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Two Stops on the Itinerary of Anne Frank's Diary

The notion of cultural commemoration as a travelling process has been discussed from different angles, but a recurring tendency in such discussions is the use of texts that describe historic events or give credible interpretations of a usually traumatic past to illustrate theoretical assumptions. Astrid Erll shows how the First World War classic Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929) created memories of the war and shaped a notion of being lost that is specific to that generation. To Erll the novel is "a striking example of how generationality is produced in the act of representation and how the transnational travel and translation of memory texts actually occurs" (2014, 391). Ann Rigney (2021) argues in her discussion of transferred memorial forms that such forms are constructions of a certain common past. She offers as prominent examples Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Across the Black Waters* (1939) about colonial soldiers in the First World War and Philip Scheffer's film *The Half-Moon Files: A Ghost Story* (2008) about prisoners of war in a camp near Berlin, also during the First World War. Key to her understanding of memory as an open-ended dynamic process is that it works as a "feedback loop between narratives about the past and solidarities in the present" (Rigney 2021, 13). Eneken Laanes uses Sofi Oksanen's novel *Purge* (2010) as an example of "born translated memories" and argues that this novel about rapes in Estonia at the end of the Second World War modelled on war rapes in the Bosnian war and in Berlin in the Second World War exemplifies "translation as a new model for conceptualising the transnational travel of memories that operates through transcultural memorial forms" (2021, 43).

Erll's case study illustrates how travelling memories can produce a new transcultural concept of generational identity, Rigney emphasises the agency of literature in the continuous remaking of memory in social contexts, and Laanes proposes translation as a new model for conceptualising the transnational travel of memories. In the extension of these contributions I suggest here another angle to the question of how literature addresses aesthetic inheritance and interpretation in the context of cultural memory. Instead of focusing on how a particular novel reinterprets past events, my approach deals with the ways in which a book written by a time witness, Anne Frank (1929–1945), has influenced fiction with a more complex agenda than just reinterpreting the past. Its transcultural travel has produced remediations that inspire reflection on the very act of the aesthetic transformation of memories.

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The Diary of Anne Frank, published in 1947 under the title *The House Behind* (*Het Achterhuis*), is an astonishing example of a text that became an international success against all the odds. It has now been translated into more than 70 languages and remediated into numerous theatre productions and movies, and is a stunning example of a canonisation that may seem both random and surprising.[1] *The Diary of Anne Frank* also prompts attention because it is not occupied with past events but is an account of everyday life in the present. Although Anne wrote the diary as an eyewitness to the wartime sufferings of the Jews and had hoped that it would be published at some point, its temporal layout is different to that of the other texts mentioned above. The writer is not looking back but is reflecting on her difficult circumstances in the here and now, and dreams about a better life in the future. Throughout the history of its reception though, her book has been *made into* and *used as* a prominent testimony of the Holocaust, the genocide of the Jews.

The Diary of Anne Frank is an especially moving read because of the young girl's hopeful expectations, which are juxtaposed with the horrible destiny that we know was hers.[2] The book is mostly written in the present tense and addressed to a confidant Kitty, who is the diary itself. It consists of observations and descriptions of a life in internal exile, and it does not deal very much with times that have passed. Instead, the author articulates her longing for a future without the sufferings of the present day, and she is not without vigour and ambition when she looks forward to a normal life after the war. It can thus be argued that while *The Diary of Anne Frank* was conceived as a day-to-day report of extreme circumstances, it has been transformed through its reception and adaptations and given the status of an important remembrance of the past.

There are several reasons why *The Diary of Anne Frank* has achieved canonical status, one of which may be its capacity to work as a travelling memory even though it is set in the present and does not take a retrospective attitude. We can explore this ability to fascinate new audiences and generations again and again by reading novelistic works that clearly allude to the book as their forerunner.[3] I have chosen Philip Roth's *The Ghost Writer* from 1979 and Kristian Klausen's *Anne F.* from 2021 as two remediations that make clear reference to their predecessor text, but also imaginatively incorporate the author herself into their fictional worlds. Roth and Klausen explore the idea of travelling quite literally and move

1 Information about the publication and its reception history can be found on the website of the Anne Frank House: https://www.annefrank.org/en.

2 Anne and her sister Margot died of hunger and disease in Bergen-Belsen in February 1945.

3 Many of these remediations of Frank's diary are books and picture books for children and young adults.

Anne Frank to locations in the United States and Norway respectively, thereby studying the potential cultural crossovers of her diary. Both authors prominently address meta-perspectives at the same time, such as the writing, reception, and distribution of a literary text, in this way reflecting on the conditions and possibilities of fiction as an agent in memory processes.[4]

The two novels are an interesting comparison because they also reveal different motivations for the interest of their authors in Anne Frank and her diary. Roth engages with the diary's reception, remediation, and customisation into an American post-war commercial culture. His text is saturated with an ironic rhetoric that provokes reflection on how literary parody may be used in commemoration processes. Klausen engages with the production and survival of the diary in a Norwegian culture besieged in wartime. His text is concerned throughout with the aesthetics of an urban landscape, which incites him to explore his material and spatial surroundings as a support for remembrance and as part of the substance of it.

