

Confederate Monuments and Historic Markers in the Former Union States of Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio: Does Location Matter?

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ABSTRACTS

Der Tod von George Floyd, eines afroamerikanischen Mannes, durch die Polizei in Minneapolis im Mai 2020 entfachte erneute die Black Lives Matter Bewegung und die Debatte über die Notwendigkeit, die Symbole der Konföderation aus der amerikanischen Landschaft zu entfernen. Die meisten dieser Symbole, errichtet durch die Vereinigungen der *United Daughters of the Confederacy* (UDC) und *Sons of the Confederate Veterans* (SCV) an der Wende zum 20. Jahrhundert, zielten darauf ab, der Geschichte des Südens und seiner noblen Zwecke in den Kämpfen des Sezessionskrieges zu gedenken. Jedoch könnten einige von ihnen auch nördlich des Mason-Dixon-Linie gefunden werden, in Regionen ohne Sklaverei, die standhafte Verteidiger der Union im Bürgerkrieg waren. Am Beispiel von drei Nachbarstaaten, Ohio, Pennsylvania und New York fragt dieser Artikel, wie das geschehen konnte. Wie konnten Staaten der Union die Erinnerung an die Konföderation hochhalten? Um diese Frage zu beantworten, wird damit begonnen, den historischen Kontext des 19. Jahrhunderts zu betrachten und sich um Verständnis zu bemühen, bis zu welchem Grad Ohio, Pennsylvania und New York freie Staaten waren und welche Rolle sie im Bürgerkrieg spielten. Dann wird auf das frühe 20. Jahrhundert eingegangen, auf die Zeit, als Denkmäler für die Konföderierten von den nördlichen Unterorganisationen der UDC und SVC errichtet wurden und es wird versucht zu erklären, wie es ihnen gelang, ihren Einfluss auf den Norden auszudehnen. Schließlich befasst sich der Beitrag mit den aktuellen Debatten über den Abbau dieser Symbole in diesen drei Staaten und versucht, die Bedeutung der Zerstörung der anstößigen Marker der Vergangenheit zu bewerten.

The death of George Floyd, an African-American man, at the hands of the Minneapolis police in May 2020 reignited the Black Lives Matter movement and the debate over the need to erase all Confederate symbols peppering the American landscape. Most of these symbols, erected on the initiative of the *United Daughters of the Confederacy* (UDC) and the *Sons of the Confederate Veterans* (SCV) at the turn of the twentieth century, were aimed at paying tribute to Southern history and their noble cause in fighting in the Civil War. However, interestingly, some of them can be found north of the Mason–Dixon line, in non-slaveholding regions, which were staunch supporters of the Union during the War. Taking the example of the three neighbouring states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York, this article is going to ask how this could happen: How could Union states celebrate the memory of the Confederacy? To answer this question, we will start by looking at the historical context of the nineteenth century, trying to understand to what extent Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York were free states as well as the role they played in the Civil War. Then, we will look at the early twentieth century, at the time Confederate monuments and historical markers were erected by the Northern chapters of the UDC and the SCV, and we will try to explain how they managed to extend their influence into the North. Finally, we will study the contemporary debates about the removal of these symbols in these three states and will try to reflect on the significance of erasing offensive markers of the past.

1. Introduction

The death of George Floyd, an African-American man, at the hands of the Minneapolis police in May 2020 reignited the Black Lives Matter movement and the debate over the need to erase all Confederate symbols peppering the American landscape.¹ The movement started in 2015 after Dylann Roof, a neo-Confederate teenager, opened fire in the historic African-American church Mother Emanuel in Charleston, South Carolina, killing nine people on 17 June. That Roof had posed on social media, proudly flying the Confederate flag, was proof of the connection between this old secessionist symbol and rampant racism targeting the African-American community. The rebel flag, Dixie flag or Southern Cross, was re-introduced by neo-Confederate groups in the 1950s and 1960s to express their opposition to desegregation and civil rights movement. To this day, over 1,503 Confederate symbols in public spaces have been listed by the Southern Poverty Law Center, and 93 have been removed or renamed between 25 May 2020 (Floyd's death) and 15 September 2020.² The largest one is the Confederate Memorial

1 The state of New York passed a law on 16 December 2020 banning all Confederate and Nazi symbols in public places, whereas the state of Ohio rejected such a ban. See J. Balmert, Ohio Lawmakers Reject Attempt to Ban Confederate Flag at County Fairs, in: *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 11 June 2020, <https://Eu.Cincinnati.Com/Story/News/2020/06/11/Ohio-Lawmakers-Reject-Attempt-Ban-Confederate-Flag-County-Fairs/5341475002/> (accessed 19 March 2021).

2 These include 718 monuments, 109 public school names, 80 county and city names, 9 Confederate holidays, and 10 US military base names, excluding the "2,570 Civil War battlefields, markers, plaques, cemeteries and similar symbols that, for the most part, merely reflect historical event", *Whose Heritage?*, https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/com_whose_heritage.pdf (accessed 2 March 2021). Among the 93 Confederate symbols that have been targeted, we can count 60 monuments, 1 state flag (MS), 1 holiday (VA), and 2 Confederate

Carving, a 120-metre-high bas-relief sculpture depicting Confederate leaders Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson on the face of Stone Mountain near Atlanta, Georgia. The excessiveness of this representation is all the more striking as the North, which won the Civil War, does not even have an equivalent to celebrate the great Unionist generals like Ulysses S. Grant. The first Confederate monuments were erected as soon as the Civil War ended in 1865, with the majority appearing in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Some were erected during the civil rights movement, and 32 were dedicated at a more recent period, during the last 17 years.³

Even though most of these symbols can be found in the Southern states, that is to say, the ex-Confederate states, which had seceded from the Union in 1861, many can be found in Northern non-slaveholding regions, which were staunch supporters of the Union during the Civil War. Indeed, out of 32 states displaying Confederate symbols, 9 were former Union states, with Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania being among those having the highest number.⁴ Interestingly, these three states played key roles in the war by providing troops, military officers, and supplies. As the most populous states, they sent the highest number of troops to fight for the Union (465,000; 360,000; and 310,654 soldiers, respectively) and tally together one-third of the total number of deaths on the Union side.⁵ Many leading Union generals were from Ohio, including Ulysses Grant, William T. Sherman, and Philip H. Sheridan, and five Ohio-born Civil War officers would later serve as presidents of the United States.

This may seem very surprising at first sight. How could Confederate symbols be celebrated in Union states? To answer this question, we will start by looking at the historical context of the nineteenth century, trying to understand the degree of involvement of the three neighbouring states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York in slavery as well as the role they played in the Civil War. Then, we will look at the early twentieth century, at the time Confederate monuments and historical markers were erected by the Northern chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) and the Sons of the Confederate Veterans (SCV). How did they manage to extend their influence in the North? Finally, we will study the contemporary debates about the removal of these symbols in these three states and will try to reflect on the significance of erasing offensive markers of the past.

flag emblems removed; 10 relocated Confederate monuments; 10 schools, 4 colleges (1 campus; 3 buildings), 2 parks/trails (CA and VA), 2 roads (TX), and 1 body of water (VA) that have been renamed, “SPLC, Whose Heritage? Dataset Updates as of September 15, 2020”, <https://www.splcenter.org/presscenter/splc-whose-heritage-dataset-updates-september-15-2020> (accessed 2 March 2021).

3 Whose Heritage?, 153 years of Confederate Iconography, https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/com_whose_heritage_timeline_print.pdf (accessed 2 March 2021).

4 Out of the 20 Union states, 9 display Confederate symbols: California (6), Pennsylvania (4), New York (3), Ohio (3), Iowa (3), Indiana (2), Kansas (2), Nevada (1), and Massachusetts (1) “Whose Heritage?”, https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/com_whose_heritage.pdf (accessed 2 March 2021).

