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Contesting monuments: Heritage and historical geographies of inequality, an introduction

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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces a virtual special issue that explores how monuments have been contested in the past and how they continue to be so in the present. A survey of papers published in this journal from the 1990s to the early-2000s demonstrates an ongoing and rich interest in the interconnections between nationalism, landscape and ritual, with some emphasis on resistance but little sense of the contemporary lives of these historic monuments. Broader geographical scholarship in the mid-2000s evidenced the memory boom that was taking place across the discipline, beyond historical geography. A second survey of papers in this journal, published from 2012 to 2021, evidences a richer engagement with post-colonial, post-Soviet and post-slavery periods and perspectives, and with a broader range of sites beyond Europe and North America. More recent scholarship has focused on participatory geography, calls for statues to fall, and for more experimental, non-representational methods. This introduction concludes by summarising the papers in this special issue and reflecting on the relationships between monuments and contestation that they create, namely: monuments to contestation; the historic contestation of monuments; and the ongoing contestation of monuments as heritage spaces (attacks and felling, retaining and explaining, re-using, creating counter-monuments, artistically re-symbolising and re-imagining monuments, and contestatory scholarship).

Monuments are the starkest materialisations of memory. They give the past concrete form and in so-doing turn recollections of the few into publicly recognised history. The immortalising capabilities of stone were realised by the earliest civilisations, whose monuments have been imitated ever since. Stelae, statues, needles, mausolea, cenotaphs and sarcophagi commemorate individuals and events, but the ghosts of preceding commemorations animate their form, their functions, and their whisperings.

Defining a monument is a complex task. Its etymology quickly brings us to its geography, and the labyrinthine, ancient connections to memory. Janet Donohue has traced 'monument' to the Latin *monumentum*, meaning memorial, and the root *monere*, meaning to remind.[1] But *monere* also suggests an admonishment, or a warning.[2] Not all memorials, however, are monuments. It is the geography of monuments which separates them from other memorials; they organize shared space, invoking a shared past. They can be both private and public, but their object is to affect the interiority of the observer. For Nuala Johnson, in 2009, monuments were 'Built icons of identity usually in the form of public statues or symbolic buildings that are designed and executed to evoke a sense of national and regional identity, and to induce in the collective imagination remembrance of specific events or people.'[3] Such evocations and inducements take place through material monuments and any textual inscriptions accompanying them, but also through rituals, performances, and theatrics. For Johnson, the scholarship by 2009 had mostly focused on national monuments dedicated to heroes of war and colonial settlement.

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[1] Janet Donohoe, 'Dwelling with monuments', *Philosophy & Geography* 5 (2002) 235–242 (p. 235).

[2] Quentin Stevens, Karen A Franck, and Ruth Fazakerley, 'Counter-monuments: the anti-monumental and the dialogic', *The Journal of Architecture* 23 (2018) 718–739.

[3] Nuala Johnson, 'Monuments', in *Dictionary of Human Geography*(5th Ed.), ed. by Ron Johnston, Derek Gregory, Geraldine Pratt, and Michael Watts (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), (p. 478).

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If their accompanying rituals survive, monuments retain their capacity to affect identity. Paul Gough and Sally Morgan directed us towards the war historian Jay Winter's three phases in the life of monuments as sites of memory.[4] First, comes the creative phase, when a monument is constructed and accompanying ceremonies created. Second, these ceremonies become ritualised and routinised. And, finally, most monuments atrophise, as earlier meaning and significance is lost.[5] As the philosopher and novelist Robert Musil wrote in 1927, from a heavily monumentalised Europe:

> '… monuments are so conspicuously inconspicuous. There is nothing in this world so invisible as a monument. They are no doubt erected to be seen – indeed, to attract attention. But at the same time they are impregnated with something that repels attention, causing the glance to roll right off, like water droplets off an oilcloth, without even pausing for a moment.'[6]

The last twenty years have seen a profusion of work by geographers and others that have expanded the remit of how we connect recollection and space. Peter Meusburger, Michael Heffernan and Edgar Wunder divided their edited collection, *Cultural Memories: The Geographical Point of View*, into sections addressing memory theory, case studies, the Second World War, postcolonial and pre-modern cultural memories. While some chapters focused on monuments, the emphasis was mostly on minority community memories, family memories, archives, (an)amnesia, Aboriginal culture, and more.[7] Likewise, in *Geography and Memory*, Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen presented chapters exploring domestic memory objects, memory sports and competetive recollection, grief in works of fiction, post-memory and painting, family photographs, graffiti, and memory walks, self-consciously moving away from an emphasis on monuments.[8]

Others have, however, continued to work on monuments through, first, expanding the definition of what a monument is and, secondly, looking at how they are contested. New forms of monument are often referred to as counter-monuments, although calls for such newness are now nearly a century old; in 1927 Musil demanded that monuments try a little harder to grab our attention, following the lead of advertising, embracing the age of noise, movement and gimmick.[9] Today, counter-monuments generically include the ' … anti-monument, non-monument, negative-form, deconstructive, non-traditional and counter-hegemonic monument'.[10] Several of the papers in this special issue include such examples of re-imagining the monument form, memorialising stone-carvers; genocide victims; lost industries; uprisings; and racial minorities/majorities.

Most of the papers, however, focus on the contestation of monuments. Their approach to these geographies are very much of their time. Nine of the fourteen papers reflect on the transformative influence of the Black Lives Matter movement from 2013, especially in the wake of the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 in Minneapolis, USA. More specifically, the Rhodes Must Fall movement has sparked a global revolution, from its base in South Africa, in our approach to monuments. Having begun in the University of Cape Town campus in March 2015, statues worldwide are being reassessed, and brought back to life. We might add a fourth category to Jay Winter's original three phases in the life histories of memory topoi (created, ritualised, atrophied). In this phase, seemingly forgotten statues are resurrected through a very different type of performance, that of protest. Some remain, others are retained and explained, while others fall. Attention no longer, in Musil's phrase, rolls like water droplets off monuments without pausing for a moment; it streams towards them. Statues are no longer so impregnable to attention.

This special issue demonstrates what a critical historical geographical approach can contribute to this re-engagement with monuments.[11] It looks at how monuments emerged in the past, as contested objects, and how monuments in the present are being problematised as heritage spaces. The review below cannot hope to summarise the vast scholarship, hinted at above, which has explored the relationship between memory and space. Instead, it focuses on work in this journal, in three phases. The first phase, from the 1990s and early 2000s, saw papers focus on historical monuments in the global north, with limited focus on contestation or contemporary engagements with the monuments under study. We then engage with some reviews of the memory-boom across geography more broadly in the mid-2000s. The second phase of papers published in this journal, in the 2010s and early 2020s, saw a wider range of geographical sites studied, a growing attention to race, and a greater interest in contestation and contemporary heritage disputes. More recent, broader geographical scholarship on monuments highlights a broadening of method, period, and theoretical interest. We conclude with a summary of a third phase, this special issue, reflecting on their type of monuments, historiographical inspirations, and approaches to contestation.

Monumental historical geography I: nationalism, landscape, ritual

In Johnson's summary of geographers' work on monuments, she acknowledged that most of the work to date had been produced by historians. Pierre Nora had been particularly influential, notably in his detailed examination of the ways in which lived environments (*milieux*) of memory in France had been supplemented, and in many places supplanted, by sites (*lieux*) of memory.[12] Despite their name, the latter (including monuments, but also events, books, and other memorialisations) were products of history and its attendant processes of modernisation, commercialisation, and standardisation. The elegiac tone of Nora's nostalgic worldview suggests a deeper-seated hostility to modernisation (and decolonialisation) and a failure to make space for the contestation of *lieux de mémoire* or places in which alternative forms of memorialisation survive.[13] Other influential works included Eric Hobsbawm and Terence

[4] Paul Gough, and Sally Morgan, 'Manipulating the metonymic: the politics of civic identity and the Bristol Cenotaph, 1919–1932', *Journal of Historical Geography* 30 (2004) 665–684.

