

Entangled Memory and Historical Narratives in Intersemiotic Space: Dynamics and Interpretation

Anneli Mihkelev

Abstract: Historical narratives play a great role in our cultural memory, art, and identity. Both author and reader use intersemiotic space to create or interpret the meaning of a text, using sociocultural context, cultural memory, and acts of remembering, including their own individual cultural memories. The concept of “entangled memory” refers to the complex relationships between different components in this space, and thus constitutes a plural phenomenon connecting different interpretations of historical narratives in different contexts of time and space. This paper’s first aim is to analyse how different constructions of time (historical, present, mythical, and fictional) and space (geographical, mythical, and fictional) interact in historical and mythical narratives, and how these narratives influence collective cultural memory and identity. Another important question is how collective and individual cultural memories become entangled with historical and mythical narratives and contemporary culture. The second purpose is to analyse the mechanisms of intersemiosis in such narratives, focusing on works from Estonian and Finnish literature. Sofi Oksanen’s novel *Purge* represents historical events in Estonia after World War II, and Anton Hansen Tammsare’s play *Judith* interprets the apocryphal Old Testament story of Judith in a new way, connecting Judith’s story with that of Salome and the modernist discourse from the beginning of the 20th century. The final section analyses how the meanings of the narration and motif of Shakespeare’s “Hamlet” have changed through the centuries in different temporal and

spatial contexts in Estonian culture.

Keywords: entangled memory, historical narrative, mythical narrative, cultural identity, contemporary literature, Estonian literature, Finnish literature, intersemiosis

纠缠的记忆与符际空间的历史叙述：动力学与阐释

安内莉·米克列夫

摘要: 历史叙述在我们的文化记忆、艺术与身份中扮演了非常重要的角色。作者与读者用符际空间，利用社会文化语境、文化记忆和回忆行为（包括他们的个人文化记忆）去创造或阐释文本的意义。“纠缠的记忆”是指这一空间中不同成分之间的复杂关系构成了不同的现象，并将不同时空语境下的历史叙述连接起来。本文首先分析不同的时间（包括历史的、现在的、神话的、和虚构的）与空间的（包括地理的、神话的与虚构的）建构如何在历史与神话叙述中相互作用，以及这些叙述如何影响集体文化记忆和身份。另一个重要问题是集体和个人文化记忆如何被卷入历史、神话叙述以及当代文化。本文的第二个目的是通过研究爱沙尼亚和芬兰的文学作品来分析该类叙述中的符号间性机制。索菲·奥克萨宁的小说《清洗》再现了爱沙尼亚二战后的历史事件，安东·汉森·塔姆瑟尔的戏剧《朱迪思》用一种新的方式重释了《旧约》中朱迪思的故事，将朱迪思的故事与萨洛米的故事以及20世纪初的现代主义话语联系起来。本文最后一部分分析了几个世纪以来，莎士比亚的《哈姆雷特》的叙述意义和主题在爱沙尼亚的文化中，在不同的时间与空间的语境下发生了怎样的变化。

关键词: 纠缠的记忆，历史叙述，神话叙述，文化身份，当代文学，爱沙尼亚文学，芬兰文学，符号间性

DOI: 10.13760/b.cnki.sam.201601003

There are several definitions of narrative. I will deal with narrative as a cultural phenomenon that constructs and arranges the world created by people or by works of

□ 符号与传媒 (12)

art (novels, paintings, movies, plays, etc.), and that includes story. Narrative is a social phenomenon where the events of story involve “showing or telling [...] and the mode selected for that to take place”(Cobley, 2001, p. 6). In other words, narrative is “a communicative relation which is often conflated with straightforward understandings of what story is”(Cobley, 2001, pp. 2 – 3). According to Toolan, “narrative has a function which relates to the type and extent of narrative progression. In short, narrative sets in train a motivated chain of events perceived as such by the reader/listener”(Doloughan, 2011, p. 11).

Literature can be one of the tools with which societies construct and interpret history and their identities. (Assmann, 2006) All these constructions are grand narratives in the context of postmodernism. Contemporary literature and narratives have the same or at least a similar function; but in the postmodern era they are used in different ways. One literary work can use different narratives (or small narratives) side by side; these may be diffuse and work in different ways. The main question concerns how these smaller narratives work within a literary text. Do they play with history or do they represent real history? Do they destroy or reinforce the grand narratives?