5 Out of 359, 528 Union deaths, the 3 states combined reached 115, 192 (New York, 46,534; Pennsylvania, 33, 183; Ohio 35, 475). F. H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion: Compiled and Arranged from Official Records of the Federal and Confederate Armies, Reports of the Adjutant Generals of the Several States, the Army Registers, and Other Reliable Documents and Sources*, Des Moines, Iowa, 1908, pp. 11–12.

2. Were Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York Free States?

Before we engage in the discussion about monuments and historical markers, we should look at the historical context of the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. They were all Union states at the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, and they were all free states, where slavery had been officially abolished. Abolitionism was even born in these states, with the New York Manumission Society in 1785 and the Pennsylvania Abolition Society in 1789, while Ohio played a key role in the Underground Railroad – the network of secret routes and safe houses, called “stations” – that was established by abolitionists to allow enslaved African Americans to escape into free states and Canada.

Yet, this representation is just one side of the story. Colonial America did experience slavery. The Dutch colony of New Netherland received 11 enslaved Africans as early as 1626, 2 years after its foundation. When the English conquered the colony, the African population in New Amsterdam had reached 350 persons out of 1,850 inhabitants and by the 1740s, black people amounted to 20 per cent of the whole population of the city.⁶ Similarly, despite its Quaker roots, Pennsylvania, and especially the city of Philadelphia, grew partly on slavery. After the founding of the colony in 1682, Philadelphia became the region’s main port for the importation of enslaved persons. In December 1684, the slave ship *Isabella* unloaded a cargo of 150 enslaved Africans. In 1780, there were about 6,855 enslaved people in the state, with some 539 in Philadelphia County. The 1790 census lists 21,193 blacks in New York and 3,707 blacks in Pennsylvania, the proportion reaching 8.8 per cent of Philadelphia’s population in 1767.⁷

Slavery started to be questioned at an early stage in Pennsylvania with the passing of the Gradual Emancipation Act (1780), which gradually emancipated children of enslaved mothers born after the enactment of the law once they reached the age of 28. New York passed a similar law in 1799, emancipating enslaved people born after that date: boys after they reached the age of 28 and girls after 25 years old, thus officially ending slavery in 1827. Although the enslaved population in Pennsylvania born before 1780 did not enjoy emancipation, enslaved people in New York benefitted from a new law passed in 1817, emancipating 10 years later, in 1827, boys and girls when they reached the age of 21, thus officially ending slavery in the state in 1848. In 1840, as slavery was officially abolished, New York counted 4 enslaved persons, whereas Pennsylvania still held 64.⁸

6 I. Berlin/L. Harris (eds.), *Slavery in New York*, New-York Historical Society and The New Press, 2005, p. 63.

7 E. R. Turner, *The Negro In Pennsylvania, Slavery-Servitude-Freedom, 1639–1861*, Washington 1911; E. R. Turner, *Slavery in Colonial Pennsylvania*, in: *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 35, no. 2, 1911, pp. 141–151; J. W. Trotter/E. L. Smith (eds.), *African Americans in Pennsylvania*, University Park 1998, p. 44; Gary B. Nash, *Forging Freedom: The Formation of Philadelphia’s Black Community, 1700–1840*, Cambridge, MA 1988, pp. 236–237; G. B. Nash/J. R. Soderlund, *Freedom by Degrees: Emancipation in Pennsylvania and its Aftermath*, New York 1991.

8 W. S. Rossier, *A Century of Population Growth: From the First to the Twelfth Census of the United States: 1790–1900*. www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents. Look at Chapter 14: Statistics of Slaves.

New York kept benefitting from the illegal slave trade despite its prohibition by Congress in 1807.⁹ At the outbreak of the Civil War, it was known as the most Southern city outside of the South. In 1860, the Southern editorialist J. D. B. De Bow described the city as “almost as dependent on Southern slavery as Charleston itself”.¹⁰ Its harbour prospered on the trade of cotton (representing 40 per cent of all the shipped goods), tobacco, and sugar refining, which altogether made up Brooklyn’s biggest industry in 1850. Wall Street financiers, commercial shippers, and merchants selling manufactured goods to the South entirely depended on this trade. On 6 January 1861, right before the attack on Fort Sumter, Fernando Wood, the Democratic mayor known to be a “Copperhead” (a Peace Democrat), suggested to the Common Council that the city call for secession to be able to maintain its trade with the South. He was opposed to the Thirteenth Amendment and called for new constitutional amendments to protect slavery.¹¹ In 1863, the city was prey to violent riots, initially to protest the draft lottery but they quickly turned into a race riot, in which 11 black men were lynched during 5 tumultuous days.¹²

The case of Ohio is different as it was created in the Northwest Territory, which was developed as free soil. In 1787, the Northwest Ordinance prohibited slavery in the territory covering the present states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Slavery was officially banned in the constitution of Ohio when it became a state in 1802. Yet, this did not prevent racial prejudice as the state legislature started to pass black codes as soon as 1804: blacks were prohibited from voting, serving on juries, and testifying against whites in court cases; they were not allowed to settle in the state without a certificate of freedom, and those already living in Ohio had to pay a registration fee of 12 and half cents to be employed by a white person. Black children were denied education in the public schools, for which black property owners were required to pay taxes. In 1850, the new state constitution banned slavery except for “the punishment of crime”. This amendment caused many divisions. Indeed, most people in the Northeast came from New England or Pennsylvania and supported abolitionism, whereas the economy of the city of Cincinnati, situated at the southern border of the state, was indelibly linked to slavery and the South. Despite the banning of slavery in the state, many inhabitants hired enslaved labourers from their Kentucky neighbours. Moreover, Cincinnati’s economy was based on the pork industry, which was highly dependent on the plantation economy of the South. Pork was a staple in the diet of enslaved African Americans and was sold throughout the entire South. Competition for jobs on steamboats on the Ohio River between Irish immigrants and native blacks also led to many race riots in Cincinnati in 1829, 1836, and 1841.¹³

9 In total, over 400 illegal slave vessels left the United States during this period, the vast majority from New York, although others departed from New Orleans, Boston, and other minor ports, see J. Harris, *The Last Slave Ships: New York and the End of the Middle Passage*, New Haven, London 2020.

10 L. Harris, *In the Shadow of Slavery, African Americans in New York City, 1626–1863*, Chicago 2003, p. 189.

11 G. R. Hodges, *Root & Branch: African Americans in New York and East Jersey, 1613–1863*, Chapel Hill 1999, p. 266.

12 Harris, *In the Shadow of Slavery*, pp. 280–286.

13 S. Middleton, *The Black Laws: Race and the Legal Process in Early Ohio*, Athens 2006, pp. 19, 35–37, 123–127.

Because of this diversity of interests in the North, support of the war was not uniform in the Union. The Copperheads, among whom was Ohioan congressman Clement L. Vallandigham, vehemently opposed the war and showed signs of sympathy for the Confederate cause.¹⁴ One of the main reasons for their fight was Abraham Lincoln's desire to abolish slavery. Indeed, they feared that if Lincoln freed enslaved people in the South, African Americans would then flood the North looking for jobs. They held abolitionists responsible for the war. Some resented the war effort, which brought economic hardship and increasing unemployment to working-class neighbourhoods, while others saw it as an economic threat. Besides New Yorkers, who had strong trade connections with the South, many Ohioans, especially those living along the Ohio River, had migrated to the state from slaveholding states and had many connections in the South. Still others came to oppose the war when the federal government enacted a conscription act, forcing men to fight for the North, which resulted in the Draft Riots in New York. This painting of a contrasted historical reality in these three Northern states, torn between advocates of abolitionism and sympathizers to the Southern cause before the Civil War, helps us understand how Confederate memory could take root in the twentieth century.