[5] Jay Winter, 'Sites of Memory and the Shadow of War', in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. by Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (De Gruyter: Berlin, 2008), pp. 61–73.

[6] Robert Musil, *Posthumous Papers of a Living Author* (Hygiene, CO: Eridanos Press, 1987), p. 61.

[7] *Cultural Memories: The Geographical Point of View,* ed. by Peter Meusburger, Michael Heffernan, and Edgar Wunder (Dordrecht: Springer 2011).

[8] *Geography and Memory: Explorations in Identity, Place and Becoming,* ed. by Owain Jones and Joanne Garde-Hansen (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

[9] Musil, *Posthumous Papers*, p. 63.

[10] Stevens, Franck, and Fazakerley, 'Counter-monuments, p. 952.

[11] Daniel Clayton, 'Critical historical geogaphy', in *Geography: Oxford Bibliographies*, ed. by Barney Warf (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024).

[12] See Pierre Nora, 'Between memory and history: les lieux de mémoire', *Representations* 26 (1989) 7–25.

[13] Stephen Legg, 'Contesting and Surviving Memory: Space, Nation and Nostalgia in *Les Lieux de Mémoire*', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 23 (2005) 481–504.

Ranger's *Invention of Tradition* and John Bodnar's *Remaking America*.[14]

Early papers published in this journal engaged this rich broader scholarship, elaborating its interests in nationalism and state-making, but also bringing it into dialogue with the concepts and approaches of cultural and historical geography. While not encapsulating all the relevant research published here, the following eight papers give a sense of the themes and approaches at the time.

The traditional study of monuments is notable for the relative absence of women. There were few female sculptors, and when women were sculpted into monuments, they were usually the objects (mothers, queens) of nationalism, not its subjects (campaigners, activists).[15] Harold Gulley's 1993 paper, however, anticipated the recent turn to feminist analysis of monuments and of the portrayal of women, while also drawing attention to the origin of the American confederate landscapes that are now being so hotly contested.[16] Gulley highlighted how southern women, many of whom had volunteered during the Civil War, organised groups to commemorate the confederacy. These continued to feed into vernacular, locally organised commemorations, which ran alongside official monuments to the war which were erected into the 1920s, while historical markers along highways were put in place into the 1940s. While Gulley drew upon the work of historians such as Bodnar, his interpretative frame was thoroughly geographical, using David Lowenthal on the power of imagined pasts and, more prominently, J.B. Jackson, DW Meinig and Wilbur Zelinsky on the interplay between official and vernacular landscapes.[17]

Landscape, more or less prominently, framed the analysis of many of these earlier monumental historical geographies. Brian Osborne's 1998 analysis of the George-Étienne Cartier monument in Montreal, entitled 'Constructing landscapes of power', explored the intersection of built form and the choreography of public participation in landscapes of both power and resistance.[18] Bronze plaques added to the column and statue complex tied Canada to Britain through commemorating the coronation of successive King-Emperors. Bodnar was also used here, to articulate the similarities and differences between official and vernacular memory, but the main references for landscape analysis were those of historians Eric Hobsbawm, WJT Mitchell, and Simon Schama, to great effect:

> 'In particular, the material rendering of social memory in a mythologized landscape transforms landscape from an external phenomenon to be engaged visually, to a psychic terrain of internalized symbolic meaning: homeland; motherland; land of our fathers … And this is where monuments come in. Whereas many national landscapes often exist in generalized visual condensations, monuments focus attention on specific places and events. From its classical origins, through the French Revolution, and into the age of the nation-state, monumental public statuary in the western world has constituted what Eric Hobsbawm has called an "open-air museum of national history as see through great men".'[19]

Osborne took care to show how, over time, the monument had become a site of resistance, a place where people could meet to protest, whether they be students, or local communities resisting the opening of a branch of McDonalds. Like Osbourne, in 2000 Steven Cooke also drew upon Nora's work in studying the difficult and contested creation of Britain's first memorial to the Holocaust.[20] Although it features two large boulders, the Hyde Park Holocaust Memorial is more of a sculpted landscape than a monument. Cook, however, interpreted the difficult process behind getting the memorial constructed using geographical literature on the contestation of monuments and the fragility of their meaning: 'Memorials can also be viewed as a site of resistance to a particular viewpoint, a focus for disrupting identity as well as shaping it. They are sites of contestation, terrain over which various actors employ symbolic capital to in an attempt to control meaning.'[21] The emphasis on landscapes and contestation was also at the heart of Yvonne Whelan's 2002 analysis of the construction and destruction of monuments to British royalty in Dublin.[22] Here the urban landscape was used as a lens through which to study Irish decolonization and the takeover of the cityscape by a new elite:

> 'While public statues are dynamic sites of meaning which transform neutral spaces and help to legitimise authority, equally they can be used to challenge authority. The very qualities that make public statues so valuable in building popular support also make them a useful target for those who wish to demonstrate opposition. Just as public statues served throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a means of cultivating popular support and making power concrete in the landscape, the medium was also used by groups with politics at odds with established regimes. Consequently, monuments have often been erected to challenge the legitimacy of governments and objectify the ideals of revolutionary movements.'[23]

Whelan drew upon cultural geographical approaches to the iconography of landscape, and the growing body of historical geographical analysis of monuments, to show how statues formed part of the memory-bank of a city and could thus be agents of forgetting when a political regime changed (Dublin's statue of Queen Victoria migrated to Sydney). There are also more quotidian reasons for forgetting, or at least belatedly remembering, as evidenced by the long delays to erecting a regional cenotaph in the United Kingdom. Paul Gough and Sally Morgan showed that the noble, abstract, and inclusive intent behind the design of the Bristol cenotaph soon became mired in the local factions and territorial disputes of the city, delaying the unveiling until 1932.[24] David Gordon and Brian Osborne likewise studied the role of a war monument in decolonizing Ottawa, but over a longer timespan

[14] Eric Hobsbawm, and Terence Ranger, *Invented Traditions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); John E Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[15] Deniz Kandiyoti, 'Guest Editor's introduction The awkward relationship: gender and nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism* 6 (2000) 491–494.

[16] H. E. Gulley, 'Women and the Lost Cause: preserving a Confederate identity in the American Deep South', *Journal of Historical Geography* 19 (1993) 125–141.

[17] David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1985); John B Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (London: Yale University Press, 1985); *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays,* ed. by DW Meinig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979); Wilbur Zelinsky, *Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

[18] Brian S. Osborne, 'Constructing landscapes of power: the George Etienne Cartier monument, Montreal', *Journal of Historical Geography* 24 (1998) 431–458.

[19] Osborne, 'Constructing landscapes of power', pp. 433–434.

[20] Steven Cooke, 'Negotiating memory and identity: the Hyde Park Holocaust Memorial, London', *Journal of Historical Geography* 26 (2000) 449–465.

[21] Cooke, 'Negotiating memory and identity', p. 450.

[22] Yvonne Whelan, 'The construction and destruction of a colonial landscape: monuments to British monarchs in Dublin before and after independence', *Journal of Historical Geography* 28 (2002) 508–533.

[23] Whelan, 'The construction and destruction of a colonial landscape', p. 509.

