
The Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM), located in Washington D.C., is a symbolic representation of the Vietnam War—a lost war which had neither an official beginning nor end and, for some, no clear purpose. Moreover, it was a contested and socially unpopular war also in some veteran circles. Lost or unwon wars, like the Vietnam War, raise disturbing questions about the reasons for their failure and their costs. The moral, social, and economic costs of the war in Vietnam proved to be high. How to commemorate the Vietnam War was another question which had to be answered. This question was especially troublesome to the American people who do not have a long history of waging wars and, more importantly, do not lose wars. Should a monument to the Vietnam War and its soldiers bear triumphant or heroic overtones?

The story of the VVM and the controversy surrounding its original design and adding new elements to the site may serve as an example of an evolving commemoration through the process of negotiating the meaning of the monument and the past it commemorates. The Vietnam War is commemorated by not one memorial but four separate memorials constituting one commemorative site in the Constitution Gardens in Washington D.C. The main memorial is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, also referred to as “the wall.” The Statue of the Three Servicemen, the Vietnam Women’s Memorial and the In Memory Plaque are later additions. The complex structure of the site exemplifies political conflicts over the meaning of the Vietnam War. My impression after a fieldwork trip to the site is that most visitors perceive the memorials as one entity but spend most of their time in front of the wall.

In this essay I discuss memorials to the Vietnam War in terms of an interplay, which at times takes the form of a struggle, of the representations of masculinity

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1 It is worth noticing that the first veteran organization, formed in 1967, was Vietnam Veterans Against the War.
2 On the problems related to the readjustment of the Vietnam veterans to social life see Figley 80-82; on PTSD see Shehan 55; on the consequences of war combat on family relations see Hendrix and Anelli 87-92.
and femininity in the context of a lost war commemoration. This particular struggle can be read as a part of the universal conflict between the sky-cult and the earth-cult, civilization and nature, heroism and empathy, as all of those competing symbolisms and sentiments were present in the process of the Vietnam War commemoration.

First, I briefly present the history of the VVM paying special attention to its original design and attempts at mediating its innovative form, which resulted in adding more traditional commemorative elements to the site. Next, I use a psychoanalytical approach to provide insight about the interplay of the feminine and masculine features of commemoration. I also propose to view the new additions to the site as attempts at asserting traditionally perceived masculinity and femininity. The VVM’s ability to engage its visitors in bodily practices and evoke deep emotions in them can also be attributed to its female gender quality. Overall, the site’s complex structure and its enthusiastic reception show that archetypically and traditionally perceived femininity is more suitable in the context of a lost war commemoration than the traditional, masculine, and heroic code of commemoration.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial

In May 1979 Jan Scruggs, a Vietnam veteran employed by the U.S. Department of Labor founded a non-profit organization—the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF), whose aim was to build a memorial commemorating the servicemen who fought in Vietnam. The author of the winning memorial design, chosen in an open competition, was Maya Ying Lin, an American of Chinese descent and an undergraduate student of architecture at Yale University.

The memorial was dedicated on November 12, 1982. It is situated in the northwest corner of the National Mall in Washington D.C. Its central feature is a V shaped wall made of two blocks of polished, black granite set into the ground at 125 degrees. Each of the two walls is 200 feet long and points to the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, anchoring the monument in the historical iconography of Washington. The memorial is set below ground level; the ridge of the memorial is covered with grass. The natural surrounding gives the monument a peaceful and quiet ambience.

In 1982 57,939 names of fallen soldiers, both men and women, were engraved on the wall (Morgan 11). The names are arranged chronologically by the...
date of the soldier’s death. The only two dates etched in the panels are located at the intersection of the walls of the memorial. On the right side, at the top of the panel, the date 1959 is carved—this is the symbolic beginning of the war and the date of the first death. The inscription reads: “IN HONOR OF THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES WHO SERVED IN THE VIETNAM WAR. THE NAMES OF THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES AND OF THOSE REMAINING MISSING ARE INSCRIBED IN THE ORDER THAT THEY WERE TAKEN FROM US.”