3. Confederate Symbols in Union States

After the Civil War, many associations were founded across the South, for the most part initiated by women, in order to arrange burials, establish cemeteries, and organize commemorative ceremonies to celebrate the memory of Confederate soldiers. Most of these memorial associations eventually merged into the UDC, which grew from 17,000 members in 1900 to nearly 100,000 women by World War I.¹⁵ Their influence was colossal as they managed to not only lobby local legislatures and Congress, raising money to erect Confederate monuments throughout the whole country, but also influence the content of history textbooks in order to spread the Southern version of history. By awarding scholarships and organizing essay contests in Northern universities and establishing chapters in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Cincinnati in the early twentieth century, they guaranteed that the whole nation would adhere to the myth of the Lost Cause.¹⁶ So how influential were they in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio? What type of monuments and historical markers did they manage to erect?

14 See J. L. Weber, *Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North*, New York 2008.

15 D. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, Cambridge, Ma. 2001, pp. 272–273; D. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, New York 2008, pp. 237–247; S. Gardner, *Blood and Irony: Southern White Women's Narratives of the Civil War, 1861–1937*, Chapel Hill 2006, pp. 128–130.

16 K. L. Cox/J. D. Smith, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*, Gainesville 2003, p. 50, 132.

3.1. Historic Markers of Civil War Events

The first type of symbol we can find in these states is those tightly connected to a specific historical event. The state of Pennsylvania counts four Confederate historic markers, besides those in Gettysburg National Military Park, which is dedicated to the Gettysburg Battle in 1863, in which more than 7,600 Northern and Southern soldiers lost their lives, and which is protected by the policy of the National Park Service.¹⁷ The other historic markers are situated in McConnellsburg, Fulton County, a border county in the south of the state, known to be the site of the first Confederate deaths and the last Confederate presence north of the Mason-Dixon line. The first two markers are the Confederate Soldiers Monument – a 6-foot-tall monument, which was erected in 1929 by the Elliott Grays chapter no. 1877 and the North Carolina division of the UDC¹⁸ – and the Confederate Dead Marker, dedicated on 10 February 1948.¹⁹ They both commemorate the place where two Confederate soldiers, William B. Moore and Thomas Sheldon, were buried after being killed on 29 June 1863 in what was supposedly the first Civil War battle in Pennsylvania, a couple of months before the great Gettysburg Battle.²⁰ According to Glenn Cordell, a former secretary for the Fulton County Historical Society, “during the incident, Union troops chased the Confederate troops away, but two were still behind. After a skirmish, the two troops were killed and the people from the town retrieved the bodies and buried them”.²¹ We can easily understand why the UDC wanted to commemorate the unfortunate fate of these two soldiers, yet apparently they lacked historical accuracy as they engraved the date of 30 June, whereas the battle took place on 29 June.²² The 1948 marker corrects this mistake and also pays tribute to the local population by mentioning their benevolent behaviour taking care of the two burials.

The Last Confederate Bivouac Marker plaque was placed in 1930 by the Pittsburgh chapter of the UDC, with contributions from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and the Fulton County Historical Society, and was followed by a marker installed in 1948. They both pay tribute to the 4,000 Confederate troops who, on 31 July 1864, “after raiding and burning Chambersburg”, “camped out on the south edge of McConnellsburg and then went into town going house-to-house looking for food

17 We have listed 6 Confederate markers in Gettysburg: Confederate Avenue, Confederate Drive, The Virginia Monument including a statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee, West Confederate Avenue, Soldiers and Sailors of the Confederacy Monument, and the Confederate Memorial/Statue.

18 The Confederate Soldiers Monument, PA: <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=152458>; The Confederate Dead Marker (McConnellsburg, Fulton County, PA): <https://explorepahistory.com/hmarker.php?markerId=1-A-1E4> (accessed 8 March 2021).

19 https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/wm2CB_Confederate_Dead (accessed 13 March 2021).

20 <http://explorepahistory.com/hmarker.php?markerId=1-A-1E4> (accessed 8 March 2021).

21 C. Bonk, Four Confederate Monuments to be Removed in Fulton County, in: York Daily Record, <https://eu.ydr.com/story/news/local/2020/07/02/fulton-county-remove-four-public-confederate-monuments/5366552002> (accessed 8 March 2021).

22 The Last Confederate Bivouac Marker (plaque), PA 1930, https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/wm3K-PZ_Last_Confederate_Bivouac_Plaque_McConnellsburg_PA; The Last Confederate Bivouac Marker 1948, PA, https://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/wm3KPZ_Last_Confederate_Bivouac_Plaque_McConnellsburg_PA; <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=152458> (accessed 8 March 2021).

while the rebel officers hid out in a farmhouse. They were the last Confederates to camp on Pennsylvania soil.”²³ The 1930 dedication ceremony was celebrated in the name of reconciliation as Hon. H. D. Patterson, president of the Fulton County Historical Society, said: “this marker [...] will be [a] reminder to those who come after us of the crisis in our history from which emerged a United Nation”, words that were corroborated by the president of the Pittsburgh chapter of the UDC, saying “this occasion is just one more bond to show the world that we are all one”, with the flying of the two flags Stars and Stripes and the Stars and Bars.²⁴

3.2. Cemeteries

After the commemoration of landmark events, Confederate monuments are also to be found in Northern cemeteries, where Confederate soldiers are buried. When the national cemetery opened in Philadelphia in 1885, both Union and Confederate remains were removed and reinterred together. Yet, the Philadelphia chapter of the UDC contested the fact that the Confederate dead were reburied in a single section, without headstones or a memorial, and in turn managed to have “a ground-level tablet to memorialize what it said were 224 unknown Confederate dead”. They had been pushing for erecting a taller obelisk, but in 1900, Union veterans protested, claiming “that a National Cemetery in a loyal City of the North should be disgraced by a monument to would-be destroyers of our Union”.²⁵ This acknowledgement of Southern soldiers was accelerated in 1906 when Congress authorized headstones for those who died in Northern military hospitals and prisons and established the Commission for Marking Graves of Confederate Dead.²⁶ The Confederate memorial of the National Philadelphia Cemetery in West Oak Lane was completed in 1911 and dedicated by the UDC the next year. Jeff Gammage describes it as a “thick granite block [that] stands 9 feet, 6 inches tall”, erected beside the buried soldiers: “the troops, all prisoners of war who died at local military hospitals, lie within a rectangular green field whose corners are marked by four squat, square stones inscribed with a ‘C’”.²⁷ The dedication of the monument on 12 October 1912, on the forty-second anniversary of the passing of General Lee, drew a thousand people, among whom were some Union veterans, who expressively celebrated the Confederacy, singing “Dixie”

23 The Historical Marker Database, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=27266> (accessed 8 March 2021).

24 Unveiling of Marker for Last Confederate Campfire, 7 August 1930, <https://cdn.website-editor.net/020d9c979f77483189db333592c7de7f/files/uploaded/Fulton%2520County%2520Volume%252043%2520C%2520History%2520C%2520Scrapbook.pdf> (accessed 13 March 2021).

25 J. Gammage, Confederate monuments are falling across the nation, but in Philly a memorial to Southern troops still stands, in: *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 24 September 2020, <https://www.inquirer.com/news/confederate-monument-philadelphia-national-cemetery-confederacy-union-graves-20200924.html> (accessed 8 March 2021).

26 An Act to Provide for the Appropriate Marking of the Graves of the Soldiers and Sailors of the Confederate Army and Navy who Died in Northern prisons and were Buried near the Prisons where they Died, and for Other Purposes, 9 March 1905, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/59th-congress/session-1/c59s1ch631.pdf> (accessed 8 March 2021).