The meanings of a narrative depends on both the reader’s interpretation and the interaction among different components of the text (small narratives, fragments, symbols, etc.). The process of constituting meaning occurs in the dialogical relationships among author, text, and reader, taking place in the intersemiotic space that includes different spheres around the text: the social meaning, different texts, external reality, and collective cultural memory. Both author and reader use the intersemiotic space to create or interpret the text, bringing to bear their own individual cultural memories, which exist not only in verbal language. Interpreting a text requires a sociocultural context, cultural memory, and acts of remembering. At the same time, “acts of remembering are a phenomenon of discourse, their objectifications are a semiotic phenomenon”(Feindt et al., 2014, p. 31). These objectifications designate as mnemonics are those signs that refer to any socially relevant figuration of memory. (ibid.) According to Juri Lotman:

The third function of language is the function of memory. The text is not only the generator of new meaning, but also a condenser of cultural memory. A text has the capacity to preserve the memory of its previous contexts [...]. The sum of the contexts in which a given text acquires interpretation and which are in a

way incorporated in it may be termed the text's memory. This meaning-space created by the text around itself enters into relationship with the cultural memory (tradition) already formed in the consciousness of the audience. (1990, p. 18)

This suggests that the intersemiotic space, or meaning-space, includes multiple memories and the research concept of “entangled memory” incorporates the relationships between different components in the intersemiotic space. The concept of entangled memory, according to Feindt et al. ,

brings to the fore the entangledness of acts of remembering [...]. Every act of remembering inscribes an individual in multiple social frames. This polyphony entails the simultaneous existence of concurrent interpretations of the past. In a diachronic perspective, memory is entangled in the dynamic relation between single acts of remembering and changing mnemonic patterns. (2014, p. 24)

I would argue that narrative (especially the grand narrative) is very similar to myth; historical and mythical narratives, in particular, work as myths in some ways. I would suggest that myth and national identity work in a similar way and are sometimes intertwined: The purpose of national identity is also to create a specific world, the national space, where we can find the unique spirit and character of the nation. The specific national world is closed, sometimes also small, and the story of the nation extends far back in history. At the same time, national identity contains not one but several myths, which we call national myths. These are the narratives or “stories about who and what we are and where we come from” (Lukas, 2007, p. 75). These national myths also appear in different literary texts. In the view of Stuart Hall, one aspect of national identity is the narrative of the nation that exists in national narratives in literature, in media, and in everyday culture. It creates a connection between stories, landscapes, historical events, national symbols, etc. (1996, pp. 613 – 615). Hall assigns literature a very important role in the creation of national identity.

Clearly, Hall is right to stress the major role literary texts play in the formation of national and cultural identity. Estonian literature is quite young, and most of its early texts are connected with the construction of a national identity. For example,

□ 符号与传媒 (12)

the main aim of the epic poem “Kalevipoeg” by Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald (1857 – 1861) was to construct an Estonian national and cultural identity. This helps a society to create its cultural memory, because some historical pictures are reinforced in memory through literature. Such constructions are grand narratives in the context of postmodernism. According to the concept of entangled memory, which posits memory as a plural phenomenon, “a mnemonic signifier is the juncture of concurrent interpretations with an unlimited variety of possible constellations” (Feindt et al. , 2014, p. 32).

Contemporary literature and narratives have the same or at least a similar function, but in the postmodern era these narratives are used in different ways. One literary work can use different narratives (or smaller narratives) side by side, which are sometimes diffuse and work in different ways. The main question is how these smaller narratives work in a literary text. Do they play with history or do they represent real history? Do they destroy or reinforce grand narratives? The meaning of a narrative depends on interpretation and remembering by readers, and on interactions between the different components of the text (smaller narratives, fragments, symbols, etc.).

