WRITING AN ABSTRACT

Before you start to work on your seminar paper or your final thesis, you should write a brief "abstract."

This abstract should include:

• **Tentative title of your project**

• **Research question (a thesis statement)**

State your question/s that your research should answer. A research question should look like:
"This paper/MA thesis analyzes ….." or "The following thesis will show that …" or "In my thesis, I will analyze/show/investigate how/in what ways……"

This research question is the "topic sentence" of your whole project.

• **Methodology used**

• **Primary Texts used**

Here is a model abstract. It is an abstract for a conference paper.

Abstract of Proposed Paper:

Traveling Ghosts: The Performance of Memory in Ethnic American Fiction

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My paper intends to focus on a genre in American literature which Kathleen Brogan has called "the story of cultural haunting." Investigating how ethnicity is constructed through the performance of ethnic memory, I will show that the figures of ghosts in recent American ethnic texts function as enigmatic figures of travel that connect the present to the past. The tradition of ghosting is related to a re-creation of ethnic identity through an imaginative recuperation of the past that makes this new version of the past available to the present. Looking at Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*, and Cristina García's *Dreaming in Cuban*, I will approach the story of cultural haunting as a transethnic phenomenon

that is concerned with questions of cultural transmission and ethnic transformation. Ghosts, I want to argue, figure as powerful literary figures that embody and perform ethnic memory. They serve as metaphors for historical loss and obliterated transhemispheric history. Yet, they also constitute vehicles for recovery and cultural renewal.