[24] Gough, and Morgan. For an excellent, near contemporaneous analysis of the abstract, traumatic architecture of the London cenotaph see Jenny Edkins, *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 57–110.

(100 years) and a different form of decolonization to that of Ireland (from dominion to independent state with the British commonwealth).[25] While not a site for explicit contestation, like London's Holocaust Memorial, the Canadian National (First World) War Memorial was one beset by delay, disputation and compromise, being installed just in time for a 1939 royal visit.

Alongside these papers, two other pieces were published in 2004 which approached the sort of monuments traditionally studied by geographers from new perspectives. Complimenting the established body of work by geographers on war memorials in Europe, Ron Fuchs used the work of Nora to examine Britain's war cemeteries in its Palestinian mandate.[26] Here the monuments to the war dead were placed in their local geographical context, of both Jerusalem and the theatre of war (especially the need to commemorate Indian soldiers), and the need to adopt a style that was neither overtly orientalist nor neo-classical. Finally, Charles Withers examined a statue of the Scottish explorer Mungo Park, bringing together the disciplines of historical geography, memory studies, and the history of science. At this intersection Withers asked how monuments were made, how were they written about and their meaning constructed, and how they supported ongoing memorialisation, as a mean of commemorating exploration, imperialism, and scientific discovery.

What this collection of papers illustrates is the strong engagement between this journal and the huge outpouring of broader research into the connections between monuments and nationalism. What these historical geographies introduced was an emphasis on landscape as a mediating scale, vision, and concept. Embedded with the cultural and historical geographical approach to landscape was an interest in resistance, and many of these papers presented monuments as focal points for contestation, though there was barely any sense of these monuments being contentious heritage spaces today. It is also notable that seven of the papers were studies of the global north, while Fuch's paper on the Middle East focused on an explicitly British imperial-internationalist landscape. These emphases would be expanded on from the mid-2000s as part of broader shifts, within and beyond geography, in memory and monument studies.

Recollecting reflections on the geographies of memory

Despite being fundamentally concerned with the relationship between geography and history, geographers' study of memory and monuments has not been the exclusive preserve of historical geographers. The mid-2000s saw a rush of publications that offered sub-disciplinary takes on the memory-boom within and beyond geography, which informed a second wave of historical geography publications on monuments in the 2010s.

Katharyne Mitchell opened her 2003 review of the urban geography of monuments and memorials with reactions to the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York, leading to reflections on Halbwachs' work and the nationalist monumental spaces of the Nazis.[27] She noted, however, a broader move towards approaching these spaces as heritage sites, whose meaning could be transformed and rewritten. Mitchell observed, in particular, how post-Soviet cities were undertaking the same sort of re-scripting of urban landscapes that post-colonial cities had been doing for decades and how new monuments were being erected relating, for instance, to violence against women or to the complex and toxic legacies of violent nationalism.

Like Mitchell, Karen Till's 2003 expansive review of the political geography of 'places of memory' (including but going way beyond monuments) opened with a recent geopolitical contextualisation, in this case that of the Yugoslavian conflict.[28] The review reflected the emphasis of existing work on national commemorations, in terms of sacralization and place making, changing political regimes, and conflicts over national places. Although the majority of material focused on the global north, the review also took in Taipei as a Chinese nationalist landscape, British manipulation of monuments in colonial Ceylon, and Tamil statues in post-colonial Madras.[29]

The following year Steven Hoelscher and Derek Alderman opened their review of spatial memory research, for a special issue of *Social and Cultural Geography*, by noting the mnemonic significance of Robben Island in the collective memories of South Africans.[30] This centuries long place of exile, and famously of the incarceration of Nelson Mandela, allowed them to introduce and summarise what the felt to be key features of the field: 'the continually unfolding nature of memory; the importance of forgetting in every act of remembering; the pressures of the marketplace and commodification of the past; the unpredictability of group memory and its centrality in the maintenance and contestation of political identity; the fact that memory is often both particular and universal; and the inextricable link between memory and place.'[31] While covering many of the works of geographers and others outlined above, this piece also drew attention to the potential of emerging (non-representational) theories of bodily performance, and to the way in which colonialism had used monuments and ritual to justify its territorial expansion.

In 2007 the geographers Kenneth E Foote and Maoz Azaryahu reviewed the geographies of memory literature for the *Journal of Political & Military Sociology*, emphasising the spatial, locational, and material perspectives that geographers brought to this transdisciplinary field.[32] They acknowledged that the majority of existing work had focused on wars, revolutions, and other large scale historical processes and events, from the last 300 years, in Europe and North America. Where, they asked, was comparable work on Latin America, Africa and Asia? In a review from the same year, I had attempted to direct geographers' attention to forgetting as much as to memory, but also to the rich vein of memory work that had emerged from South Asian scholars regarding both the colonial and post-colonial periods.[33]

In the final review of this section, published in *Geojournal*, Owen Dwyer and Derek Alderman applied a social scientific analytic method to the study of the spaces of collective memory, which

[25] David LA Gordon, and Brian S Osborne, 'Constructing national identity in Canada's capital, 1900–2000: Confederation Square and the National War Memorial', *Journal of Historical Geography* 30 (2004) 618–642.

[26] Ron Fuchs, 'Sites of memory in the Holy Land: the design of the British war cemeteries in Mandate Palestine', *Journal of Historical Geography* 30 (2004) 643–664.

[27] Katharyne Mitchell, 'Monuments, memorials, and the politics of memory', *Urban Geography* 24 (2003) 442–459.

[28] Karen E. Till, 'Places of memory', in *A Companion to Political Geography*, ed. by John Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell and Gerard Toal (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), pp. 289–301.

[29] Also see Hamzah Muzaini, and Brenda Yeoh, 'Memory-Making 'from Below': Rescaling Remembrance at the Kranji War Memorial and Cemetery, Singapore', *Environment and Planning A* 39 (2007) 1288–1305.

[30] Steven Hoelscher, and Derek H Alderman, 'Memory and place: geographies of a critical relationship', *Social & Cultural Geography* 5 (2004) 347–355.

[31] Hoelscher, and Alderman, 'Memory and place', p. 348.

[32] Kenneth E Foote, and Maoz Azaryahu, 'Toward a geography of memory: Geographical dimensions of public memory and commemoration', *Journal of Political & Military Sociology* 35 (2007) 125–144.

[33] Stephen Legg, 'Reviewing geographies of memory/forgetting', *Environment and Planning A* 39 (2007) 456–466. Also see Stephen Legg, 'Violent Memories: South Asian Spaces of Postcolonial Anamnesis', in *Cultural Memories*, ed. by Peter Meusburger, Michael Heffernan and Edgar Wunder (Dordrecht: Springer 2011), pp. 287–303.

traditionally have been approached more from arts and humanities perspectives.[34] Of all of the reviews above, landscape was most central here, being used to connect individual sites to broader spaces and processes. Landscape as text, as arena, and as performance was suggested as a unifying frame with which to study monuments and other memory spaces, with eight to nine useful analytical questions proposed for each landscape type.

What these reviews recollect is a remarkably productive and unifying moment across geographical subdisciplines and between geography and cognate fields. A good deal of the surveyed work was produced by historical geographers, but the turn to cultural memory also prompted increased historical awareness and research across the discipline. What some of the reviews also noted, however, was that this turn had mostly concerned itself with the Global North, with the life of monuments in the past, and with monuments as tools of domination. All three of these trends have been challenged in the last fifteen years.

