cope with their trauma and their grief, memorials entail that there is a constant going back to the past, which means that they express *présentisme*, as defined by François Hartog. He claims that the present does not erase the past.[494] However, memorials make it worse because they prevent citizens from having hope in a peaceful future. As they constantly remind the citizens of the atrocities, one can wonder to what extent they will prevent the process of mourning? Because they are similar to cemeteries in many ways, they are sites which are highly affective.

Memorials are deeply thought of during their building process. While temporary memorials do not require any special agency, as they are made of the various objects that the visitors bring. They are thus spontaneous and heterogeneous. By contrast, permanent memorials are often the result of many discussions, as well as debates and consensus. They are sometimes seen as being a mere construction, but as has been developed in the dissertation, their design is not chosen at random as it entails that the victims and the events should be remembered in a certain way. Furthermore, they are a means of transmitting values, as unity and compassion lie at the heart of many memorials. They offer a place to express compassion for the victims' families, as well as feel united. The goals that are pursued when citizens visit memorials are consequently various. They can for instance go to the place to be present and try to deal with the trauma that ensued the terrorist attacks. Memorials are the physical proof that America was not destroyed, that it will stand against terrorism and will honor its lost citizens forever. The country was changed by those attacks, but it grew stronger. A paradox is involved in this process. On the one hand, citizens want to remember and be strong, but on the other, they are scared because they know that other attacks are possible. An ambivalence is present, while being impossible to be solved.

In the aftermath of tragic events when feelings of patriotism have been shattered, it is generally important to include flags to share the idea of unity and to serve as a means to redefine the strength of the nation. They are consequently often present at memorials, as it is the case for those who were built to remember and honor the victims of 9/11. In this particular context, flags were even more important as many were redesigned and reappropriated in order to give them meanings that would be closer to the events. In addition, memorials are places

[494] Bertrand Lessault. "F. Hartog. *Régimes d'historicité. Présentisme et expérience du temps*, L'orientation scolaire et professionnelle." *Revues.org* 33.3 (2004): 1-5. Web. 30 Sept. 2016. pp 3-5.

where citizens stand together, either with their country only, or to show their compassion when other countries are the targets of terrorist attacks. They are rallying grounds that are global and transnational. For instance, at the National September 11 Memorial, it is not rare to witness flags from other countries when they are also victims of terrorist attacks, as it recently was the case in November 2015 for the terrorist attacks in Paris and in May 2017 after the terrorist attack at Ariana Grande's concert in Manchester, when a flag of the United Kingdom had been laid with flowers on the Survivor Tree.[495]

Memorials have become part of our western society. They can be seen in many countries and their design encourages the visitors to physically engage with them, which sometimes results in an over-physicality. Memorials are places that are built to honor the dead who are civilians and consequently, victims. This means that even though they are not tombs, a certain attitude is expected when visiting the site. Many videos show that silence is often observed at the various 9/11 memorials. They were built in a way that makes it impossible to forget that they are places of commemoration where the dead are remembered. By contrast, other memorials such as the Diana Memorial Fountain in Kensington Gardens, London, do not make it as clear. Even if plaques inform the visitors that they are not supposed to sit or play in the water that fills the memorial, they still do. Many children play joyfully in it, not seeming to grasp that the fountain was built to honor someone who died. The status of the place is thus not as clear. The question of the physical engagement that is encouraged at memorials can consequently be raised: are the visitors not too close to them? Do 9/11 permanent memorials really have a sacred status that makes them similar to cemeteries? As was explained in the dissertation, it seems to be the case at the various 9/11 memorials analyzed. However, one can wonder whether it will continue in the future, or if they will become tourist places only, and lose their primary aim, which is to remember the victims.

This aim is freely expressed by the citizens when they erect temporary memorials, as this ritual has become more common and visible in many countries. Of course, because of the scale of terrorist attacks, many spontaneous memorials were erected in the aftermath of the events. Similarly, temporary memorials were erected in Paris, Brussels, Manchester and London after the recent bombings that took place there. All citizens, no matter where the

[495] "How to Talk to Children about Tragedies like the Manchester Attack." https://www.911memorial.org/blog/how-talk-children-about-tragedies-manchester-attack, accessed on May 28, 2017.

commemoration places appear, have the same goal. They bring objects with them because expressing their feelings with words is too complicated due to the trauma that they suffer from. Although many lives are lost because of terrorists, visitors do not overtly express any anger towards them. They rather focus on positive feelings such as compassion, unity, freedom and love. Those are expressed thanks to the objects brought, but also with messages that are left on the various sites. At all memorials, the main tone is mourning and they reflect the idea that citizens need something physical as the place of trauma has become highly symbolic and it needs to be engaged with. Churches are not used as places to mourn anymore as they have been replaced by those new rituals.

Memorials are thus supposed to serve positively: they are erected to help citizens cope with those traumatic events by uniting them and offering them a place to mourn. In the end, questions remain: will memorials help citizens forget? Or are they used as a means to guide them in how and what they should remember from the history of their country? Many questions can still be raised about this topic. As a result, much research can still be carried out. Memorials are not new, but they have become pervading. Although they are used as a means to express feelings of hope, hope that the country will be free, citizens know that terrorist attacks can happen anytime. Because they are becoming more common, it can also be wondered whether new memorials will be erected if other bombings target countries. Will the victims still be remembered as individuals? Or will victims of terrorism eventually be considered as a whole? In the end, as pointed out by Nora, material sites are needed in order to create memory. The era in which we are is obsessed with it, and many new forms of mourning and remembering have appeared, notably on the Internet on which forums and Facebook pages provide collective places where feelings can be expressed, where citizens can create a dialogue and where the victims' families can find some comfort. We live in a century that is characterized by affective thoughts and in which citizens wish to find hope and meaning. As the media put emphasis on tragedies and play on people's feelings, questions regarding the future of those places of commemoration can be raised. The trauma that ensues terrorist attacks is so overwhelming and present that remembering the absent citizens is essential, but since temporary and permanent memorials have replaced spirituality, one can wonder if those will in turn eventually be replaced by other modes of commemoration.

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