27 J. Gammage, Confederate monuments are falling across the nation; The Confederate memorial of the National Philadelphia Cemetery, <https://www.inquirer.com/news/confederate-monument-philadelphia-national-cemetery-confederacy-union-graves-20200924.html> (accessed 12 March 2021).

and “The Star-Spangled Banner”, praising the righteousness of the cause for which the Confederates gave their lives. The invited speaker, John Shepard Beard, praised the action of the federal government in recognizing the Confederate cause: “Is not this action of the Federal government pregnant with the hope that the time has at last come when an American citizen can contemplate the achievements of his fellow-countrymen, from whatever section of the Union they may hail.”²⁸

In the state of New York, a 60-foot-high, obelisk-shaped monument sits in the privately run Mount Hope Cemetery, Hastings-on-Hudson, Westchester County. It is described as “by far the tallest structure within the peaceful environs”.²⁹ This marker was built on a plot of land that was bought by the New York Camp of the United Confederate Veterans, where more than 40 Confederate veterans are buried, Southerners who came and settled in the New York region after the war.³⁰ It was paid for by a Confederate soldier and Virginia merchant and was dedicated on 22 May 1897. Many Union veterans attended the ceremony, as one Southern expatriate put it: “once called the enemy, but now known by the sweet name of brothers”. A band played a “medley of Confederate and Union airs”, and “a beautiful silk United States flag and the emblematic flag of the Confederate veterans” flew side by side. Indeed, the obelisk was dedicated “as a memorial, a pledge, and an expression of unending peace, union and fraternity among Americans”. The postmaster general attending the ceremony said the monument was “dedicated jointly by wearers of the blue and gray, and was the fulfillment of the last [...] cherished hope of General Grant”.³¹

In Ohio, two monuments can be found in cemeteries for veterans, both owned by the federal government and currently maintained by the Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration.³² One was erected on 14 June 1902 on the site of Camp Chase Confederate Cemetery in Columbus, where 2,260 Confederate soldiers are buried.³³ Camp Chase was opened as a training facility for Ohio volunteers until it recei-

28 <https://civilwartalk.com/threads/confederate-monument-in-cemetery-at-philadelphia-erected-by-united-states.110321/> (accessed 12 March 2021).

29 <https://westchestermagazine.com/publications/is-the-mount-hope-obelisk-truly-a-confederate-memorial/>.

30 M. P. McKinney, Confederate veterans cemetery monument in Hastings-on-Hudson draws concerns, in: *Rockland/Westchester Journal News* (accessed 14 March 2021), “There’s Gen. Thomas Jordan, who fought alongside Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard and went on to found the Financial and Mining Record in New York. There’s Eugene H. Levy, one of the Jewish soldiers who fought for the Confederate States, and later ran a bookshop in New York. And there’s Gen. Elwin Selvage, believed to be New York’s last surviving Confederate veteran when he was fatally struck by a taxi in 1930”, <https://amp.azcentral.com/story/news/2017/08/18/confederate-veterans-cemetery-monument-hastings-on-hudson-greenburgh-draws-concerns/575772001/> (accessed 12 March 2021).

31 TO THE CONFEDERATE DEAD; Veterans of Both Armies Unite in Dedication of the Monument at Mount Hope Cemetery. AN ORATION BY W.L. WILSON The Shaft Erected by Charles Broadway Rouss to His Dead Comrades Is Formally Accepted – Three Graves Already in the Plot, in: *New York Times*, 23 May 1897.

32 More Confederate sites are to be found like the grave of Confederate Captain William C. Quantrill in Dover, Tuscarawas County. Quantrill died and was buried in Louisville, KY, in 1865 but in 1887 his mother had his remains moved to the Fourth Street Cemetery in Dover, the family home. Similarly, an historical marker that had been placed on 26 September 2004 by the Sons of the Confederate Veterans outside the home where CSA Brigadier General Roswell S. Ripley was born in Worthington was removed 18 August 2017.

33 Camp Chase Confederate Cemetery in Columbus (Ohio): <https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/lots/campchase.asp> (accessed 5 May 2021).

ved thousands of Confederate political and military prisoners from nearby Kentucky and Western Virginia, many of whom died because of malnutrition and disease. In 1863, the peak prisoner population reached 8,000 men. The 17-foot-high memorial represents a bronze soldier holding a rifle and standing straight on a granite arch on which the word “AMERICANS” is inscribed, underneath which rests a 3-foot-tall boulder with a commemorative inscription.³⁴ The second Confederate historic site to be found in Ohio is on Johnson’s Island in Lake Erie – a Union prison for Confederate officers, which received 15,000 men between 1862 and 1865.³⁵ On 8 June 1910, Moses Ezekiel’s 19-foot-tall statue *Southern* (also called *The Lookout* for its gaze out over the water to the Northeast – to Canada, perhaps), ordered by the Cincinnati Robert Patton chapter of the UDC, was erected on the site, guarding over the headstones of 206 Confederate soldiers.

3.3. Hall of Fame and Street Names

The last type of Confederate symbol we find is of a different nature because it does not refer to any specific historical event or place but is rather a glorification of Confederate generals through the naming of streets and public places or the erection of busts or statues.

Ohio has the highest number of Confederate names. Many roads and schools are dedicated to the South: Confederate Hills, a neighbourhood in Batavia Township; Stonewall Ridge in Batavia Township; Colonel Mosby Drive in Day Heights; Robert E. Lee Drive in Fairfield; Beauregard Court; Jeb Stuart Drive; Monassas Run Road (memorializing the Confederate victory at the battle at Manassas); Stonewall Jackson Drive in Milford; Morgan High School in McConnelsville, named after General John Hunt Morgan; and Willoughby South High School, which used to sing Stars and Bars and have a Confederate-looking mascot dressed in grey and blue as well as Confederate imagery on school uniforms.³⁶ On the contrary, Pennsylvania only counts one Confederate name: Lee Park Avenue in Hanover Township, in the northeast of the state.

In New York, apart from Longstreet Avenue in the Bronx (named after Confederate general James Longstreet, who studied at West Point), Stonewall Jackson Drive and General Lee Avenue in Brooklyn are different cases because they are situated inside New York City’s Fort Hamilton army base. In the same way, West Point, the military academy, commemorates General Lee with the naming of the Lee gate and Lee road and with portraits of Lee in the superintendents’ quarters and the cadet mess hall. There is also the Robert E. Lee Memorial Award for the graduating cadet with the highest grades in the core math curriculum.³⁷ That the state of New York commemorates these two generals is

34 <https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/lots/campchase.asp> (accessed 9 March 2021).

35 <http://ss.sites.mtu.edu/mhugl/2015/10/11/johnsons-island-pow-camp/> (accessed 9 March 2021). Johnson’s Island (Ohio) https://www.cleveland.com/metro/2017/06/confederate_statue_controversy_yet_to.html (accessed 5 May 2021).