I . Sofi Okasnen’s Novel *Purge*

Sofi Oksanen (b. 1977) is a Finnish writer with Estonian roots, whose novel *Purge*, based on a play of the same title (2008, in Estonian 2009), has been very successful internationally. It has been translated into more than 20 languages and staged in drama theatres in Estonia, Finland, New York, and London and also as an opera in Helsinki. The film based on the novel premiered in August 2012. *Purge* presents historical events in Estonia after World War II, in addition to events in the 1990s. The two female protagonists of the novel are of different generations. The author presents their tragic life stories while also interpreting historical motifs that exist in our cultural memory. It is paradoxical that although the novel, play, and opera are very popular in many countries, the reception in Estonia has been lukewarm.

The novel *Purge* begins with a page from Hans Pekk’s diary, making him the narrator. Hans Pekk is one of the protagonists, and he lives in a special little room, a hiding place. The diary page is written in May, 1949, which leads the reader into

the historical narrative, a great historical narrative in the context of Estonian history, about the freedom of Estonia and its Soviet occupation after World War II. The year 1949 was the time of Stalin in the Soviet Union, when Estonia had lost its freedom and the borders were closed.

Hans Pekk lives in his hidden room and does not know what has happened during the past five years. He writes in his diary: “What’s keeping the English? And what about America? Everything’s balanced on a knife edge—nothing is certain” (Oksanen, 2011, p. 12), touching painful memories in readers who remember that time. It is possible that some readers would read it as a historical novel or as a novel about a historical trauma.

The next chapter also presents historical time, but in contemporary history, when Estonia regained its freedom in 1992. This was a turbulent time in the young Estonian Republic, when crime increased and people did not feel safe. The discourse of fear is permanently captured in historical narratives and stories: Aliide fears thieves, Zara fears her captors and violence because she was a sex slave in Berlin, and her mother in Siberia, Vladivostok, fears black Volga cars, because these were the vehicles of the Soviet Union’s security agents who arrested and abducted people. Both women are also victims of sexual violence. The fear and violence connect the historical times in these stories, and fear also plays a significant role in the historical narratives in Oksanen’s novel.

Another discourse that plays an important role in these stories is betrayal: Zara’s friend Oksana has betrayed her, and Aliide has betrayed her sister Ingel and her daughter Linda, both of whom get deported to Siberia. Betrayal is a major activator of events in these stories and narratives.

The text of the novel presents non-linear time: the 1940s and 1950s alternate with the 1990s, until finally all timelines connect at the end of the novel. It is possible to read the novel as an adventure story or a melodrama. According to Eneken Laanes (2012), “the melodramatic elements of the text, in aspiring towards an unequivocal moral interpretation of the world, construct a world of perpetrators and victims”. However, the melodramatic and thriller elements are not dominant in the novel. The narrative begins and ends with Hans Pekk’s diary, and at the end of the novel several fictional documents represent those of the Soviet security agency (NKVD). Although these are fictional documents depicting fictional situations, they

□ 符号与传媒 (12)

create an impression that all these events are real. Oksanen plays with fictional and real worlds, imitating the real world and using fiction to talk about real historical events, events that were possible in the context of national history. Despite being a novel, it describes our real history and can be read as a historical novel.

Another important element that makes the historical narrative dominant is the use of quotes from Estonian poet Paul-Eerik Rummo at the beginning of each chapter. Rummo was a major innovator in Estonian poetry during the 1960s. These verses by Rummo are from the collection *Sender's Address and Other Poems*, 1968 – 1972, which was banned for a long time during the Soviet period; some of these poems were published in 1985, but the full collection only came out in 1989.

In the film version of *Purge*, which premiered in August, 2012, the emphasis is different. The film begins with the episode where Zara escapes, runs into the woods, and collapses in front of Aliide's house. The film also ends with Zara, now smiling as she leaves Aliide's house with her money and passport in her hand. She is happy, free, and safe, while Aliide's house, full of dead bodies, is on fire with smoke visible in the distance. This scene gives the film narrative a different and far more melodramatic meaning than that of the novel.