Monumental historical geography II: sites of memory and the politics of the post-

The first set of *Journal of Historical Geography* papers reviewed above mostly focused on historical studies of monuments to nationalism. This second period of papers, spanning 2009 to 2021, examine sites (*lieux*) of memory, but across a greater range of sites and reflecting a greater range of political movements and contexts. While Matthew Craske's study of the attempt to erect a statue of George III in London did not engage with the broader literature on monuments and public memory, it presented a detailed narrative of the *failure* to erect a statue in the face of rival plans for the landscape.[35] Joshua Hagen, in contrast, drew upon Nora's work to explore the memory politics of Nazi Germany, already one of the core periods and locations in literature regarding monuments and commemoration.[36] His study, however, moved away from the monumentality of Berin or Nuremberg to study the more everyday places that were rehabilitated and conserved as part of a newly invented tradition of German racial and ethnic purity (often in the face of local resistance).

Three papers engaged with the various 'post-s' that so animated research in the 2000s. Duncan Light and Craig Young studied the post-socialist reworking of statues in Romania, acknowledging the huge transformations which took place during the de-communisation of cultural landscapes.[37] They also acknowledged, however, the continuities through which statues retained their previous meaning through re-contextualisation and translation. Laragh Larsen built on Whelan's earlier paper to explore post-colonial memorial politics in Kenya, read comparatively against Sudan, India and the Democratic Republic of Congo.[38] Landscape as text was the frame here, studying decolonization as an attack on the symbolic accretion of the city. This landscape approach made use of the analytical questions posed by Dwyer and Alderman above. In a 2010 paper Alderman approached the challenges of remembering in America as a post-slavery society.[39] The 'post-' here recognised the continuities, legacies and *Duress* of oppression in the histories of our geographies.[40] Alderman charted contemporary calls for African American sites of counter-memory in the southern USA state of Georgia that would recognise the forgotten struggles of the enslaved. Such interventions into the commemorative landscape, including monuments and statues, were contested both within and without Black communities. The act of surrogation, commemorating representational surrogates who stand in for the suffering of communities, resolves the difficulties of picking a single figure to commemorate, but raises many more difficult questions of representation, textual interpretation, and the charged racial politics of contemporary heritage spaces.

Alison Bashford et al. also used landscape to frame their analysis of commemorative spaces, returning to earlier interests in the connection between official and vernacular landscapes.[41] This paper, however, focused not on nationalism but on *trans*-national sites of migrant quarantine and immigration on two sides of the Pacific Ocean (Sydney and San Francisco). Neither are sites of official commemoration, but within the sites are monuments to those who died and unofficial traces and messages of the detainees. This produces landscapes of affective commemoration, designed to trigger a very different sensation in the interior of the observer to the 'open-air museum' Victorian landscapes which Hobsbawm described.

Like Withers' study of Mungo Park, Ernesto Capello's 2018 paper explored the intersection of historical geography, memory studies, and the history of science, within an imperial frame.[42] This paper, however, looked back to Europe and its scientific explorers from Ecuador, connecting the racial politics of French geodesic expeditions to the formation of Ecuadorean identity, examining the symbolic loading of pyramidal geodesic markers as monuments, and how they function as contentious heritage in contemporary tourism and Indigenous discourses. The papers of Alderman and Capello combined historical contextualisation with attention to contemporary engagements with monuments as sites for critical discussion and engagement. This was also the focus of the two final papers in this section. The first was a joint editorial, in which we acknowledged the transformative effect that global shifts in the racial politics of contemporary statuary (including attacks on states of Black historical figures) were having in inspiring moves to decolonize society, and to decolonize journals.[43] The second was an immersive and lyrical account by a participant in the protests in Bristol around the statue to slavery-financier Edward Colston, which culminated in the statue being felled and dumped into the city harbour in June 2020.[44]

There are many clear continuities between these papers and those recapped in the first section, especially the use of landscape as a way of connecting monuments to broader scales and spaces, and thinking through the connections to resistance and

[34] Owen J Dwyer, and Derek H Alderman, 'Memorial landscapes: analytic questions and metaphors', *GeoJournal* 73 (2008) 165–178.

[35] Matthew Craske, 'Matthew Cotes Wyatt's monument to George III and the Tory vision of metropolitan improvement, 1766–1835′, *Journal of Historical Geography* 38 (2012) 387–400.

[36] Joshua Hagen, 'Historic preservation in Nazi Germany: place, memory, and nationalism', *Journal of Historical Geography* 35 (2009) 690–715.

[37] Duncan Light, and Craig Young, 'Socialist statuary as post-socialist hybrids: following the statues of Dr Petru Groza in Romania', *Journal of Historical Geography* 37 (2011) 493–501.

[38] Laragh Larsen, 'Re-placing imperial landscapes: colonial monuments and the transition to independence in Kenya', *Journal of Historical Geography* 38 (2012) 45–56.

[39] Derek H. Alderman, 'Surrogation and the politics of remembering slavery in Savannah, Georgia (USA)', *Journal of Historical Geography* 36 (2010) 90–101.

[40] Ann Laura Stoler, *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in our Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016).

[41] Alison Bashford, Peter Hobbins, Anne Clarke, and Ursula K. Frederick, 'Geographies of commemoration: Angel Island, San Francisco and North Head, Sydney', *Journal of Historical Geography* 52 (2016) 16–25.

[42] Ernesto Capello, 'From imperial pyramids to anticolonial sundials: commemorating and contesting French geodesy in Ecuador', *Journal of Historical Geography* 62 (2018) 37–50.

[43] Divya Tolia-Kelly, Diogo de Carvalho Cabral, Stephen Legg, Maria Lane, and Nicola Thomas, 'Historical geographies of the 21st century: Challenging our praxis', *Journal of Historical Geography* 69 (2020) 1–4.

[44] Lara Choksey, 'Colston falling', *Journal of Historical Geography* 74 (2021) 77–83.

the vernacular. But this batch of papers also differed in significant ways. Almost all were based beyond the geographical core of the United Kingdom and Ireland, Canada and the USA, and when they focused on these countries their emphasis was mostly on race relations. Of the nine papers, five emphasised the contestation of monuments and four explored monuments as objects of contemporary heritage disputation. They emphasised the difficult grappling with the legacies of empire, communism and slavery. But in so-doing they also chart a movement from critical to more radical approaches. These moves chime with broader developments within geography, and anticipate the foci of many of the papers in this special issue.

Recent reflections on the geographies of memory

Geographers working across the range of the discipline's methods and epistemologies have continued to test and review how we have, and might yet, study monuments. From a social sciences perspective, Waldemar Cudny and Håkan Appelblad provided an analysis of what the function of monuments might be (artistic, symbolic, experienced, interpreting, commemorate, political, social, religious, marketing, or mixed).[45] Political analysis of nationalist monuments remain vital, but have explored an ever-wider range of nationalisms. Timur Hammond, for instance, has extended geographers' situation of monuments in spaces, places and landscapes to interrogate the publicness of a monument in contemporary Turkey.[46] This monument commemorates an *un*-successful attempt to overthrow the government in 2016 and, in addition to websites which recount resistance to the coup, the efforts to shape a nationalist public through these two different but linked forms of commemoration.