The list of names continues in the direction of the Lincoln Memorial, climbing up and disappearing at the wall’s end, which symbolizes the middle of the war, May 1968. The list resumes on the other side of the memorial continuing gradually in the direction of the apex of the walls. At the bottom of the left panel the date 1975 is etched. It is accompanied with the following inscription: “OUR NATION HONORS THE COURAGE, SACRIFICE AND DEVOTION TO DUTY AND COUNTRY OF ITS VIETNAM VETERANS. THIS MEMORIAL WAS BUILT WITH PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, NOVEMBER 11 1982.” This is the place where the symbolic beginning and the end of the war meet. The first and the last casualties are commemorated side by side.

**The Controversy**

The original design of the memorial raised a lot of controversy and was heavily criticized by some Vietnam veteran circles. Three features of the memorial were constantly challenged; its location, its color and its shape. It was compared to a bat, a boomerang, a scar, it was called a black hole in the ground. “The wall was also condemned as ‘an open urinal,’ ‘a wailing wall for anti-draft demonstrators,’ ‘a tribute to Jane Fonda,’ and a ‘pervasive prank’ that ‘would baffle the general public.’ Another critic ... called it a ‘slap in the face,’ ‘a tombstone,’ ‘something for New York intellectuals’” (Wagner-Pacifi ci and Schwartz 394). In the most serious assault, Tom Carhart, a graduate of West Point and a Vietnam veteran, called the wall “the black gash of shame.” Carhart argued: “Black the universal color of shame and degradation. In all races and societies worldwide. And a hole, as if out of shame” (Hagopian 104). Some veterans thought the memorial was antiheroic and, in its refusal to impose any political interpretation of the war, too ambiguous and open to interpretations.

Critics of the memorial proposed to open the memorial selection process once more. Carhart argued that the memorial should be placed above ground, the color of its walls should be changed from black to white, and a flagpole

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4 The entire inscription is engraved on the Wall with capital letters. Quotation according to the original.
should be put at the vertex of the walls. The conflict was ended by a decision that the original design of the VVM would stay unchanged, but a sculpture of Vietnam servicemen and a flagpole would be added to the site. This decision was not accepted by the creator of the design. Lin in her official statement argued that adding the statue would disturb the idea of the memorial. She saw the wall and the statue as two separate monuments that could not complement each other.

Despite Lin’s criticism a flagpole was added to the site in 1983. The Statue of the Three Servicemen was unveiled in 1984. A tribute to men who fought in Vietnam resulted in the protests of women who served there and felt their sacrifice was underrated. The Vietnam Women’s Memorial, a bronze statue of three women-nurses, was added to the site in 1993. The latest addition to the memorial is an in memory plaque which honors the hidden casualties of war. The plaque recognizes the death of the soldiers who survived the war but failed to withstand its negative consequences (In Memory Plaque online).

**The Feminine versus the Masculine Features of the Memorial**

The ideas articulated by some veterans—to change the color of the memorial, its below ground location and to add a flagpole—were not aesthetically motivated. What the veterans wanted was to adjust the memorial’s design to the Mall’s political iconography. They longed for a memorial that would resemble the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial—grand classical monuments, made of light and shiny materials, memorials that command respect of the viewers. Both monuments stay erect above the ground and are surrounded by the vast open space that suggests visiting them should be an experience marked by pathos and reflection. The form of those two monuments provides the events they symbolize with national, heroic, and triumphant interpretation.

The sexual associations and psychoanalytical interpretations of the VVM had proliferated in American popular discourse even before the memorial was built. Sturken argued: “The memorial contains all elements that have been associated psychoanalytically with the specter of woman—it embraces the earth; it is the abyss; it is death” (123). The harsh criticism of the original design of the memorial concerned its feminine character seen as inappropriate for war commemoration since the war was fought by men and therefore should assert their masculinity identified with strength and heroism. Those assumptions had perhaps been made stronger by the character of the Vietnam War; its status as a lost and contested effort wounded the pride of those who fought in it, it also demanded rationalization. The veterans’ disappointment with the memorial’s anti-heroic and feminine character was revealed in epithets which are slang words for
female genitals such as “a slash” or “a gash of shame” as the memorial was compared to a vessel—another object associated with femaleness.