The story of Zara shows the violence in Berlin at the beginning of the 1990s. The film combines the memories of the two protagonists, Aliide's memories of the 1940s, and Zara's of the beginning of the 1990s. The main message of the film is opposition to violence, especially sexual violence against women. However, the most important elements in this novel are not the historical facts but rather the feeling of horror and fear characteristic of that time. This is why the scenes of violence do not seem exaggerated: they are not presented as isolated acts but rather within an atmosphere of fear. People who live amid violence and permanent fear may behave unpredictably, and this situation is also a touchstone for how strong a person is. The protagonist Aliide was not strong enough during the time of Stalin, but her character develops during the story and she is strong by the time she meets Zara and her captors. The episode in which Paša and Lavrenti (Lavrenti is also Beria's first name, and symbolically connects the different historical narratives) come to Aliide's house to catch Zara is very significant in Oksanen's novel:

There was a knock at the door. Commanding blows. The blow of a man used to giving commands. [...] A man greeted her. Behind him stood another man,

older, who also greeted her, and Aliide smelled the scent of a KGB officer. Aliide started to breathe through her mouth. She knew men like these. Men with that kind of posture, men who know how to punish a woman, and they were here to get a woman, and punish her. People with an insolent bearing, who smile broadly with their cap visors level, knowing that no one can deny them what they want. The kind of people who wear boots to trample anyone who gets in their way. (2011, pp. 229 – 230)

Aliide no longer experiences fear in this situation, because her body has “got old enough. Old enough that no one would ever bother her the way they did in the town hall” (p. 229).

Historical narratives play a major role in our cultural memory and art, and also in our identity. Oksanen’s novel reminds us of our tragic history, activating our memory, but at the same time destroying our great national narrative, which was established after World War II. As Laanes wrote:

The debate on *Purge* brought to the fore the differences in the interpretation of World War II and its aftermath in post-Soviet Estonia, not only between the ethnic communities in the country, but within the Estonian community itself, in particular with regard to whether or not the memories of ethnic minorities deserve a place in the Estonian collective memory. (2012, p. 20)

The reception of *Purge* has been contradictory in Estonia. Some critics believe that Oksanen shows life in the Soviet Union as too tragic and too full of fear, that it was more varied, not merely full of violence. Sirje Olesk has compared *Purge* to an ancient Greek tragedy: a great story about love, passion, betrayal, and redemption written in a somewhat high style. (2010, p. 477) The protagonist Aliide also represents the typical Estonian peasant who loves her land and farm and woods (Olesk, 2010, p. 480), the type of protagonist who belongs in our grand national narrative.

Oksanen’s novel offers several possibilities for interpretation and for reading: it does not provide final meanings, and the work falls into the serious historical genre, while some aspects make it possible to read it as a melodramatic story or thriller. It is a good example of how different interpretations of the same mnemonic attribute changing meanings to a text.

II . Anton Hansen-Tammsaare's *Judith*

An other example of how historical and mythical narratives are used in contemporary culture is Tammsaare's play *Judith*. Anton Hansen-Tammsaare (1878 – 1940) was a major Estonian epic writer and playwright. *Judith* (1921) interprets the apocryphal story of Judith from the Old Testament in a new way, connecting it with that of Salome and the modernist discourse from the beginning of the 20th century. Tammsaare's *Judith* has attained a different meaning from that of the original text based on an apocryphal story. It is significant that every director has given his or her own interpretation of the apocryphal narrative when staging Tammsaare's play. Although not a historical story, it contains historical elements from the first century BCE, and it is also noteworthy that the text, although not canonical, is connected with the Old Testament.

Judith tells the story of a hero who brings freedom to the Jews in Petulia. The story of Judith belongs to the grand narrative, as do most literary works based on original apocryphal stories. The mixture of history and apocrypha makes Tammsaare's play meaningful for the present epoch. Other examples of this mixture are Friedrich Hebbel's drama *Judith* (1840) and paintings by Botticelli, Mantegna, Michelangelo, and Rubens. Tammsaare gave new meaning to the old story by focusing on the psychology of Judith as a woman in the context of Freudian psychoanalysis and biology, both of which, in their way, were grand narratives at the beginning of the 20th century. In the play, Tammsaare destroys the grand narrative of Judith, and presents her as a passionate woman in love who acts on her passion, using yet another narrative for that deconstruction. In the postmodern era, Tammsaare's play has been produced more playfully and liberally than in the 1920s. The question of whether Judith is a hero or just a passionate murderer lives on. We can ask the same question about Oksanen's *Purge*: is Aliide Truu a victim, a murderer, or a hero? The answer depends on interpretation.