Another strand of monument research is that which casts geographers as participants in the interpretation or even construction of monuments. Dydia DeLyser has written about her attempts to influence the construction and interpretation of a monument in another part of the American South, this time Oklahoma.[47] The statue, of a mythologised female settler, was felt to be based on a fabrication, and was the subject of campaigns to halt or alter the design, which failed. What emerged from this failure, however, was a deep and detailed engagement with community activists who worked to influence the interpretation and understanding of the statue, and to contest its unquestioned acceptance. Other geographers have participated in community campaigns that have been successful, however. Susanne Seymour, for instance, has been engaged in long-running participatory community activism, which has sought recognition of the enslaved labour origins of much of the cotton used in the textile and lace industries of the British midlands.[48] A concerted campaign by the 'Legacy Makers' group has secured agreement for the prominent placement in a Nottingham city centre redevelopment of a statue, co-designed with sculptor Rachel Carter, that will 'highlight the contributions and connections between white mill workers in the East Midlands and Black enslaved women who grew the raw cotton supplies in the Americas.'[49] The statue will provide a subtle example of an anti-monumental statue, in that it differs from traditional statue norms in its subject, form, site, visitor experience, and meaning.[50]

A different project, by geographers and others, seeks to provide evidence about older, imperial statues, in an attempt to bring their forgotten stories and biographies to life.[51] The 'Cast in Stone' project has brought together scholars in the UK and France to produce an online database (and map) of statues in each country as the basis for participatory learning about both the monuments and reactions to them:

> '… we intend to study the complex histories of these statues, situating them in their local contexts, understanding their iconography, tracing the connections between sites, and gathering the conflicting emotions and memories that have built up around them. In doing so, we aim to go beyond flattened descriptions of "vandalism" and "patriotism" and instead produce a citizens' archive and interpretive tool that can assist with dispassionate, positive and democratic decision-making with regards to difficult heritage.'[52]

While these projects seek to influence understanding, they have been energised by broader moves to not just question but to remove statues which embody offensive ideologies. This is part of the phenomenon which Sybille Frank and Mirjana Ristic term urban fallism:

> 'the contestation, transformation and pulling-down of public monuments by minority, marginalized and/or oppressed civic groups in today's socially, politically and ethnically diverse cities as a means of political struggle for social recognition and inclusion. We argue that contemporary urban fallism is a form of political iconoclasm that attacks symbols which reinforce racism, oppression, discrimination and intolerance with a view of transforming the city into a place of heterogeneity, equality and social justice.'[53]

Calls, in the wake of the Rhodes Must Fall movement, have come for statues to fall in post-colonial Africa and the Americas; post-miliary conflict sites in the Middle East; and post-Soviet and post-imperial Europe, Asia and South America.[54] One geographical angle on these moves is to connect the subjects of the statues which are falling, or not, to the discipline of geography, and higher education more broadly. Gerry Kearns has explored the links between Rhodes and universities in South Africa and the United Kingdom, connecting to debates about George Floyd, Colston, and Halford

[45] Waldemar Cudny, and Håkan Appelblad, 'Monuments and their functions in urban public space', *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift-Norwegian Journal of Geography* 73 (2019) 273–289.

[46] Timur Hammond, 'Making memorial publics: Media, monuments, and the politics of commemoration following Turkey's July 2016 coup attempt', *Geographical Review* 110 (2020) 536–555.

[47] Dydia DeLyser, 'Participatory Historical Geography?: Shaping and Failing to Shape Social Memory at an Oklahoma Monument', in *Envisioning Landscapes, Making Worlds*, ed. by Stephen Daniels, Dydia DyLyser, J. Nicholas Entrikin, and Doug Richardson (Londond: Routledge, 2012), pp. 177–187.

[48] https://globalcottonconnections.wordpress.com/about/, last accessed 11 July 2024.

[49] https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/news/standing-in-this-place-exhibition, last accessed 11 July 2024. Also see https://www.standinginthisplace.co.uk/, last accessed 26 July 2024.

[50] Stevens, Franck, and Fazakerley, 'Counter-monuments'.

[51] Tim Edensor, 'The haunting presence of commemorative statues', *Ephemera* 19 (2019) 53–76.

[52] https://castinstone.exeter.ac.uk/en/about/, last accessed 11 July 2024. Also see Gavin Grindon and Duncan Hay, 'Seeing culture from below: Counter-curating, counter-ethnography, counter-mapping', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* (2024) e12710; and https://www.britishmonumentsrelatedtoslavery.net/public/, last accessed 11 July 2024.

[53] Sybille Frank, and Mirjana Ristic, 'Urban fallism: Monuments, iconoclasm and activism', *City* 24 (2020) 552–564 (p. 556).

[54] For samples of the exceptionally rich body of work on South America, for example, see the 'Monuments and Counter-Monuments' special issue of *ReVista* XX (2020); Clausia Wasserman, 'Monuments and Protests: Disputed Memory in the Latin American Public Space' *Observing Memories* 6 (2022) 50-55.

Mackinder.[55] Another geographical approach is that of Benjamin Forest and Juliet Johnson, who have drawn upon their earlier work on post-Soviet statue politics to analyse calls for statues of US Confederate leaders to be removed.[56] Those in favour suggest that the association of these figures with white supremacy, which has no place in legitimate political discourse, means that they should have no place in public space.[57] This does, however, raise questions about the forgetting of the confederate past that this might enable, and which point between retaining or removing might be more productive.

Beyond participatory geographies and the fallism movement, there has also been a broader turn in monument studies to more experimental methodologies. Shanti Sumartojo has surveyed the emergence of non-representational approaches to commemoration which emphasise experiential, subtle but excessive feelings, the disruption of ideological intent, and the simultaneous experience of different temporalities.[58] This takes us beyond traditional *lieux de memoire* to new or counter-monuments, but it also encourages us to revisit monuments, museums, or heritage sites to see how they are experienced, their affects, and their resistances.[59] These themes are touched upon in the papers of this special issues, as introduced below.

Monumental historical geography III: heritage and historical geographies of inequality

This special issue of fourteen papers, the result of an open call by the journal in the wake of the BLM and Rhodes Must Fall movements, enhances the rich and vibrant field of contested monument studies. It presents a truly interdisciplinary cast, with six geographers joined by contributors from history, art and architecture, international relations, library and IT studies, and critical heritage studies. In what follows I introduce the focus of each paper before, in the next section, reading across the collection to note its types of monument, means of interpretation, contextual protest movements, and type of contestation.

The first paper in this special issue provides a progressive alternative to fallism, in arguing that there are certain statues that must stand. Federico Ferretti presents an analysis of monuments to the combative stone workers, and antifascist campaigners, of the Carrara region in Italy.[60] Many of these monuments have been, and continue to be, contested, but are defended as reminders of worker contributions to the economy and to society, and a reminder (*monere*) not to forget the ongoing threats from the far right in contemporary Europe. In contrast, the second paper explores the aftermath of a statue's very public fall. Tim Cole presents an insider perspective on local debates regarding what should happen to the statue of Edward Colston, after it was dredged up from Bristol harbour.[61] As chair of a History Commission established by the Mayor of Bristol, Cole presents an analysis of some of the 13984 responses to a survey regarding where the statue should be put, and how it should be interpreted. If Cole explored the rival imaginations of the future of a contemporary statue, Ela Gök and Ezgi Tuncer explored ways of imagining and mapping a lost statue; Istanbul's Armenian April 11 memorial.[62] Commemorating the deaths of Armenians before and during the Frist World War, in what is widely accepted to have been a genocide, the statue has since been destroyed, its form preserved in only one photograph. Gök and Tuncer map, visualise, and re-imagine the memorial as a form of counter-memory; an unsettling re-composition (Fig. 1).

Many of the papers explore campaigns to have statues destroyed, or at least moved. These campaigns vary across temporal and spatial scale. Brett Chloupek explores the post-Second War fate of Slovakia's 'Victims Warn' statue, erected in 1969, which commemorates the 1944 uprising against the Nazi occupation.[63] Communist authorities had the statue moved, as it could be read as anti-state, while since its restoration to a central location it has become a symbol of anti-political sentiment more broadly. Another post-Soviet geography is sketched by Nina Debruyne and Georgeta Nazarska, who explore the fate of two monuments in Bulgaria from the perspectives of ex-communist and anti-communist sub-cultures.[64] Since 1991 both monuments have been contested, repurposed, and mocked (the graffiti and art hacks on the Monument to the Soviet Army being one particularly spectacular example, see Fig. 2, where McDonalds makes another appearance). While one has been destroyed, the other has become a meeting space and protest ground, refuting the ideology of the composers of the space in ritual fashion.