36 See https://www.cleveland.com/metro/2017/08/willoughby_south_high_school_d.html?ampredir (accessed 9 March 2021).

37 J. Byrn/G. Royal, What Should West Point Do About Its Robert E. Lee Problem?, 22 June 2020, <https://mwj.usma>.

tied to its local history. Indeed, during their army careers, Lee and Jackson spent time at Fort Hamilton, Lee in the early 1840s as an engineer and Jackson toward the end of that decade. Army spokesman and major general Malcolm Frost explained that “every Army installation is named for a soldier who holds a place in our military history. Accordingly, these historic names represent individuals, not causes or ideologies. It should be noted that the naming occurred in the spirit of reconciliation, not division.”³⁸

The name of Lee was also celebrated at the local Episcopal Church of Saint John’s at Fort Hamilton, where he worshipped during his time at the army base. In 1912, the New York chapter of the UDC – who had learned about Lee’s planting of a maple tree in the churchyard through the church’s rector, attending one of the group’s events at the Waldorf-Astoria – installed a plaque paying homage to the tree. When the tree was later damaged in a storm, the UDC planted a new maple tree and installed a new plaque saying the tree had been replaced in 1935.³⁹

Further north, in the Bronx, one can find busts of Lee and Jackson in the Hall of Fame for Great Americans, the first hall of fame in the nation dating back to 1900, at Bronx Community College.⁴⁰ The 630-foot-long open-air colonnade was designed by architect Stanford White as “an American pantheon”, representing 14 categories of prominent Americans, including “politicians, writers, educators, inventors, military leaders, judges, theologians, philanthropists, humanitarians, statesmen, artists, and explorers”. The choice of the 98 individuals, who were progressively added up to the 1970s, was made from a “Senate” of “100 voters composed of American leaders: past American Presidents, Presidents of Colleges, Senators and men of renown in various fields”.⁴¹

Lee’s bust was installed in 1923, and Jackson’s followed in 1957, after a vigorous campaign led by Confederate history supporters.⁴² Lee’s memory was celebrated during that period along that of Lincoln’s, with annual commemoration ceremonies celebrated on 12 February, Lincoln’s birthday. The 1927 ceremony is described in a *New York Times*

edu/west-point-robert-e-lee-problem/; C. Jenks, “The Tangled History of Confederate Generals at West Point and in the US Army: What’s in a Name?”, 28 August, 2017, <https://www.justsecurity.org/44479/tangled-history-confederate-generals-west-point-army-robert-e-lee/> (accessed 9 March 2021).

38 D. Hajela, Confederate street names stir debate in ... New York City?, in: AP News, 1 July 2017, <https://apnews.com/article/0afa8a06f7864fc7bb88b88866d7a5c0> (accessed 8 March 2021).

39 R. Sullivan, A Confederate General in Brooklyn, in: The New Yorker, 12 June 2017, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/06/19/a-confederate-general-in-brooklyn> (accessed 8 March 2021); R. Sullivan, It’s Hard to Get Rid of a Confederate Memorial in New York City, in: The New Yorker, 23 August 2017, <https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/its-hard-to-get-rid-of-a-confederate-memorial-in-new-york-city> (accessed 9 March 2021). See Lee’s plaques in Saint John’s Episcopal church yard (NY), <https://www.brownstoner.com/brooklyn-life/robert-e-lee-brooklyn-st-johns-church-bay-ridge-fort-hamilton/> (accessed 5 May 2021).

40 A. Cusano, HoF Confederacy busts removed/Rebel generals vanquished by Gov. Cuomo, in: Bronx Times, 25 August 2017, <https://www.bxtimes.com/hof-confederacy-busts-removed-rebel-generals-vanquished-by-gov-cuomo/> (accessed 8 March 2021).

41 C. Tobar, Inclusive Archiving, Public Art, and Representation at the Hall of Fame for Great Americans, 18 July 2019, <https://www.gothamcenter.org/blog/inclusive-archiving-public-art-and-representation-at-the-hall-of-fame-for-great-americans> (accessed 8 March 2021).

42 Lee’s bust in the Hall of Fame, Bronx Community College (NY) is accessible at <https://gothamist.com/news/updated-robert-e-lee-stonewall-jackson-are-part-of-bronx-community-colleges-hall-of-fame> (accessed 5 May 2021).

article as a time when “the blue and the gray, united in these survivors of the great conflict of the 60s, do honor to the bronze image of these men who made some of the most notable pages in the history of America”.⁴³ On 3 April 1900, a reader from the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* asked for more clemency towards the Southern generals:

*Would it not be a graceful tribute to our worthy Southern brothers to include the names of some of their great heroes on the Hall of Fame record? Though Robert E. Lee and T. J. Jackson fought for what we think is a bad cause, yet we should not forget that such men acted as their consciences dictated, and their whole lives show them to be great, good and most worthy gentlemen.*⁴⁴

Similarly, in 1955, Jackson was said to be chosen for his “dogged determination to excel at West Point, his valor in the Mexican War, his absorbing professorship at the VMI, [...] his unsurpassed military genius and contribution to the science of warfare”.⁴⁵ However, the choice of Lee did not meet with unanimous approval. On 15 October 1900, a reader expressed in the *New York Times* his disappointment of having no bust of great Union generals in the Hall of Fame:

*The names of Sheridan, Sherman, and Thomas absent and the foremost traitor of the county side by side with the Nation's greatest benefactors and patriots. The writer of the Emancipation Proclamation and the man who led the armies in a long and bloody war to found a Government based upon human bondage in the same niche of fame! The famous and the infamous!*⁴⁶

On 17 August 2017, Governor Andrew Cuomo ordered their removal, saying that “New York stands against racism” and that “there are many great Americans, many of them New Yorkers worthy of a spot in this great hall. These two confederates are not among them.”⁴⁷

Lee's memory is also celebrated in Franklin, Warren County, Ohio.⁴⁸ It is found on a bronze plaque fixed on a large, ruggedly shaped boulder, fenced off from the roadway by some petite white pillars and a draped metal chain. The plaque, depicting Lee on horseback, reads: “Erected and Dedicated by the United Daughters of the Confederacy and Friends in Loving Memory of Robert E. Lee and to Mark the Route of the Dixie

43 Civil War Veterans Honor Lincoln, Lee, in: *New York Times*, 12 February 1927, <https://nyti.ms/3qQ6e68> (accessed 16 March 2021).

44 Robert E. Lee in the Hall of Fame? There were concerns even back in 1900, <https://www.boweryboyshistory.com/2017/08/robert-e-lee-hall-fame-concerns-even-back-1900.html> (accessed 15 March 2021).

45 D. L. Frankill, General Jackson for Hall of Fame, in: *The New York Times*, 14 July 1955, <https://nyti.ms/3qvnuss> (accessed 17 March 2021); “Bust of Jackson is Given to N.Y.U.”, 20 May 1957, <https://nyti.ms/2nqjt65> (accessed 17 March 2021).

46 Robert E. Lee in the Hall of Fame?; Letters from Readers on Various Timely Topics, in: *The New York Times*, 15 October 1900, <https://nyti.ms/30L2Crk> (accessed 16 March 2021).

47 <https://twitter.com/nygovcuomo/status/897977234220351494> (accessed 16 March 2021).

48 Robert E Lee plaque Dixie Highway, Ohio is accessible at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/jstephenconn/3220573894> and <https://eu.cincinnati.com/story/news/2018/06/29/confederate-monument-gen-robert-e-lee-plaque-now-displayed-private-land/745270002/> (accessed 5 May 2021).

Highway. ‘The shaft memorial and highway straight attest his worth – he cometh to his own.’ – Littlefield/Erected 1927.’⁴⁹ This marker is one among many along Dixie Highway, an old route connecting Chicago to Miami that was built between 1915 to 1923 to connect the Northwest to the South and foster economic development and tourism in the Southern region.⁵⁰ The UDC could not miss that great opportunity to mark their presence on such a dedicated place, Dixie Highway. The 1927 ceremony gathered the president of Ohio’s UDC, Ohio’s director of highways, and the publisher of the *Franklin Chronicle*. Together, they celebrated the Confederacy by singing “Carry Me Back to Ole Virginny [Virginia]”, Lee’s home state, as well as “How Firm a Foundation”, Lee’s favourite hymn.⁵¹ Although celebrating Dixie was fairly popular in the 1930s, the recent race riots led local communities in the North to question such celebrations and the presence of Confederate monuments on their soil.

