



## **On Text, Action and Space and the project's Phase III: Exploring Texts, Media and Memory**

Since 2006, the project *Text, Action and Space*, founded at the University of Bergen (UiB), has published two books based on a series of international research workshops: *Exploring Textual Action* (2010) on textual processes and spatiality, and *Exploring Text and Emotions* (2014) on textual and emotional processes, both published with Aarhus University Press. The working process has been the same: The TAS leadership group has invited 20-25 senior and junior researchers mainly within literature, theatre, film and the other arts to present their ideas on a specific topic within the larger framework defined by the components of the TAS headline: text, action, space. This has happened in a series of workshops, followed by a rigorous editorial process based on internal and external peer review of the papers coming out of the workshops. (For the two already published volumes, see our main webpage, as well as <http://en.unipress.dk/udgivelser/e/exploring-textual-action>, and <http://en.unipress.dk/udgivelser/e/exploring-text-and-emotions>.)

Autumn 2014: Aimed at a third publication TAS launches yet another set of workshops under the title “Exploring Texts, Media and Memory” – endorsed by the Academia Europaea, and with the sustained support of the UiB, the Centre de coopération franco-norvégienne en sciences sociales et humaines (FMSH), and others. Venue and time for our first workshop within TAS Phase III: Paris, December 2014.

Framework for Phase III: The preoccupation with memory in relation to literature and the arts is as old as cultural history, in which for ages memory was most often seen in opposition to oblivion, and mnemotechnical devices were developed to oppose the process of forgetting. In that context, the main focus was on the content of memory, its archival characteristics. In recent history, from around 1800, the focus instead moved to memory as a process of the present in which forgetting is integrated as a pre-condition for reworking the past. As a corollary to this change of focus the center of attention moved from the past to be remembered to the present where the memorial process unfolds, collectively and individually, as a construction process, also opening for the important question of the relation between power and the use of memory. Construction became a key word instead of archive, and dynamic remembering replaced static memory as the corner stone of conceptualization and investigation. This perspective has been developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by writers, artists and thinkers – such as Baudelaire, Wordsworth, and Bergson – who saw the link between memory and imagination. Later on, around 1900, further developments of this perspective were induced by Freud in his theory of repressed memories reworked in a dialogical process, and by Maurice Halbwachs and his conception of collective memory.

In the latest decades a new challenge is offered by the proliferation of media through which the act of remembering is channelled, performed and transmitted. This condition has not been sufficiently explored although it changed the conception of what determines the memorial process. This development gave prominence to the relation between sensual experience, mediation and memory and therefore opened a broader view of how aesthetics, imagination and memory interact. Language is no longer the only nor, in all contexts, the most salient medium. Each medium or compounds of media performatively engaged in the memorial process structures the relation between remembering and forgetting in its particular way while allowing for various modalities of remembering as a continuously unfolding, debatable and malleable process, reshaping the past in the present. The age old question of the limits of human memory thus moves from the restricted mental capacities of humans or the availability of sources, to the ongoing interaction among humans and between humans and our experience of the surrounding world.

Mediation is a key concept for the understanding of the new conditions of and possibilities for memory. The media – linguistic, visual, digital, spatial, etc. – and the memorial process are interdependent: on the one hand, what can be remembered depends on the media; on the other, certain types of memorial processes favour and select the most appropriate media within today's large media landscape. However, to our knowledge, the many projects, studies and publications on memory during the last 20 years have only begun to explore the interdependence of multiple levels of texts, media and memory. The TAS project wishes to respond to the ever-growing concern with memory in many fields and disciplines focusing precisely on this interdependence.

On this platform we research various texts, media and art forms; we conduct projects concentrated on detailed analytical engagement with selected texts and other media-specific objects; we encourage investigations of larger units such as genres, traditions and canonizations; we analyse the use or abuse of memorial products and processes in specific cultural contexts; we explore spatial environments such as landscapes, monuments and architecture as media for memorial processes; and more.

See our TAS website and its menu and sidebars for further information and contact:

<http://www.folk.uib.no/hlils/tasweb/>