Noah Randolph provides a study that reminds us of the delicate temporalities and spatialities of counter-monumentalisation. His paper examines the 'Rumors of War' sculpture that was erected in the former confederate statue megapolis of Richmond, Virginia, USA.[65] The statue was installed in 2019 and depicts a young, dreadlocked Black man astride a horse, wearing a hoodie and Nike trainers, a counterpoint to the many local statues that have been contested as racist. This took place before the outrage over the murder of George Floyd, but within the longer running context of the ongoing violence against Black communities, especially in the American south, and the successful campaigns to have the confederate statues removed, from 2016. Rahul Rao invites us to explore the complexities of a very different anti-statue campaign. He examines the rise of calls for statues of MK (*Mahatma*) Gandhi to fall, which have spread from Africa to become a global phenomenon.[66] Rao situates the accusations against Gandhi (that he was racist, anti-Dalit and sexist, and has become a symbol of an aggressively global Indian state) at different scales and within often

[55] Gerry Kearns, 'Topple the racists 1: Decolonising the space and institutional memory of the university', *Geography* 105 (2020) 116–125; Gerry Kearns, 'Topple the racists 2: Decolonising the space and the institutional memory of geography', *Geography* 106 (2021) 4–15.

[56] Benjamin Forest, and Juliet Johnson, 'Confederate monuments and the problem of forgetting', *Cultural Geographies* 26 (2019) 127–131.

[57] On the erasure, valorisation or acknowledgment of white supremacy in 90% of surveyed national historical landmarks in the USA, see Laura Pulido, 'Cultural memory, white innocence, and United States territory: the 2022 Urban Geography plenary lecture', *Urban Geography* 44 (2023) 1059–1083.

[58] Shanti Sumartojo, 'New geographies of commemoration', *Progress in Human Geography* 45 (2021) 531–547.

[59] For a thorough survey of contemporary scholarship on the broader geographies of memory see Reuben Rose-Redwood, Ian G Baird, Emilia Palonen, and CindyAnn Rose-Redwood, 'Monumentality, memoryscapes, and the politics of place', *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies* 21 (2022) 448–467.

[60] Federico Ferretti, 'Statues that must stand not fall: The material agency of anarchism in the marble monuments of Carrara, Italy', *Journal of Historical Geography* 80 (2023) 94–105.

[61] Tim Cole, 'After the fall, where?: Relocating the Colston statue in Bristol, from 2020 to imaginary futures', *Journal of Historical Geography* 82 (2023) 156–168.

[62] Ela Gök, and Ezgi Tuncer, 'An unsettling re-composition: Istanbul's lost Armenian April 11 Memorial', *Journal of Historical Geography* 81 (2023) 19–31.

[63] Brett R Chloupek, 'Commemorative vigilance between totalitarianisms: Slovakia's' Victims Warn'sculpture, from counter-monument to anti-monument', *Journal of Historical Geography* 81 (2023) 55–66.

[64] Nina Debruyne, and Georgeta Nazarska, 'Contentious heritage spaces in post-communist Bulgaria: Contesting two monuments in Sofia', *Journal of Historical Geography* 83 (2024) 176–190.

[65] Noah Randolph, 'Rumors of War: Towards the unsettling of the Confederate monumental landscape', *Journal of Historical Geography* 81 (2023) 43–50.

[66] Rahul Rao, 'Gandhi falling … and rising', *Journal of Historical Geography* 82 (2023) 1–10.

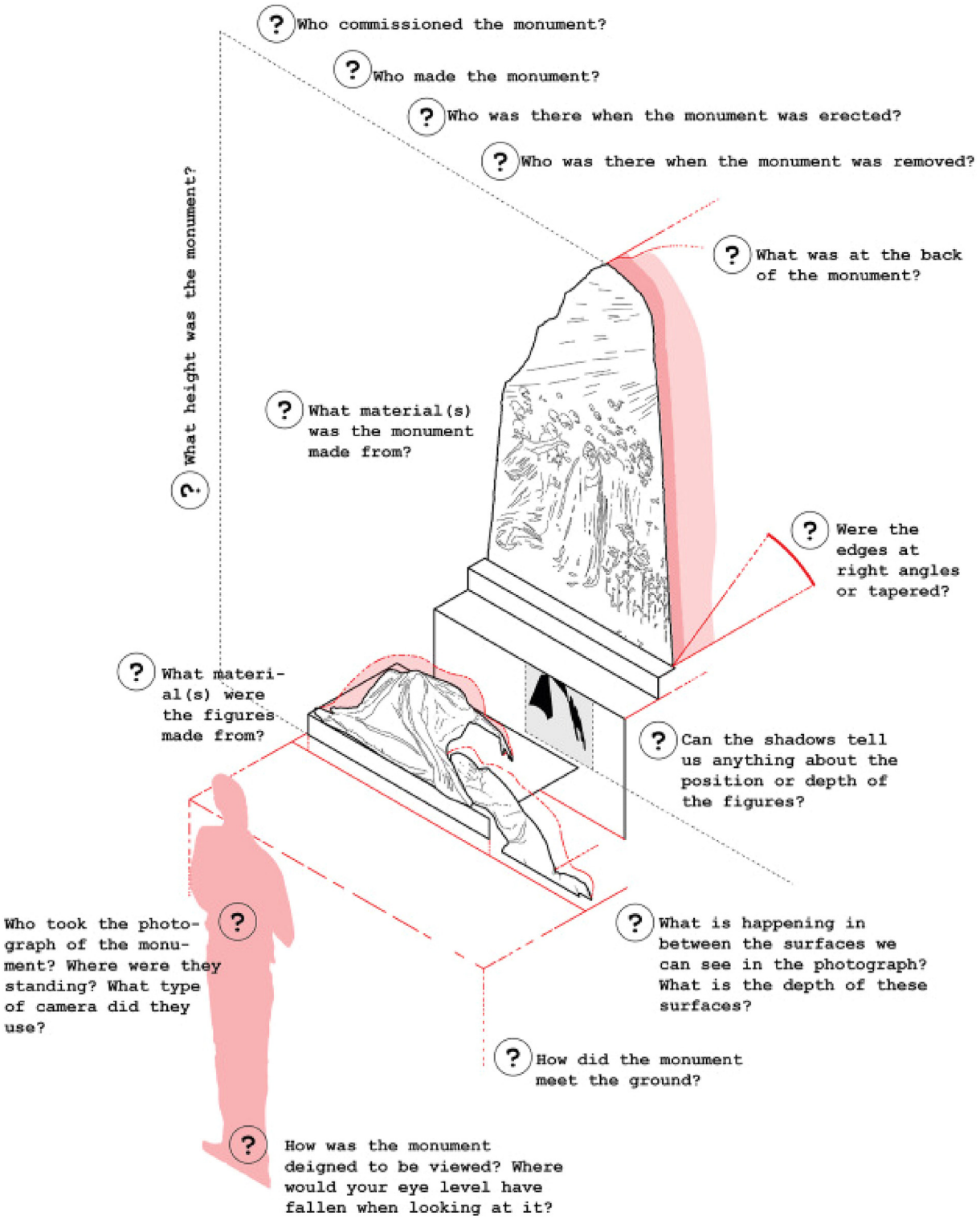

Fig. 1. April 11 Memorial 'absence' drawing (reproduced with permission of Ela Gök).

incompatible discourses of decolonization, heritage, and nationalism.