Comparing the VVM with “an open wound” also brings associations with female genitals, coming from the psychoanalytical tradition which views the wound as the result of castration. Karen Horney spoke of a girl’s inability to see her genitals and to a boy’s ability to see his as a symbol of “the subjectivity of women as compared with the greater objectivity of men” (qtd in Paglia 22). Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz suggested that the memorial caused “anxiety about masculinity and its representation” (397). Sturken argued that the critics of the memorial felt it symbolized “the open, castrated wound of this country’s venture into an unsuccessful war, a war that emasculated the role the United States would play in the future foreign conflicts” (123). According to this reading, the memorial questioned the validity of American achievements and Americas position in the modern world.

The hidden placement of the memorial, its intrinsic connection with nature, and the aura of mystery surrounding it have also added to its identification with femaleness. Visiting the memorial is often connected with a discovery. Charles L. Griswold notes: “One must, then come upon the VVM suddenly. It is quite possible to happen upon it almost by accident, as I did. Once there, however, one is led into it gently. ... It demands that you enter into its space or miss it altogether” (706). The VVM brings association with a tomb. The blackness and the private and intimate character of the memorial’s site are clearly juxtaposed with the whiteness and the open and public nature of sites like the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial.

The close contact of the memorial with the earth was also noticed and commented on, becoming a matter of contention. Asked whether the memorial represents female sensibility, Lin said “In a world of phallic memorials that rise upward it certainly does. I didn’t set out to conquer the earth, or overpower it the way Western man usually does. I don’t think I’ve made a passive piece, but neither is it a memorial to the idea of war” (qtd in Hess 121). Sociologists Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz have argued: “A strictly semiotic reading of the wall would highlight its ‘femininity.’ It is an opening in nature. It is womblike in its embrace of the visitor. The wall also reflects the visitor in its stone, thus eliciting a form of empathy, a trait traditionally considered more available to women than to men” (397).

Another reading of the memorial refers to the primeval earth-cult developed in hunting and agrarian societies as opposed to the more advanced sky-cult. The chthonian power earth represents is directly connected with the power of nature. However, nature, which in all primeval cultures was associated with femaleness, was seen as a volatile and dangerous phenomenon whose power could only be curbed by the bonding of men and by the development of culture and civilization
According to Sigmund Freud, the power of the earth-cult and nature-worship became lost in the era of civilization: “The work of civilization has become increasingly the business of men, it confronts them with ever more difficult tasks and compels them to carry out instinctual sublimations of which women are little capable” (747). It is not surprising then that a refusal to pay tribute to war in traditional ways, which is archetypically perceived as a male endeavor, received such initial harsh criticisms. A regressive and restraining quality of the memorial bastardized the national code of remembrance established by the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial.

Lin wrote, “Walking into the grassy site contained by the walls of this memorial we can barely make out the carved names upon the memorial’s walls. These names, seemingly infinite in number, convey the sense of overwhelming numbers, while unifying these individuals into a whole” (qtd in Howe 95). With the names on the wall arranged in a manner which gives the memorial a closed cycle quality, soldiers’ names become immersed in a natural cycle, a realm governed by female power. As Paglia argued, “Nature’s cycles are woman’s cycles. Biologic femaleness is a sequence of circular returns, beginning and ending at the same point. She doesn’t have to become but to simply be” (8). The memorial’s symbolism suggests, then, that a greater female power encompasses the deaths of the fallen soldiers. It is a return to the symbolic womb, a reincorporation into the nature’s circle of events. The memorial’s serene ambience suggests that nature is the source of healing power rather than of violence and danger; surrendering to its power brings peace and comfort.

Interpreting the memorial from a psychoanalytical perspective, one sees its ultimate association with regression: it suggests withdrawal from society and culture into nature. Its alluring power brings connotations with the term “oceanic feeling” proposed by Romain Rolland, critically discussed by Freud in the first chapter of his Civilization and its Discontents (723). According to Rolland the “oceanic feeling” was a feeling of being connected to something greater than oneself, to the universe. He saw it as a spiritual phenomenon primary to religious feelings, the basis for developing religious convictions. Freud, however, associated the “oceanic feeling” with an early state of a child’s development. In the process of socialization the feeling of oneness with the world is replaced with one’s sense of identity, however, adults long to re-experience the primary “oceanic feeling.” The engravings on the memorial are often referred to as “the sea of names” and the dark reflective surface resembles a body of water. The transcendental power of the memorial unites those whose names are engraved on the wall with a grander scheme of events. The memorial seems to have the capacity to become an object upon which the “oceanic feeling” is projected and through which it is experienced.
An Assertion of Masculinity: The Flagpole and the Statue of the Three Servicemen

