

Perspectives

When read together, the works reflect some broader developments, namely:

- A changing idea of memory, focusing less on the preservation and representation of the past and more on performing memory in the present.
- Changing modes of engaging with literature, focusing increasingly on reading as participation across different media platforms.
- A development where intermediality in literature becomes more widespread and less associated with radical avant-garde or experimental aesthetics.

About Sara Tanderup

Sara Tanderup is MA in Comparative Literature. She produced her PhD dissertation at the Department of Communication and Culture, Aarhus University, where she has been part of the Center for Literature between Media. Her research focus is on cultural memory, intermediality and materialist approaches to literature.



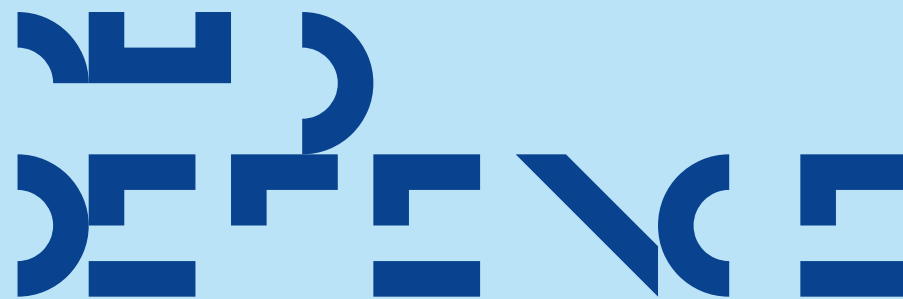
Time and place for the defence

2 December, 13.15 – 16.00 at Langelandsgades Kaserne, building 1584/room 124

Contact

Sara Tanderup
Email: litst@cc.au.dk
Tlf. 22768794

Aarhus University
School of Communication and Culture
Langelandsgade 139
Jens Chr. Skous Vej 2 og 4 (bygning 1485 og 1481)
8000 Aarhus C



"SOMETHING TO HOLD ON TO..."



PhD Dissertation by Sara Tanderup



AARHUS UNIVERSITET

"SOMETHING TO HOLD ON TO..." REPRESENTING MEMORY AND REMEMBERING LITERATURE IN INTER-MEDIAL LITERARY WORKS 1978-2014

Summary of the main points of PhD dissertation "Something to hold on to" Representing Memory and Remembering Literature in Intermedial Literary Works 1978-2014 by Sara Tanderup, Department of Communication and Culture, Aarhus University. The dissertation focuses on intermedial strategies of representing and performing memory in selected literary works, spanning from neo-avantgarde montages from the 1970s to contemporary book objects and transmedial children's stories.

A Comparative Approach

The dissertation analyses works by Alexander Kluge, W.G. Sebald, Jonathan Safran Foer, Anne Carson, Mette Hegnhøj, J.J. Abrams and Doug Dorst, and William Joyce. These works emerge out of different traditions and are usually read separately. Tanderup, however, presents a comparative approach, focusing on how they all employ intermedial strategies to reflect on the status of literature as a mediator of cultural memory. Thus, the works are read as reactions to the modern media development, reflecting how literature and memory are affected by various kinds of new media.

Memory and Media

Methodologically, the dissertation combines the perspectives of cultural memory studies,

represented by Andreas Huyssen intermediality studies, represented by W.J.T. Mitchell and Irina Rajewsky, and materialist literary analysis, represented by N. Katherine Hayles and Bill Brown. Combining these perspectives makes it possible to read the works with an emphasis on the connection between their formal, medial and material dimensions and their thematic pre-occupation with memory.

Text and Image

The dissertation is divided into two parts. Part I focuses on image-texts by Kluge, Sebald and Foer. These works are read as reactions to what Mitchell calls the pictorial turn in modern culture, highlighting what happens to the representation of history in a culture that is dominated by images. A development is traced from Kluge's neo-avantgarde montages, which represent and revise political history, to Sebald's photo-novels, focusing on representing individual memory, or the absence of memory and to Foer, who uses intermedial strategies to produce intimate close-ups of history.

Books Between Media

This development towards a more intimate approach to the past is also reflected in part II, which focuses on the book objects and transmedial stories by Carson, Hegnhøj, Abrams and Dorst, and Joyce. These works all resist (and explore) processes of digitalization by experimenting with the material or 'bookish' aspects of literature. Tanderup points to a tension in the works between, on the one hand, nostalgically celebrating the book, and the culture associated with it, as a thing of the past, and, on the other hand, transforming the book, presenting it as a part of the modern media ecology.

Conclusion

The dissertation presents a development from works that focus on images of history and engage in re-presenting or deconstructing these images – towards works that focus on individual memory and on the book as an intimate thing of the past. However, this development is complicated since the works all navigate between the logics of images and things, and between intimacy and distance in relation to the past. Furthermore, they all encourage processes of participatory reading and remembering. Thus, they do not merely look back, but also reflect changes in how we read and remember in the present.