

EXPRESSION ORALE/ ANGLAIS

TERRITORY AND MEMORY

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The document I have chosen is the first one because it best illustrates my notion "Territory and memory". People have always been seeking for new territories leaving theirs behind.

The document under study is a picture depicting an immigrant family on the dock at Ellis Island, looking at New York's skyline while waiting the ferry to take them there, in 1925.

These immigrants went to the USA through Ellis Island, a historical site that opened in 1892 as an immigration station, a purpose it served for more than 60 years until it closed in 1954. Located at the mouth of Hudson River between New York and New Jersey, Ellis Island saw millions of newly arrived immigrants pass through its doors. In fact, it has been estimated that close to 40 percent of all current U.S. citizens can trace at least one of their ancestors to Ellis Island. When Ellis Island opened, a great change was taking place in [U.S. immigration](#). Fewer arrivals were coming from northern and western Europe—Germany, Ireland, Britain and the Scandinavian countries—as more and more immigrants poured in from southern and eastern Europe. Among this new generation were [Jews](#) escaping from political and economic oppression in czarist Russia and eastern Europe and Italians escaping poverty in their country. There were also Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Serbs, Slovaks and Greeks, along with non-Europeans from [Syria](#), Turkey and Armenia. The reasons they left their homes in the Old World included war, drought, famine and religious persecution, and all had hopes for greater opportunity in the New World. After an arduous sea voyage, immigrants arriving at Ellis Island were tagged with information from their ship's registry; they then waited on long lines for medical and legal inspections to determine if they were fit for entry into the United States. From 1900 to 1914—the peak years of Ellis Island's operation—an average of 1,900 people passed through the immigration station every day. Most successfully passed through in a matter of hours, but others could be detained for days or weeks. Many immigrants remained in [New York](#), while others traveled by barge to railroad stations in Hoboken or Jersey City, [New Jersey](#), on their way to destinations across the country. Passage of the Immigrant Quota Act of 1921 and the [National Origins Act](#) of 1924, which limited the number and nationality of immigrants allowed into the United States, effectively ended the era of mass immigration into New York. At this point, the smaller number of immigrants

began to be processed on their arriving ships, with Ellis Island serving primarily as a temporary detainment center.

To conclude, Ellis Island, was once a territory that welcomed a huge number of immigrants coming from all parts of the world resulting in having good memories for those who were accepted and among them the immigrant family on the dock at Ellis Island. That place was turning point in their life.