III . The Dialogue with *Hamlet*

The motive and narration of *Hamlet* has been much discussed globally. Although the meaning of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* has changed through the centuries in different temporal and spatial contexts, we can still ask what *Hamlet* means today. According

to *The Oxford Dictionary of Allusion*, the connotation of the character Hamlet concerns doubt and oratory, an allusion to “someone who talks at length, expressing anxieties, doubts, or unhappiness” (Delahunty et al., 2001, p. 288). Let us consider, then, the different meanings of the narration and motif of *Hamlet* in Estonian culture.

As noted earlier, Paul-Erik Rummo had a major influence on the 1960s Estonian poetry. His poem “Hamleti laulud” (Hamlet’s Songs) was published in 1964 in his second collection of poetry, *Tule ikka mu rõõmude juurde* (*Always Come to My Joys*). This poem represented an innovation in Estonian literature and (choral) music at the beginning of the 1960s, and became a prologue to new developments in Estonian theatre in the second half of the 1960s. Rummo’s play *Tuhkatriinumäng* (*The Cinderella Game*, 1969), which alludes to Prince Hamlet, is a pivotal play in the development of Estonian drama (q. v. Kruuspere, 2006). Luule Epner has pointed out the key elements of Estonian drama in the 1960s: play, myths, especially literary myths, and ritual. The most significant mythical and symbolic figures were Antigone and Hamlet, but Hamlet became the most important. (Epner, 1988, pp. 170 – 176) Consequently, Hamlet has been an influential motif in Estonian literature and culture, and Rummo’s text forms the centre around, which not only written texts revolve but also cultural texts such as theatre performances and music.

Rummo’s poem refers to the famous monologue in *Hamlet* (Shakespeare, 2006):

To be, or not to be, that is the question;
 Whether ’tis nobler in the mind to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
 And by opposing end them. (3: 1: 284 – 285)

Prince Hamlet faces a complicated situation in which there is no good solution, and considers what to do: to rebel or conform. His existential question (q. v. Bruster, 2007, p. 17) has inspired several Estonian poets and writers, as has existentialism. According to Rein Veidemann:

In the 20th century, many writers have influenced the development of existentialist philosophy and they in turn had an influence on the Estonian

□ 符号与传媒 (12)

literature of the 1950s and 1960s. [...] Existentialism found an especially strong resonance in Estonian literature in the second half of the 1960s. It was promoted by the absurdity of the whole Soviet life. (2000, p. 50)

The validity of this statement is borne out by a number of literary works. In terms of Estonian history, we can also ask where the boundary lies between adaptation and conformity, and between adaptation and rebellion. It is easy to understand why existentialism was an important philosophical trend in Estonian literature in the 1960s. At the end of 1968, controversy even arose regarding the “suitability” of existentialism for Soviet society, with Rummo’s play *Tuhkatriinumäng* (*The Cinderella Game*, 1969) taken as an illustration of “the fundamental questions of existentialist philosophy”(Veidemann, 2000, p. 50).

Rummo’s poem “Hamlet’s Songs” reflects a number of influences. The translation of modern European and American literary works had an effect on Estonian literature in the 1960s, the time of the political “thaw”. The 1960s generation was exposed to several important contemporary theories, including existentialism. Several young writers systematically undermined the Soviet regime in their work. In this case, there is a similarity between existential and romantic rebellion. While many Eastern European nations were trying to take control of their destinies and attain freedom during this epoch, Rummo’s poem was actually an echo of romanticism. A similar situation, although necessarily hidden, existed in Estonia and other Eastern European countries in the 1960s. Romanticism was important because it indicated that it was possible to adapt to certain situations only to a point. Once a particular invisible line was crossed, revolt would follow. Romanticism cultivates continual non-adaptability, a continual negation of existence, and is an appropriate basis for innovation and for the artist to rebel against (political) reality.