Wagner-Pacifi and Schwartz hold that Lin’s unconscious strategy was not to impose the feminine over the masculine but to deflect and displace the Vietnam experience providing it with a more universal meaning (389). Nonetheless, putting aside Lin’s intention, the disturbing awkwardness of the design of the wall led to adding a flagpole and the Statue of the Three Servicemen to the site. A study showed that at least 85% of veterans and nonveterans approved of adding the flagpole and the Statue; moreover, the majority of them wanted an inscription which would explain the purpose of the war (396).

The addition of a tall flagpole at the entrance of the memorial, an element of the Apollonian sky-cult, made the VVM resemble more traditional monuments. The dedication placed on its base reads: “THIS FLAG AFFIRMS THE PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM FOR WHICH THE VIETNAM VETERANS FOUGHT AND THEIR PRIDE IN HAVING SERVED UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES.” The dedication fails to specify what the “difficult circumstances” were, and thus it fails to provide the war with a meaningful definition.

The bronze Statue of the Three Soldiers, designed by Frederick Hart, is an ethnically diverse representation of American soldiers. The three men are Hispanic, white Caucasian, and African American. They also represent the three main branches of the services involved in Vietnam. The statue is put on a flat slab with no pedestal so visitors can look in the soldiers’ eyes. The soldiers are young and despite their different ethnic origin they resemble each other—all three look weary and dazed, as if suffering from war fatigue. The sculptor explained: “The contrast between the innocence of their youth and the weapons of war underscores the poignancy of their sacrifice. There is about them the physical contact and sense of unity that bespeaks the bonds of love and sacrifice that is the nature of men at war” (National Park Service leaflet). As the soldiers are squeezed on a narrow platform, with a wide park area in the background, the visitors may have an impression that the servicemen are lonely and that they can only rely on each other.

Hart aimed at rendering the idea of men’s fellowship forged in war extremities. Ironically, the final design of his statue which epitomized the idea of comrade-ship failed to restore the notions of heroism and combat glory. The “heroic Statue of Three Servicemen” came to be perceived as deeply anti-heroic (Bodnar 6). Charles L. Grinwold argues: “The soldiers seem to have just emerged from the trees and to be contemplating the names inscribed on the VVM. The look on their faces is not heroic” (710). Another critic notes: “Their military garb is realistically rendered, with guns slung over their shoulders and
ammunition around their waists, and their expressions are somehow bewildered and puzzled” (Sturken 125).

A long distance separating the wall and the statue makes them two different monuments with very little in common. Most veterans took an instant liking to the statue. They saw it as a tribute to their war combat, one they felt they deserved and had long waited for. Seeing the wall as a tribute to the fallen soldiers and the statue as a tribute to the veterans respectively, the conflict seems to have been resolved. Yet this division of symbolic labor only superficially mitigated the deep contradictions embodied in the memorial’s structure and the controversies over the Vietnam war.

**An Assertion of Traditional Femininity: the Vietnam Women’s Memorial or the Pietà**

The estimated number of women who served in Vietnam ranges from 4,000 to 15,000. Eight women died in the combat zone. All of them were nurses. (Vietnam Center and Archive online). The Vietnam Women’s Memorial, created by Glenna Goodacre, was unveiled on November 11, 1993 (Vietnam Women’s Memorial online). The monument echoes the Statue of the Three Soldiers: the three women represent different ethnicities, and they are portrayed in army uniforms, performing their duties. The central figure is embracing the body of a wounded soldier who is lying on her lap. Behind her back, there is a figure of another woman who is holding the sitting woman by the elbow. She is standing up straight with her head turned and her mouth open as if crying for help. The third woman is kneeling down, at the back of the two women, with a helmet on her knee. The three women personify the Biblical virtues of Love, Hope and Faith (Vietnam Women’s Memorial online). In comparison to the soldiers’ statue, the women’s memorial is similarly realistic but more expressive, showing both more feelings and arousing more emotions in the viewers.