Two papers explore the historical geographies of monument construction and contestation between the mutually constitutive geographies of imperial Britain and colonial India. Durba Ghosh provides a comparative reading of London and Calcutta between the Napoleonic (1815) and First World (1914) Wars.[67] She shows that statues have constantly been on the move through history, both

[67] Durba Ghosh, 'Moving statues: Monuments to empire from London's Waterloo Place to the Maidan in Calcutta', *Journal of Historical Geography* 83 (2024) 10–22.

Fig. 2. The Monument to the Soviet Army's reimagination in Sophia, Bulgari (reproduced with permission of Nina Debruyne).

around cities and between countries. The majority of the imperial statues in India were made in and shipped from Britain, to which some of them returned after independence. Swati Chattopadhyay explores a similar timespan, but years advanced, between the Indian uprising (known at the time as the mutiny) of 1857-59 and independence in 1947.[68] Her focus is the Cawnpore Memorial Well Monument, erected by the colonial state to commemorate the deaths of the 200 British women and children whose bodies lay in the well. The racially segregated and enclosed structure was moved after independence, after delicate negotiations with the new government, to a churchyard where the new architecture was open, yet still protected.

The final five papers are focused on the present, and on contestations of contemporary heritage landscapes. Gareth Hoskins and Leighton James, like Ghosh, focus on connecting two imperial sites, in this case the Welsh town of Carmarthen and the islands of Trinidad and Tobego.[69] The connection is Sir Thomas Picton, the Welshman who served as military governor of Trinidad for six-years, overseeing a violent regime and profiting from slavery. A statue of Picton was boxed up and then removed from the Welsh capital's city hall in Cardiff and campaigns contesting his memory across the two countries are continuing. Doron Eldar's paper also explores forgotten connections between European and Caribbean sites, in this case the role of recent contested Copenhagen monuments in engaging Denmark's previously effaced colonial past as a proxy for negotiating Danish identity and belonging.[70] Four sites are explored, from a temporary imagining of a Danish West Indies rebel (see Fig. 3), to an official monument recognising the Caribbean connection, to an artistic dumping of a wax model of a king associated with colonial atrocities into the harbour, to a proposed statue of a colonial child who was brought to Copenhagen and died there. Sofia Lovegrove and Raquel Rodrigues Machaqueiro's comparable paper has explored both the contestation of imperial monuments and the erection of counter-monuments in the Portuguese capital of Lisbon.[71] They show how Portugal's role as one of the earliest European colonial states, and a founder of the modern slave trade, has been depicted in public monuments as the triumph of the exploratory spirit. This interpretation has been challenged by

[68] Swati Chattopadhyay, 'Memorial as aegis: Colonial sovereignty and the unmaking of the Kanpur Memorial Well Monument', *Journal of Historical Geography* 83 (2024) 53–67.

[69] Gareth Hoskins, and Leighton James, 'Commemorating Picton in Wales and Trinidad: Colonial legacies and the production of memorial publics', *Journal of Historical Geography* 83 (2024) 68–79.

[70] Doron Eldar, 'Negotiating Danish identity with (in) Copenhagen's postcolonial landscape of commemoration', *Journal of Historical Geography* 84 (2024) 37–48.

[71] Sofia Lovegrove, and Raquel Rodrigues Machaqueiro, 'Contesting monuments, challenging narratives: Divergent approaches to dealing with the colonial past and its legacies in Lisbon, Portugal', *Journal of Historical Geography* 83 (2024) 84–95.

Fig. 3. I am Queen Mary ('Vestindisk Pakhus april 2018', reproduced under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license, source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vestindisk_Pakhus_april_2018.jpg, last accessed 17 October 2024).

re-interpreting existing statues and erecting new ones to the forgotten participants in the city's imperial and trading past.

In the penultimate paper I summarise a three-day workshop put together by the historical geographer Alan Lester, for a mostly non-academic audience, advising on how to talk about, and contest, British colonialism in the context of 'a culture war'.[72] This involved a fieldtrip to London, making visible some of the many imperial statues which go unnoticed throughout the city, and exploring the private monumental spaces of the ex- Foreign and Colonial Office buildings. The final paper returns us to the first, addressing monuments focused explicitly on economy and class, rather than nation and race. Brian Rosa explores the local significance of Barcelona's surviving industrial chimneys, most of which now stand as lone memorials to lost economies and lost communities.[73] Their ritualisation and commemoration has actually come as a last, not first, phase in their commemoration. As with Cole, surveys and exhibitions are used to explore how these monuments are both contested and related to.

Current reflections on the geographies of memory

What insights do these papers offer into the current state of research into (contested) monuments? First, in terms of the types of monuments studied, there is still a strong bias towards the study of traditional statues. These are, however, supplemented here with a strong minority of other spaces, including plaques and graves (Ferretti), memorial sculptures (Gök and Tuncer), avant-garde early-postmodern statues (Chloupek), mausolea and towering monuments (Debruyne and Nazarska), street names (Hoskins and James), architecture and murals (Legg), and industrial chimneys (Rosa).

In terms of their historiographical and theoretical inspirations, many of the papers fit well into the intellectual genealogies outlined previously in this paper, with papers by historical geographers and others used throughout. Nora is cited in five papers, but has lost the stronghold he exerted over earlier work. This is, in part, down to the growing emphasis on contesting or counter-monuments, but also due to a much wider and heterodox

[72] Stephen Legg, 'How to talk about British colonialism in the middle of a culture war', *Journal of Historical Geography* 84 (2024) 154–159.

[73] Brian Rosa, 'Industrial Obelisks: Working-class memory and Barcelona's chimney-monuments', *Journal of Historical Geography* (2024).

theoretical vocabulary. Gök and Tuncer draw upon Giorgio Agamben's notions of the sacred and profane, using their re-imagination and re-mapping of the Armenian memorial as an act of profanation and re-composition that asks us to connect absence, forgetting, remembrance and reckoning.[74] Chattopadhyay uses the ancient Greek notion of *aegis*, that which deflects the gaze, to help us think about fear, failure, colonialism and sovereignty, via Thomas Hobbes, in new ways. But in general the papers draw widely, from within and beyond geography, to adapt to new contestations of memory and monumentality that they study.

As already noted, nine of the fourteen papers chart contestations that were either directly inspired by the Black Lives Matter or Rhodes Must Fall movements, or which use the provocations of these movements to inspire their analysis. Other papers, however, explore movements for genocide recognition and remembrance (Gök and Tuncer), post-Soviet realignment (Chloupek, Debruyne and Nazarska), and the commemoration of industrial lives and geographies (Ferretti, Rosa).[75] Many of the latter movements have adapted to the social media age, while the former were direct products of it (as #BLM and #RMF on Twitter/X). Many of the papers reflect the role of social media on contesting heritage, both through campaigns for reform, but also for bitter and often unregulated 'culture war' trolling.

In terms of contestation, we can distinguish three forms, with their own temporalities. The first category is that of monuments to forms of contestation, whether directly or indirectly. Chattopadhyay explored how the Indian uprising of 1857-59 was commemorated, through a monument to 200 women and children found in a well; Chloupek studied a 1960s monument to a 1940s uprising of the Slovakians against the Nazis; Debruyne and Nazarska examined a monument commemorating the Soviet battle to liberate Bulgaria; while many of the monuments Ferretti studied commemorated antifascist resistance.