4. Removing Statues and Historical Markers

4.1. What’s in a Monument?

Before considering the necessity to get rid of monuments, we may start by wondering what these monuments and historical markers represent. What are they used for, and why do they cause such controversy, even when their presence goes unnoticed? Monuments are markers of individual and heroic accomplishment set in stone. They developed in the nineteenth century in parallel to the modern European nation-state and European colonial expansionism and became physical representations of the new national identity.⁵² Their permanent nature turns them into witnesses of the past. They tell us a story but not that of the historic event they refer to but rather of the idea a certain community – usually a political elite – had at a particular time – the period it was erected – of a specific historic event. In other words, monuments do not tell history; they crystallize collective memory and turn it into historical memory. By creating these common spaces of memory, they forge and reinforce the feeling of national or regional identity; they forge what Benedict Anderson terms an “imagined community”, a socially constructed sense of belonging. For him, the most representative emblem of that constructed nationalism is the cenotaph or tomb of the unknown soldier.⁵³ Indeed, this is what Confederate

49 Ohio Has A Monument Honoring Robert E. Lee, The Only Such Monument North of the Ohio River, in: Columbus Navigator, <https://www.columbusnavigator.com/ohio-confederate-monuments/> (accessed 17 March 2021).

50 There are seven in North Carolina, one in Ohio, and one in Florida. T. Ingram, *Dixie Highway: Road Building and the Making of the Modern South, 1900-1930*, Chapel Hill 2014.

51 C. Welter, *Confederate Symbolism and Apologists in Southwest Ohio*, WYSO, 21 July 2020, <https://www.wyso.org/news/2020-07-21/confederate-symbolism-and-apologists-in-southwest-ohio>; <https://www.columbusnavigator.com/ohio-confederate-monuments/> (accessed 17 March 2021).

52 J. J. Winberry, ‘Lest We Forget’: The Confederate Monument and The Southern Townscape, in: *Southeastern Geographer* 23 (1983) 2, pp. 107–121.

53 B. R. O’Gorman Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London 2016, p. 9.

monuments are: a concrete, physical representation of an imagined community, that of the Southern region, the ex-Confederate states, which no longer exist but to which generations of Americans have kept claiming their loyalty, asserting their regional difference and cultural pride. As Federico Bellentani and Mario Panico put it, “monuments represent selective historical narratives focusing only on events and identities that are comfortable for political elites”.⁵⁴ This representation of history is indeed selective and incomplete as the main reason behind the conduct of the Civil War – the maintaining of the institution of slavery – has completely been written out of the Southern collective memory of the war and was superseded by the protection of Southern states’ rights. The extent to which the UDC and other Confederate veteran groups managed to impose their vision of history, in the South as well as in the North, tells us how influential and dominant they were in the early twentieth century, at the height of the Jim Crow period. The monuments are more informative about the context of the early twentieth century than of the 1860s. According to Roger C. Hartley,

Confederate monuments were erected to transmit collective memory: originally to transmit the tenets of what is referred to as the “Cult of the Lost Cause”; later, to communicate attitudes of White supremacy as Jim Crow segregation took hold at the turn of the twentieth century; and then, most recently, to help construct a Southern collective memory supportive of the “massive resistance” to the forced ending of Jim Crow racial segregation and the emergence of the Civil Rights movement.

Indeed, monuments are “not simply inanimate hunks of stone, marble and bronze”; they are “expressive” and “possess robust communicative power”.⁵⁵ This is the reason why they have become so controversial. The message they deliver is no longer in line with contemporary society. The support of white supremacy is no longer bearable, as became evident with the 2015 Charleston shooting and the 2017 Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville. As Howard Pollman, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission’s director of external affairs, said: “The PHM program has been in existence for more than 100 years. Some of our earlier markers may contain outdated cultural references.”⁵⁶ So what should be done with these outdated cultural references? Are all historical markers equally objectionable?

4.2. To Remove or to Save?

With 150 years passing since the tearing apart of the country over the question of slavery, another division has split the country: the presence of Confederate monuments and historic markers. Should they totally disappear from the landscape as they embody the

54 F. Bellentani and M. Panico, The meanings of monuments and memorials: toward a semiotic approach, in: *Punctum* 2 (2016) 1, pp. 28–46.

55 R. C. Hartley, *Monumental Harm, Reckoning with Jim Crow Era Confederate Monuments*, 2021 (Kindle Version).

56 C. Deppen, Pennsylvania’s Confederate monuments are coming down, in: *The Incline*, 30 June 2020, <https://theincline.com/2020/06/30/pennsylvanias-confederate-monuments-are-coming-down/> (accessed 8 March 2021).

mark of a contested period, characterized by slavery and racial oppression, or should they be left standing as reminders of the nation's past?⁵⁷ First, we need to consider why these monuments are seen as outrageous. Indeed, no monument blatantly defends slavery, racial inequality, or white supremacy. It does so indirectly by honouring the Confederacy and Confederate generals and soldiers who fought to maintain the “peculiar institution” of slavery that made their regional culture so distinctive. The Confederate vice president Alexander H. Stephens declared in his 1861 Cornerstone Speech:

*Our new government is founded upon [...] the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition.*⁵⁸

As Kirk Savage showed, the fact “that the common soldier is [...] always white and Anglo-Saxon in physiognomy suggests that the memorials offer up not a neutral individual body but a collective body conceived with certain boundaries and allegiances”.⁵⁹ Those who want these monuments gone say they reject the values the Confederacy represents, as the Pennsylvania governor Tom Wolf expressed, “if there are things and monuments that don't actually jibe with the values we hold, then we should not be elevating those things”.⁶⁰

This reaction is even stronger in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods where the African-American population is the majority, like in Brooklyn or the Bronx. A letter sent by Congress representatives from Brooklyn – Yvette Clarke, Jerrold Nadler, Nydia Velazquez, and Hakeem Jeffries – to army secretary Robert Speer stated that “to honour these men who believed in the ideology of white supremacy and fought to maintain the institution of slavery constitutes a grievous insult to the many thousands of people in Brooklyn who are descendants of the slaves held in bondage”. Similarly, Bronx borough president Ruben Diaz Jr issued a lengthy statement condemning the statues in the Hall of Fame:

Our diversity is our strength, not just here in The Bronx but across our city and our nation. In celebration of that diversity and united in our outright rejection of the hatred that we have seen on display in recent days – be it an act of domestic terrorism in Charlottesville or the vitriol emanating from the White House – the busts of Confederate Generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson must be removed from the Hall of Fame for Great

57 For the debate, see K. L. Cox, Why Confederate Monuments Must Fall, in: The New York Times, 15 August 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/opinion/confederate-monuments-white-supremacy-charlottesville.html>; C. Janney, Why We Need Confederate Monuments, in: Washington Post, 27 July 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/07/27/why-we-need-confederate-monuments/?utm_term=.4efa0489c15d; M. Bogart, In Defense of 'Racist' Monuments: These Are Works of Public Art with Complex and Specific Histories, in: New York Daily News, 24 August 2017, <https://www.nydailynews.com/amp/opinion/defense-racist-monuments-article-1.3436672>; A. Werbel, Removing Monuments Won't Fix Our Problems, in: History News Network, 8 October 2017, <https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/167057>.