The Vietnam Women’s Memorial is also a tribute to the tradition of the pietà, as it is its modern version—the woman mothering the suffering, bringing comfort in the last moments of a dying man’s life. The posture of the central figure represents feminine beauty in its very mother-like style. It is obvious that she is not holding a baby but a body of a soldier even if her back is bent in a manner of a mother nursing a child. Her facial expression resembles that of the Virgin

5 In the spring of 2008 at an exhibition in the Department of the Interior Museum a small replica of Michelangelo’s Pietà was juxtaposed with a replica of the Vietnam Women’s Memorial. A commentary read: “Glenna Goodacre [the designer of the memorial] was selected to develop her entry, three nurses and a wounded soldier. Her compositional model was Michelangelo’s great Renaissance masterpiece, the Pietà, Mary cradling the body of the dead Christ.”
Mary as portrayed in many sacral paintings. She is in great pain but, nonetheless, remains calm and quiet carrying on the role of care-giver. The figures show women performing different roles in the army and in society, but the focus is clearly placed on the woman holding a dying soldier. The Vietnam Women Memorial is a tribute to the traditional role of woman as mother and nurse.

It is worth noticing how femininity was asserted for the second time within the context of war, traditionally perceived as male. The message of the monument is easy to understand—in the ghastly reality of war, women were the source of hope, faith, and love. They showed a lot of inner strength which radiated onto the soldiers. They were also a source of support and comfort. The servicemen, though placed in close proximity to each other, remain separate and silent. The women, on the other hand, are totally preoccupied with their work and seem to be more related to each other and have more contact with the outside world. In comparison with the Three Soldiers’ Statue, the Women’s Memorial is, ironically, a more heroic tribute to the Vietnam War.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as an Emotional and Bodily Experience

The VVM, unlike many other pieces of commemorative art, has the capacity to make people respond and relate to it. Maya Lin intended for the visitors to experience the memorial “composed not as an unchanging monument, but as a moving composition, to be understood as we move into and out of it” (qtd in Howe 95). Most visitors to the memorial spend their time in front of the wall reading the names, touching the stone, taking pencil rubbings of some names, taking pictures, and leaving artifacts. The surface of the wall allows visitors to see their own reflection in the listing of the dead and establish a connection with them.

Visiting the memorial is an emotional experience which can also be related to what is generally assumed to be a female gender sensibility. Empathy, reciprocity, intimacy, and the ability to show and verbalize emotions are features traditionally attributed to women. A special form of emotionality and close interaction with the wall accompanying the veterans’ visit to the memorial enables them to establish and fully experience their veteran identity. It helps them to complete their veteran gestalt. For many veterans I met in Washington D.C. it was their first visit to the memorial. Some of them had postponed the visit because they did not feel ready for it. For all veterans the first visit was the most difficult one. It represented an experience they were afraid of: “First time is hard, second time not so hard, third, which happened last year, wasn’t hard at all”—one person told me. A veteran who came to the memorial for the third time said, “I came to Washington to talk to the veterans. Some of them are open
to talking to you, and some aren’t. And I can tell it still hurts me a little bit but I’m OK with that, but some guys are just...they are so hurt, they can’t even come here.”

The memorial also serves as a meeting ground; a place where veterans see each other on the occasion of a military reunion. Generally, reunions are more often attended by men than women. One obvious reason is that more men than women served in Vietnam, and despite the high levels of stress both genders experienced, it is men who were more exposed to war combat and its consequences. However, some researchers suggest that women cope better with PTSD than men thanks to their culturally acquired ability to show their emotions and verbalize them (Stanley 256). As one of the nurses explained: “I didn’t experience the worst kind of trauma because I had someone to verbalize with who had been in Vietnam also. This is the thing about nurses. They have nurse friends and they could tell how they felt and talk to [them], but the men didn’t have that” (qtd in Stanley 256).