This literary rebellion in Estonian literature in the 1960s had a political character; it fused with several local tendencies and Western European ideas, although these ideas were translated and adapted to the local culture and conditions. It is interesting and paradoxical that Estonian existentialism was more influenced by Camus’ ideas than by Sartre’s, because in the Western European tradition, Camus is considered less political than Sartre, and superficially, it seemed more innocent. At the same time, official criticism reduced the influence of existentialism in Estonian literature. The Soviet system provoked situations where different names had to be

adopted, and if one wanted to speak about existentialism, a substitution was needed. In Soviet poetics, true ideas and thoughts were hidden between the lines. (Velsker, 2001, pp. 423 – 424)

Rummo and other Estonian poets adapted to the surrounding reality while attempting to change it using the artistic worlds they created, which were based on personal and historical memory and the existential rebellion. Rummo focused on the idea of freedom, which mattered more to him than any risk or adaptation. Personal and social motifs and interests are connected in Rummo's poetry, and his own pain represents the pain of all nations. The historical and political situation in Estonia was, for many centuries, very similar to that in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (trans. 2006), represented in the First Folio's phrase about Denmark being a prison. The dialogue between Hamlet and his friends Guildenstern and Rosencrantz before the players give the performance is particularly telling.

ROSENCRANTZ: [...] the world's grown honest.

HAMLET: Then is doomsday near—but your news is not true. But, in
the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?
(Shakespeare, 2006, 2: 2: 254 – 255)

Folio-only passages of *Hamlet* contain the famous lines about Denmark and prison which explains the word “true”:

HAMLET: [...] Let me question more in particular. What have you, my
good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune that she sends
you to prison hither?

GUILDENSTERNE: Prison, my lord?

HAMLET: Denmark's a prison.

ROSINCRANCE: Then is the world one. (2: 2: 466)

This dialogue, especially the Folio-only passage, characterises a totalitarian society such as the Soviet Union, Soviet Estonia, and other Eastern European countries or the Russian Empire (q. v. Thompson & Taylor, 2006, pp. 115 – 122). One of the best examples of *Hamlet* as a symbol of political resistance is the banned novel *Doctor Zhivago* (1957) by Boris Pasternak (1890 – 1960). The novel ends with the poem “Hamlet” where the poetic “ego” of Pasternak identifies with the destiny and mission of both Hamlet and Christ. (q. v. Pärli, 1999, p. 558)

□ 符号与传媒 (12)

The 1978 novel of Estonian writer Jaan Kross (b. 1920) titled *Keisri hull* (*The Czar's Madman*) implicitly plays with the motif and narration of *Hamlet*: the novel's protagonist Timotheus von Bock is “declared mad for criticising the Czarist regime, a fate which also befell dissidents in the Soviet times” (Kronberg, 2005, p. 68). Kross does not directly reference Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, but both literary works contain similar conflicts and motives of madness, non-madness, and/or pseudo-madness. Mardi Valgemäe notes that Kross plays with Soviet censorship: the plot of *The Czar's Madman* appears to be about the Russian Empire in the 19th century while actually referencing the 20th century Soviet regime. The novel's protagonist Jakob uses a similar scheme in his diary: he writes about the Russian romantic poet Zhukovsky when actually concentrating on the life of Timotheus von Bock. (Valgemäe, 2005, p. 74) Kross's novel is an apposite political allegory which also uses the motif and narration of *Hamlet* to indicate the mad or schizophrenic situation that may lead to madness.

The first strophe of Rummo's poem “Hamlet's Songs” (trans., 2006) establishes a dangerous and threatening atmosphere: something is ominous, and nature creates a tangible feeling of fear. The sawgrass and a child who has injured his hand on the sawgrass represent that situation; it is an inexplicable feeling. The atmosphere is quite similar to that of Shakespeare's play:

The sea withdraws into itself. It is ebb tide.
On the dunes a streak of storm-foam fades.

Listen: what is the breeze rustling,
Ominous and lurking?

Sawgrass, oh friend, sawgrass.
And gathering before us a cloud-mass. (p. 8)

The next lines of the poem introduce an unexpected contrast:

a couple of lovers who run fearless
along the beach, barefoot,
barefoot and in their veins the windwine—
Sawgrass, oh friend, sawgrass. (ibid.)