58 C. Marrs, Not Even Past: The Stories We Keep Telling about the Civil War, Baltimore 2020, p. 100.

59 K. Savage, Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America, Princeton 2018, p. 131.

60 Deppen, Pennsylvania's Confederate monuments are coming down.

*Americans on the campus of Bronx Community College. [...] Their inclusion at this location is especially galling: there is nothing great about two men who committed treason against the United States to fight to keep the institution of slavery intact.*⁶¹

One can also question the choice of Jackson in 1955 in the midst of the civil rights era. Did this induction in the Hall of Fame emanate from a more racist intention than that of Lee in 1923? According to Andrew Valls, “these later monuments clearly reflect resistance to racial equality and nostalgia for slavery and/or Jim Crow”, so they are even more objectionable than those created at the turn of the twentieth century, when veterans were dying and when the need to honour their memory was felt.⁶² A 1955 article from the *New York Times* praised Jackson for “his concept of personal teaching, and guiding Godward the little negro children”, which totally demonstrates the racial prejudices of the period.⁶³

As far as Lee is concerned, opinions are more divided. Some see his presence as offensive to African Americans, like Democratic representative Clarke: “We have evolved beyond the Confederacy in the United States, and for people of color who have to utilize that base, it’s a constant reminder of a very painful period of time”. In like manner, Marva Harris Small, a black woman who works in Brooklyn near Fort Hamilton, said that “whatever good the men might have done while at the base was subsumed by their serving as Confederate generals”.⁶⁴ The representation of Confederate leaders, contrary to soldiers, served to promote the values that the South defended; they embodied an imagined community, that of a nostalgic white, racialized, and rural society. On the contrary, others point to Lee’s past experience in West Point and Fort Hamilton before he joined the Confederacy. For instance, one Bay Ridge white resident, Joe Conly, emphasized the fact that Lee was a loyal soldier during his time at Fort Hamilton. In the same way, Bronx historian Lloyd Ultan praised Lee’s and Jackson’s achievements:

*They were chosen by people from every state in the union, and they were chosen because of their military contributions to strategy and tactics that are studied even today. [...] Both Lee and Jackson are in the section honoring people in the military. In fact, Lee’s bust is right next to the bust of (Union general) Ulysses S. Grant.*⁶⁵

Others state that Lee served in the US army for 32 years, including the Mexican-American War, before joining the Confederacy and that he applied to the president in 1865

61 G. Notes, Why the Hall of Fame for Great Americans Is ‘At Risk’, in: The New York Times, 5 November 2018, <https://ny.curbed.com/2017/8/16/16158414/bronx-community-college-confederate-busts-nyc> (accessed 17 March 2021).

62 A. Valls, What Should Become of Confederate Monuments? A Normative Framework, presented at the meeting of the American Political Science Association, Washington, DC, August 29–September 1, 2019 (forthcoming in Public Affairs Quarterly, special issue on Race and Public Policy, vol. 33, No. 3, July 2019, pp. 177–193).

63 D. L. Frankill, General Jackson for Hall of Fame, in: The New York Times, 14 July 1955, <https://Nyti.Ms/3qvnuss> (accessed 17 March 2021); Bust of Jackson is Given to N.Y.U., 20 May 1957, <https://Nyti.Ms/2nqjt65> (accessed 17 March 2021).

64 Hajela, Confederate street names stir debate in ... New York City?

65 Cusano, HoF Confederacy busts removed.

for amnesty, pardon, and restoration of his rights as a citizen, which General Grant supported. In 1975, Congress passed a resolution reinstating Lee's full rights as a US citizen.⁶⁶

The danger of erasing the past is also put forth as an argument: keeping the statues where they are could serve to explain history to the new generations and have a constructive dialogue about the past. Removing these historical markers would wipe out the action of the UDC and their influence at the turn of the twentieth century. Some celebrations are still taking place, for example in 2014, when the monument to the two Confederate soldiers in Fulton County, Pennsylvania, was rededicated with local officials, congressmen, representatives of different UDC chapters, and President Barack Obama in attendance.⁶⁷ In 2017, despite the nationwide movement to remove Confederate symbols, Fulton County's local residents did not express any will to do away with their historical markers.⁶⁸ Similarly, the Confederate statues in the two Ohio cemeteries are believed to be sacrosanct. Two visitors from Reynoldsburg, near Columbus, confessed that more than representing the Confederacy, they personify

all those poor boys who went to war to fight for something that they believed was right, irrespective of what really was right. [...] Despite what was the philosophy of the Confederacy, it's important to remember that these were human beings, and they mattered just as much as the side they were fighting against, [...] so their resting place in these secluded areas should always be preserved.

That they are positioned in a cemetery is indeed different than "on the Statehouse grounds".⁶⁹

4.3. Location Matters

The debate between the repudiation of racism and the danger of erasing the past could be overcome if we take a closer look at the variety of monuments found in the Union states. Valls established a normative framework that can help us classify the monuments according to their degree of offensiveness. If the size of the monument and what is represented matters, then location and ownership must also to be taken into account. Apart from the Hall of Fame, all the examples in the Northern states of Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania are found on very specific places that played a key role in the Civil War and, in that matter, are completely different from monuments positioned on courthouse

66 C. Jenks, The Tangled History of Confederate Generals at West Point and in the US Army: What's in a Name?, 28 August 2017, <https://www.justsecurity.org/44479/tangled-history-confederate-generals-west-point-army-robert-e-lee/> (accessed 15 March 2021).

67 Fulton County Historical Society News, Spring-Summer 2014, <https://www.fultonhistory.org/newsletters/news-letter2014spring-summer.pdf> (accessed 15 March 2021).

68 Books, Fulton County's Confederate markers are staying put, <https://eu.publicopiniononline.com/story/news/local/2017/08/26/fulton-countys-confederate-markers-staying-put/601666001/> (accessed 15 March 2021).

69 B. Albrecht, Confederate statues remain part of Ohio Civil War landmark, 6 June 2017, <https://sanduskyregister.com/news/32567/confederate-statues-remain-part-of-ohio-civil-war-landmark/> (accessed 15 March 2021).

lawns and urban parks or in front of city halls. The 10-foot-high statue of the former Philadelphia mayor Frank Rizzo (in office from 1972 to 1980), famous for his anti-desegregationist policies, racism, and police brutality, standing in front of Philadelphia's Municipal Services Building, is an obvious acclamation of white supremacy. The fact that his monument is positioned on a public civic space implies that the whole city recognizes itself in this figure. It constitutes what Valls terms "state speech", and as such it has a duty to "convey the message that all citizens are free and equal".⁷⁰ The busts of Lee and Jackson in the Hall of Fame in Bronx Community College are problematic because the college belongs to the City University of New York, a public university system, which is a taxpayer-funded university, and taxpayers refuse to sponsor the values Confederate generals incarnate. Moreover, the campus has been added to the list of National Historical Landmarks in 2012, implying that it is recognized by the federal government as a place of national historical significance. In a very similar manner, Lee's plaque at the road junction in Franklin Township is offensive, even if it was hardly noticed by local residents, because it is placed on a public highway and is thus supposed to embody the values shared by the whole community.⁷¹

The two historic markers in McConnellsburg are different because they memorialize very specific historical events at the exact location where they happened: the killing of two Confederate soldiers by Union troops and their burial by local residents and the last encampment of Confederate soldiers north of the Mason-Dixon line. The Confederate Soldiers Monument in McConnellsburg – in the same way as the Confederate memorial of the National Philadelphia Cemetery and the obelisk in Mount Hope Cemetery in Hastings-on-Hudson, or the two statues in Camp Chase Confederate Cemetery and Johnson's Island Union prison for Confederate officers – pay tribute to places where Confederate soldiers died and are buried. As Valls puts it, these are "genuine funereal memorials, monuments to the dead that reflect 'grief and mourning'". Yet, we can still draw a distinction between "monuments bearing the likeness of a person, either the Common Soldier or a specific individual" and "those that are nonrepresentational".⁷² While the obelisk can be upsetting due to its size, the two soldiers in Ohio are clearly white and thus exclude African Americans from collective memory.