Acknowledging the gender distinction in experiencing and expressing emotions, it is justified to argue that men, more than women, needed the official commemoration of the Vietnam War. They needed a meeting ground and a venting place for the difficult emotions they were not culturally allowed to show. It is justified to say that ex-soldiers have built around the memorial a therapeutic community or a self-help brotherhood to work through their trauma according to their own rules. Lin wanted her design to possess therapeutic quality and time showed that she achieved her goal:

Designing the piece I had asked myself “what is a memorial’s purpose?” And all I was saying in this piece is: the cost of war is these individuals and we have to remember them first. So it’s really the people, not the politics. ... And literally when you read a name or touch a name and the pain will come out, and I really did mean for people to cry. (Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision DVD).

Veterans’ accounts prove that controversy over the ambiguity of the memorial’s message has been eventually put to peace. One of my veteran interviewees said: “I think it [the wall] is beautiful. It’s...I don’t know how to put it...it’s a place to come, it kind of eases the pain. It’s a place to grieve, to say goodbye.”

Conclusions

It seems that at first veterans did not recognize, or were reluctant to admit, that the Vietnam War was different from other wars America fought and therefore it required a different form of commemoration. Submitting to the traditional code of remembrance which underscored the notion of heroism, many
veterans wanted to gain social recognition through the affirmation of their heroic actions. The detachment of the memorial from the national code of remembrance triggered a strong reaction of some veterans, a need to assert its national character. It is clear that the marginalized veterans quested for recognition of their war effort and its inclusion within the framework of the American public memory. Adopting a psychoanalytical perspective, we may conclude that their efforts were an attempt to deflect the threat of castration and to assert their masculinity.

The creator of the memorial saw the war as a non-heroic and costly endeavor and assumed that the veterans needed reconciliation with the past which could only be achieved through acceptance of loss and death. Lin consciously broke the national code of remembrance by giving her design an emotional and personal quality, making it a place of private mourning in the middle of the National Mall. Her initial design, accused of being “a black gash of shame,” brought subconscious connotations with castration and the submission of the masculine to the feminine. The design was criticized and changed with the addition of a flagpole and the Statue of the Three Servicemen. Those new elements made the memorial assume a more national character, locating it within a specific historical context but failed to provide it with a “proper” heroic interpretation and assure its place among the most important and glorious events in American history.

Despite the fact that the Statue of the Three Servicemen was originally conceived as the assertion of the “masculine” American mission in Vietnam, its final design bore no glorious overtones and was seen as a bleak portrayal of the consequences of war on ordinary people. In fact, the Vietnam Women’s Memorial was more representative of the official culture of commemoration in terms of its heroism and war service glorification. The memorial subscribed to the traditional way of portraying women and asserted their role of mothers and carers but also American soldiers.

The interplay between the representations of masculinity and femininity in the creation of the VVM and its later additions brought paradoxical results. It seems that every attempt to assert masculinity, strength, and heroism in the process of the Vietnam War commemoration resulted in emphasizing femininity, empathy, and intimacy. This struggle demonstrated the inappropriateness of the traditional masculine code of remembrance in case of a lost war commemoration for commemorating a lost war. In search for comfort and consolation Americans turned to womanhood. Memory of the past has often been associated with womanhood as women play the role of keepers and mediums of memory (Gillis 10). It is women: mothers, wives, lovers and friends, who mourn men killed in wars and do not let the memory of them die by transmitting it to the next generations. The VVM does not attempt to provide answers to the universal questions of the
meaning of sacrifice and death. It rather creates a space where the traumatic experience of war can be mediated, and painful emotions can be re-lived and accepted. The therapeutic quality of the memorial distinguishes it from other war monuments.

The female gender quality of the memorial is perhaps best expressed in its ability to appeal to the sensitivity of ordinary people and make them relate to the event it commemorates. The memorial is also attributed healing powers due to its ability to evoke emotions and stimulate people’s responses. The VVM is a successful exercise in communalizing grief. For the veterans it is a meeting place and a venting ground. The most striking and unusual feature of the VVM is that men are not afraid to cry there since they have been given the right to weep and seek comfort in the network of social belonging. This stands as proof that the memorial has the power to reach unconscious identifications and, by engaging them in a dialogue between individual, historical and gender narratives, to bring repressed emotions to the surface. As one of the Vietnam veterans told me: “I like it, it’s a healing place, it does what monuments are supposed to do.”

**Works Cited**