A second category of contestation shows how monuments have been contested in the past. Ghosh shows, in contrast to anti-fallist insistence that statues must not move or be tampered with, that statues often have very mobile lives, being moved to make way for urban development, changing tastes, or political demands. Gök and Tuncer showed that the Armenian April 11 Memorial, likely erected during the post-war occupation of Istanbul by British, French, Greek, and Italian forces, did not survive the nationalist government of the new Turkish state. Chattopadhyay has shown that the racially segregated Cawnpore memorial was overrun and defaced on the very day of Indian independence.[76] The Slovak monument that Chloupek describes lasted only three years before the communist government had it cut into pieces and put into storage. Debruyne and Nazarska describe a much richer historical palette of contestation regarding post-Soviet Sofia. The Mausoleum of Georgi Dimitrov became a site for political confrontation in 1989–90, while in the early 1990s many citizens argued for its removal. More damaging to its political power was, however, its subsumption with the commodity chains of capitalism after the supposed *End of History*.[77] The mausoleum was variously fashioned into a Christmas decoration, an art installation and, perhaps most devastating of all, painted with black dots to commemorate the release of Disney's 1997 film, 101 Dalmatians (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Mausoleum as dalmatian, with dalmatian. (Reproduced with permission of Nina Debruyne).

The third form of contestation relates to how monuments have been contested as sites of critical heritage debate and dialogue in the near-present. In one light, the most successful contestation of a monument is one which leads to its removal. Rao has shown how 'Rhodes Must Fall' successfully morphed into 'Gandhi Must Fall', with statues of the Indian leader falling from 2016 onwards. Hoskins and James showed how a one-and-a-half tonne marble statue of Picton was removed from the 'Heroes of Wales Collection' in Cardiff's City Hall, while Cole explored the famous fall of Colston in Bristol. What the latter shows, however, is that falling is a process not an event.[78] The public debate regarding where the statue should reside after it's rebirth from the harbour elicited broader debate on woke-ism, censorship, imperial pride, racial shame, and the role of monuments in constituting public space. Similarly, Ferretti has shown how the attempts to fell statues can themselves be commemorated. In 1981 a statue to the victims of fascism, erected two years prior in Carrara, was attacked with dynamite, toppling one of the five monumental blocks. The fallen monument remains fallen, but has been re-inscribed, making it a permanent memorial to the ongoing and live threat of fascist resurgence.

Other forms of heritage contestation argue that even problematic statues, in Ferretti's language, 'should stand'. This 'retain and explain' approach is adopted by many governments, as in the case of the Picton memorial in Carmarthen. Even this, however, led to a backlash from those who felt that interpretative information boards were evidence of 'woke police' and censorship. Beyond explanation, retained monuments can also become what

[74] Giorgio Agamben, *Profanations* (New York: Zone Books, 2007).

[75] For an early, and outlier, example of the latter see Chilla Bulbeck, 'Building the Nation: Silences and Marginalities concerning the representation of workers in monuments', *Labour History: A Journal of Labour and Social History* 59 (1990) 16–27.

[76] For comparable symbolic targeting of British sites in Delhi in 1857 see Nayanjot Lahiri, 'Commemorating and remembering 1857: the revolt in Delhi and its afterlife', *World Archaeology* 35 (2003) 35–60.

[77] Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 1992).

[78] On memorials as ongoing events see Sumartojo, 'New geographies of commemoration'.

Lovegrove and Machaqueiro call 'contestation zones' of heritage dissonance, as evidenced in graffiti on refurbished imperial monuments, or poetic performances at problematic statues. Other forms of contestation emerge organically and represent vernacular takeovers of the landscape. Debruyne and Nazarska, for instance, describe the use of Sophia's Monument to the Soviet Army grounds as a skater park, street art hub, and a meeting point for the city's pride parade and a meeting point for the local LGBTQ+ community.

Beyond reactive forms of heritage contestation, there are many active and constructive forms of monumentalisation that provide alternative foci for contestation. One form is the counter-monument. Lovegrove and Machaqueiro describe the erection of a statue in Lisbon that remembers the millions of people enslaved by the Portuguese empire. The bust of Pai Paulino, a freed enslaved man from Brazil who lived in Lisbon from 1834, stands here as surrogate.[79] The 'Rumors of War' and 'I am Queen Mary' statues are both also synecdoches, parts standing in for wholes (of Black American youth and insurgent Danish West Indians). But these are synecdoches with open ended chains of signification; monuments without direct figurative referents. To craft 'Rumor of War' the artist Kehinde Wiley digitally amalgamated portraits of multiple people to create both a someone and an anyone; a translatable symbol of young Black men in America. Likewise, although 'I am Queen Mary' (see Fig. 3) figuratively represents Mary Thomas, a leader of the 1878 Fireburn revolt, the statue itself is based on a composite of the bodies of the two artists, United States Virgin Islands (current day Danish West Indies) artist La Vaughn Belle and Danish-Trinidadian Jeannette Ehlers. The statue has also returned to the virtual realm. When its material manifestation was damaged in a storm, the artists developed an augmented reality app that allows visitors to see the monument in its previous location, virtually.

Artist reimagination can also contest monuments when it is not possible to fell or replace them. Lovegrove and Machaqueiro show how the 'Monument to the Discoveries' monument in Lisbon's Empire Square was brilliantly reappropriated by the Angolan artist Kiluanji Kia Henda, who photographed young Black people from marginalised local neighbourhoods on the monument, contrasting with the colossal whiteness of the statues celebrating exploration/colonialism (see Fig. 5). Eldar describes the 'Artists Anonymous' filmed intervention in Copenhagen, in which a plaster bust of King Frederic V (associated with colonial atrocities) was stolen from the Academy of Fine Arts and dumped in the harbour. It's retrieved and disfigured form has been copied in miniature, a replicated monument and reminder of the ongoing reality of colonialism in another European capital. Finally, Gök and Tuncer's paper is *itself* an artistic intervention, one which refuses the empirical or positivist traps of evidencing a lost monument, in favour of the utopian and hermeneutical act of imagining and mapping it.

A final form of contestation demonstrated in this special issue is that which the papers enact themselves, participating in what Karen Till termed the active memory-work of collective memory-making that enhances the capacities of others to act.[80] Ferretti explicitly calls for a ' … a militant historical geography that is not limited to deconstructing and criticizing discourses, being able to support decolonial agendas by also analysing counter-monuments that must not fall.'[81] Hoskins and James call for commemorative activism as a part of broader anti-racist scholar activism; they chart activism in Carmarthen and Trinidad and Tobego but their paper is also an amplification and an advertisement of this campaigning. Alan Lester's three-day workshop was an example of how historical geographers can intervene into contemporary political debates, using monuments as learning tools and affective prompts. And, following Ferretti and Magdalena Novoa, Rosa asks how historical geography might intersect with insurgent heritage, preserving the knowledge and actions of passed collective lives, using industrial monuments as a space of such insurgent preservation? We hope that these forms of monument contestation (attacks and felling, retaining and explaining, re-using, creating counter-monuments, artistically re-symbolising and re-imagining monuments, and contestatory scholarship) inspire future research into the spaces of memory, lived heritage, and the historical geographies of inequality.

Fig. 5. 'A Descoberta (Taking over the monument celebrating the infamous period of the so called "Discovery")', 2006/2007. Source: Kiluanji Kia Henda.

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[79] Alderman, 'Surrogation and the politics of remembering slavery in Savannah, Georgia (USA)'.

[80] Karen E Till, 'Wounded cities: Memory-work and a place-based ethics of care', *Political Geography* 31 (2012) 3–14.

[81] Ferretti, 'Statues that must stand not fall', p. 95.