Finally, we need to look at the inscriptions. According to Valls,

*monuments with inscriptions referring to the Confederate cause are more objectionable than those that merely memorialize fallen Confederate soldiers. This is based on the assumption that it is permissible for the state to memorialize its war dead even if they fought in an unjust war.*⁷³

70 Valls, *What Should Become of Confederate Monuments?*, pp. 11–12.

71 Dalton, 79 said: "I've lived here all of my life [...] I must've driven by it 20,000 times and didn't know it was there", in J. Williams, Robert E. Lee monument in Greater Cincinnati removed. Will it be relocated?, in: *Cincinnati Enquirer*, <https://eu.cincinnati.com/story/news/politics-extra/2017/08/16/px-should-robert-e-lee-monument-greater-cincinnati-come-down/573158001/> (accessed 16 March 2021).

72 Valls, "What Should Become of Confederate Monuments?", p. 19.

73 Ibid., p. 15.

Indeed, all inscriptions here “are simple statements of remembrance”, and none directly evoke the Confederate cause. Many lists the names of those who are buried on the premises. The Confederate Soldiers Monument in Pennsylvania pays tribute to the two soldiers by mentioning their names, whereas the historical marker does not: “W. B. Moore of VA., F. A. Shelton of N.C. Killed near here in first battle on Penn. Soil June 30, 1863”. The boulder in Camp Chase carries the following inscription: “2,260 Confederate Soldiers of the war 1861–1865 buried in this enclosure”. The Confederate memorial in the National Philadelphia Cemetery bears the names of 184 Southern soldiers and sailors on 3 plaques. The fourth plaque states “Erected by the United States”, showing the national engagement to memorialize these deaths. In a similar way, the arch in Camp Chase reads “AMERICANS”, as a sign of reunion and reconciliation, and the obelisk shows a four-line poem:

Fold up the banners! Smelt the guns!
Love rules, her gentler purpose runs.
A mighty mother turns in tears
The pages of her battle years,
Lamenting all her fallen sons.

This is more a message of peace than a tribute to the Confederacy, an invitation to mourn those who gave their life the state, whichever state it was.⁷⁴

When an agreement has been concluded over whether a monument is offensive or not, one needs to decide what to do about it: destroy it, relocate it, or “add context that further interpret the statue”, which some historians have called “augmentation”, the idea that “by adding to, rather than taking from, sites of Confederate monuments, the implication that the state is honoring white supremacy can be undermined”.⁷⁵ None of the Union monuments have taken that option. Out of the 11 markers we looked at, three have been permanently removed (Lee’s and Jackson’s busts and the plaques on Lee’s tree), one has been relocated and vandalized (Lee’s plaque on Dixie Highway), and one as been destroyed but repaired (the soldier in Camp Chase). Confederate names at Fort Hamilton and West Point will be erased as commissioned by the new congressional group, the Confederate Base Naming Commission, which was set up on 1 January 2021 to remove within three years “all names, symbols, displays, monuments, and paraphernalia that honor or commemorate the Confederate States of America or any person who served voluntarily with the Confederate States of America from all assets of the Department of Defense”.⁷⁶

74 M. P. McKinney, Confederate Veterans Cemetery Monument In Hastings-On-Hudson Draws Concerns, in: Rockland/Westchester Journal News, <https://eu.lohud.com/story/news/2017/08/18/confederate-veterans-cemetery-monument-hastings-on-hudson-greenburgh-draws-concerns/575772001/> (accessed 12 March 2021).

75 Hartley, Monumental Harm.

76 H.R.6395 – 116th Congress (2019–2020): National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021. www.congress.gov, 1 January 2021 (accessed 17 March 2021); see also <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/IN10756.pdf>.

Location does matter because when monuments are removed, they are cast away in a place that is supposed to be less controversial to the community. Usually, this comes along with a transfer of ownership from public, the state or city government, to private ownership in order to silence the state speech. General Lee's plaque in Franklin Township, Ohio, was moved from alongside a public highway to the private property at a chapter of the Fraternal Order of the Eagles. Interestingly, this had no impact on the community's aversion because one year later, on 28 June 2018, the plaque was vandalized on the new private property with the painting of a red inscription saying "no racist monument". The Bronx borough president Ruben Diaz Jr argued about the removal of Lee's and Jackson's busts from the Hall of Fame, stating that a more appropriate location would be the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs, where "they could be presented in a historical context rather than venerated".⁷⁷ Even if private ownership seems less controversial, owners sometimes take the decision themselves to displace monuments they consider offensive. The plaques that marked the Brooklyn tree planted by Lee on the lawn of the Episcopal Church was taken off by the diocese.⁷⁸

Among those still standing, we can notice a mixture of public and private ownership. The Pennsylvania historic markers are held by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, a state agency; the National Cemetery of Philadelphia is maintained by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs; Camp Chase is listed on the National Register of Historic Places; Johnson's Island was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1990, and the Friends and Descendants of Johnson's Island Civil War Prison was formed in 2001 to help in the preservation, interpretation, and education of the site; Mount Hope Cemetery is monitored and cared for by the Westchester-Putnam-Dutchess chapter of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, who own the site and conduct a memorial service every Confederate Memorial Day on 27 April.⁷⁹ If public ownership is not the predominant factor to discard monuments, when the state wishes to protect such symbols, then it enrages the community. The statue in Camp Chase, which was toppled and destroyed on 22 August 2017 but repaired with federal funds and reinstalled in May 2019, created extreme reactions.⁸⁰

5. Conclusion

Speaking about Confederate monuments, it is important to put forth major distinctions. They are not all similar, and some are definitely more offensive than others. Indeed, in the Union states we studied, there are no Confederate markers in public civic places –

77 Cusano, HoF Confederacy busts removed.

78 Sullivan, A Confederate General in Brooklyn.

79 McKinney, Confederate Veterans Cemetery Monument In Hastings-On-Hudson Draws Concerns.

80 P. Inglish, Federal Funds Replace a Dismantled Confederate Statue in Ohio, in: Owllocation, 28 May 2019, <https://owllocation.com/humanities/Federal-Funds-Replace-a-Dismantled-Confederate-Statue-in-Ohio> (accessed 17 March 2021).

apart from the Hall of Fame in Bronx Community College – like town halls, courthouse lawns, or urban parks, but in cemeteries, on battlefields, or in places where Confederate generals had lived. Still, their presence remains disturbing for some local communities who have expressed their desire to remove them. Apart from the Camp Chase statue, which was toppled by protesters (and put back by the state), all the removals have been ordered by the local or federal authorities, which recognized the danger of promoting such state speech. Now, one can wonder, what to do with the sites from which they have been removed? Is the silencing of the past the most suitable answer? What to do with the empty pedestals? Whereas this emptied space represents for some “the unseating of white supremacy”, for others the sites should be “put to more creative purposes. This would represent not only the dethronement of white supremacy but its replacement with a more positive commitment to racial justice”.⁸¹ Many artists have come up with ideas on how to erect counter-monuments that will make people think and reflect on the issue.⁸² We need to transform them from objects of veneration into historical artefacts that tell the story of why so many of them have been erected. We need to better teach about the colonial and Antebellum period by peppering the landscape with monuments paying tribute to African Americans, whether leaders or anonymous, to rebalance the scales. History is complex, and both sides need to be stressed. The history of slavery was not only the history of the South but the history of the whole nation. If we recognize that the UDC has been promoting a revised history, downplaying the role of slavery in the Civil War, then the North should also accept its responsibility and participation in the institution that was not so “peculiar” to the South and should focus less on its role in abolitionism. This has partly been done with the African Burial Ground National Monument and visitor centre in New York, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center and Underground Railroad Museum in Ohio, the Lest We Forget Museum of Slavery in Germantown, and the President’s House and the African American Museum in Philadelphia. But work still needs to be done to educate and shape a new historical memory, one that is fully aware of the past.

81 Valls, *What Should Become of Confederate Monuments?*, p. 18.

82 *Monuments for a New Era*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/10/opinion/charlottesville-confederate-monuments.html> (accessed 17 March 2021).