The lovers express positive and optimistic emotions in the poem; they do not

fear the stormy sea and cutting grass, although these are dangerous:

All those who wish to remain children
 hoping that the cloud, the large black one,
 never touches their love, —
 [...]
 for a moment heaven got mixed up with earth
 for a moment I understood: no longer
 can I stand hesitating and silent where one should
 simply cry the bad into the good... (pp. 8 – 9)

The second part of the song sounds like an answer to Shakespeare's protagonist Hamlet:

Yes, to be, to be, certainly to be
 [...]
 and from the scabbard of doubts and boredom
 [...]
 to draw the sword, when meanness and stupidity
 [...]
 threaten to drown my childish childhood streams
 [...]
 in the mud of deceptions. (p. 9)

Between these lines above, a line in brackets and italics (q. v. also Rummo, 1964, p. 62) repeat as a refrain:

(Ah, only one lap, only one lap on which to rest my head!) (p. 9)

The refrain probably alludes to the tense, contradictory dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia in the second scene in the third act of Shakespeare's play (2006):

HAMLET: Lady, shall I lie in you lap?
 OPHELIA: No, my lord.
 HAMLET: Do you think I meant country matters?
 OPHELIA: I think nothing, my lord. (2006, 3: 2: 304 – 305)

Although there is a dialogue between these texts of Rummo and Shakespeare,

□ 符号与传媒 (12)

their meanings are opposite. Rummo's text (trans., 2006) sounds like a hippy poem from the USA or Western Europe in the mid-1950s to the 1960s, with the last strophe intensifying its anti-violence or anti-war stance:

Then to be, and at the same time to know
that life is not our struggle, to know
that what is coming is greater than me
and also greater than my enemy. Then to be,
and at the same time
to think of the children yet unborn whose laughter
destroys the swords of both of us. (pp. 9 - 10)

It seems the main idea of this poem is “make love, not war” or, as in Frank Sinatra's 1960 song “Let's Fall in Love”, “to be or not to be, let our hearts discover”. Rummo's poem was a new approach to the anti-war topic in the Soviet context, because the idea of love and children expresses the main idea of the poem. Rummo brought more humanity and brightness to the poetry of Soviet Estonia, and expressed the influence of Western European culture.

The composer Veljo Tormis set Rummo's poem as a choral work entitled “The Song of Hamlet” in 1965. Tormis used the principle of two choruses: one expressing nature as a background element and the other expressing Hamlet's thoughts (Kuusk, 2000, p. 120). The music and text present a dialogue between nature and humankind, and Rummo's poetic “ego” identifies with Hamlet in the poem. There is a similarity between Rummo's and Pasternak's poems. Rummo's poem also influenced Estonian theatre, for example, in the performance “Hamlet's Songs” directed by Mati Unt and staged on April 14, 1978, which dealt not only with Rummo's works but Estonian poetry from 1960 to 1970. It is significant that the motif and narration of *Hamlet* became a symbol connecting different Estonian poets and poems, yet the title of the performance refers specifically to Rummo's poem. This is an instance of an ambivalent play on the motif of Hamlet, and we can ask whether it is a dialogue with Shakespeare's text, with Rummo's text, or possibly with both. What is certain, however, is that *Hamlet* always exists at least symbolically and as a mnemonic in Estonian theatre.

IV. Conclusion

The meaning of a historical narrative depends on the interpretation of the text, which works as a mnemonic. Interpretations may differ across time and space, and can be attributed to the changing meaning of the mnemonic. Interpretation requires memories and the act of remembering: both author and reader use the intersemiotic space to create or interpret the text, while drawing on their own individual cultural memories. The concept of entangled memory describes the complex interactive process of acts of remembering and interpretation in various times and spaces.

References:

- Assmann, A. (2006). *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik*. Munich, DEU: Beck.
- Bruster, D. (2007). *To be or not to be*. London, UK: Continuum.
- Cobley, P. (2001). *Narrative*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Delahunty, A., Dignen, S., & Stock, P. (2001). *The Oxford dictionary of allusions*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Doloughan, F. J. (2011). *Contemporary narrative, textual production, multimodality and multiliteracies*. London, UK: Continuum.
- Epner, L. (1998). Kahe, Libahundi vahel ehk Antigone ja Hamlet. In M. Laak (Ed.), *Traditsioon ja pluralism* (pp. 169 – 184). Tallinn, EE: Tuum.
- Feindt, G., Krawatzek, F., Mehler, D., Pestel, F., & Trimçev, R. (2014). Entangled memory: Toward a third wave in memory studies. *History and Theory*, 53, 24 – 44.
- Hall, S. (1996). The question of cultural identity. In S. Hall, D. Held, D. Hubert, & K. Thompson (Eds.), *Modernity: An introduction to modern societies* (pp. 595 – 634). Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Kronberg, J. (2005). *Jaan Kross. A sharp cut: Contemporary Estonian literature*. Tallinn, EE: Estonian Literature Information Centre.
- Kruuspere, P. (2006). Is it ghosting? The motifs and allusions of Hamlet in Estonian drama. In C. Hasselblatt (Ed.), *Different inputs—same output? Autonomy and dependence of the arts under different social-economic conditions: The Estonian example* (pp. 35 – 47). Maastricht, NLD: Shaker BV.
- Kuusk, P. (2000). *Veljo Tormis. Jonni pärast heliloojaks!* Tallinn, EE: Prisma Prindi Kirjastus.
- Laanes, E. (2012). Sofi Oksanen's "Purge" in Estonia. *Baltic Worlds*, 2, 19 – 21.
- Lukas, L. (2007). The Baltic-German settlement myths and their literary developments. In A. Mihkelev, & B. Kalnačs (Eds.), *We have something in common: The Baltic memory* (pp. 75 –

□ 符号与传媒 (12)

- 85). Tallinn, EE: Eesti TA Underi ja Tuglase Kirjanduskeskus.
- Lotman, Y. M. *Universe of the mind: A semiotic theory of culture* (A. Shukman, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Oksanen, S. (2011). *Purge* (L. Rogers, Trans.). London, UK: Atlantic Books.
- Olesk, S. (2010). Eesti teema soome kirjanduses: Sofi Oksaneni romaan “Puhastus”. *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 7, 437 – 486.
- Pärli, Ü. (1999). Boris Pasternak ja Doktor Živago. Tallinn, EE: Eesti Raamat.
- Rummo, P. -E. (1964). *Tule ikka mu rõõmude juurde. Teine vihik luuletusi*. Tallinn, EE: Eesti Riiklik Kirjastus.
- Rummo, P. -E. (2006, Trans.). Hamlet's Songs. In J. Talvet, & H. L. Hix (Eds.), *On the way home. An anthology of contemporary Estonian poetry* (pp. 8 – 10). New Delhi, IND: Sarup & Sons.
- Shakespeare, W. (2006). *Hamlet*. A. Thompson, & N. Taylor (Eds.). London, UK: Arden Shakespeare.
- Thompson, A., & Taylor, N. (2006). Introduction. In A. Thompson, & N. Taylor (Eds.), *Hamlet, William Shakespeare* (pp. 1 – 137). London, UK: Arden Shakespeare.
- Valgemäe, M. (2005). Keisri hull ja Hamlet. In E. Laanes (Ed.), *Metamorfiline Kross. Sissevaateid Jaan Krossi loomingusse* (pp. 72 – 76). Tallinn, EE: Underi ja Tuglase Kirjanduskeskus.
- Veidemann, R. (2000). Eksistentsialistliku paradigma avaldusi 1950 – 60 aastate eesti kirjanduses. In L. Epner, & P. Lilja (Eds.), *Taasleitud aeg. Eesti ja soome kirjanduse muutumine 1950 – 1960. aastatel. Kadonneed ajan arvoitus. Viron ja Suomen kirjallisuuden muuttuminen 1950 – ja 1960 – luulla*. Tartu Ülikooli eesti kirjanduse õppetooli toimetised 2 (pp. 41 – 50). Tartu, EE: Tartu Ülikool.
- Velsker, M. (2001). Kümnevahetuse pööris. In Annus, E., Epner, L., Järv, A., Olesk, S., Süvalep, E., & Velsker, M. (Eds.), *Eesti kirjanduslugu* (pp. 419 – 24). Tallinn, EE: Koolibri.

Author:

Anneli Mihkelev, associate professor of Comparative Literature and an senior researcher in the School of Humanities at the Tallinn University, Estonia. Her research fields include Estonian literature, comparative literature, Russian and East European studies.

作者简介:

安内莉·米克列夫, 爱沙尼亚塔林大学比较文学副教授, 人文学院高级研究员。研究方向为爱沙尼亚文学、比较文学、俄罗斯及东欧研究。

Email: anneli.mihkelev@tlu.ee