Here I will discuss how Roth and Klausen exploit fictional invention, with an emphasis on parody in the first case and spatiality in the second, to reflect on the relationship between literature and history, and the distinctive quality that literature has of causing memories to travel. In these cases, the notion of mnemonic migration helps us scrutinise and understand not only how aesthetic articulations remember the past and work as memory agents, but also how they independently investigate the mental and mediative processes of remembrance. I intend to illuminate how these novels both performatively show and meta-reflectively address the ways in which aesthetic articulations make memories travel.

4 Roth's use of Anne Frank recurs in several books (see McLennan 2009), and she has frequently been read as his muse. Stephen Wade interprets her function as a designation of "dichotomies involved in 'being a Jew' and being an American, the identity of a writer and the art of narrative, and the woman and sexuality as a metaphor for creativity" (1996, 118). Klausen's use of Frank occurs mainly in one novel, but he has experimented with the idea of moving a historic person from one country to another, which is the central aesthetic concept of *Anne F.*, in two other novels, *Death and Work* (*Døden i arbeid,* 2020) and *The Little Man from Argentina* (*Den lille mannen fra Argentina,* 2022), which respectively portray Mark Rothko and Adolf Eichmann. None of these have been translated into English; the translations here are mine.

Invention as parody

The Diary of Anne Frank was presented to the American audience in 1952.[5] The translation was launched with an introduction by Eleanor Roosevelt and quickly became a bestseller. A dramatisation written by Hollywood screenwriters Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett premiered at the Broadway Cort Theatre in 1955, and the script of it formed the basis for the 1959 film adaptation *The Diary of Anne Frank*, directed by George Stevens. Both the Broadway play and the Hollywood film production were awarded prestigious prizes and received a great amount of acclaim, but they were also controversial because of the ways in which they related to and produced Holocaust remembrance.[6]

Critics have pointed to the deliberate attempts to adapt to public tastes, for instance by moving Anne's romance with Peter van Daan and her erotic longings to centre stage. In an article at the time, Algene Ballif argued that Anne had become a caricatured combination child-woman, created by what Ballif saw as Broadway and Hollywood conventions of love stories and female desire. She calls the play a "travesty" that is guilty of "misrepresentations" and fails "to catch the spirit of the work from which it springs" (Ballif 1955). Others have noted an effort to "downplay both the real terror of Nazi totalitarianism and the ethnic or cultural specificity of its Jewish victims" (Spargo 2001, 98). Bruno Bettelheim, in a 1960 speech on the remediative chain of the book, the play and the film, discusses what he sees as a universal and uncritical response. He argues that the adaptation directs the audience's attention to the private and intimate sphere of Holocaust victims in order that they may forget the gas chambers and other Nazi crimes. This cannot be explained unless we recognise in it an effort to glorify "the ability to retreat into an extremely private, gentle, sensitive world", Bettelheim (1979, 247) argues.

Philip Roth's novel *The Ghost Writer* (1976) introduces the first-person narrator Nathan Zuckerman, who tells the story about himself in the 1950s, looking back

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5 The first translation was made by B. M. Mooyaart-Doubleday and published 1952 under the title *Anne Frank. The Diary of A Young Girl.* Later editions (1986, 1995) are published under the title *The Diary of Anne Frank.*

6 On Holocaust remembrance in the US, see Deborah E. Lipstadt 1996. She maintains that the "prominence of the Holocaust in American Jewish identity is particularly noteworthy since throughout the 1950s and most of the 1960s it was barely on the Jewish communal or theological agenda" (Lipstadt 1996, 195). But "it was not totally absent from the American popular cultural agenda. In contrast to what has often been the general impression there were a significant number of movies, plays, television productions, and books on the subject well before the end of the 1960s" (Lipstadt 1996, 195). According to Lipstadt, the translation and remediation of Anne Frank's diary is foremost among the media events that gained substantial attention.

from twenty years later at when he is a nascent writer obsessed with great literature, who visits his idol, the author E.I. Lonoff, in his New England residence. The first chapter, "Maestro", describes the widely acclaimed author, who is an unparalleled hero in Nathan's idolised universe, with an emphatically ironic touch. He has withdrawn from social life and lives in a now sexless relationship with his desperately distressed wife, Hope, in a "hideaway [...] at the end of an unpaved road twelve hundred feet up in the Berkshires" (Roth 2007, 3). His asceticism and anti-materialism have developed to such a degree that he demands half an egg for breakfast and cares for nothing other than writing; "Then we go for a walk in the hills and I'm haunted by the loss of all that good time", he confesses to Nathan (Roth 2007, 12). At the same time though, his writing appears as a futile and pathetic drive toward perfection, or perhaps towards writer's block, when he describes his daily routines: "I sit down at my little Olivetti and start looking at sentences and turning them around" (Roth 2007, 12). Lonoff, "the great man" (Roth 2007, 3), in his self-inflicted seclusion incorporates all the artistic ambition that Nathan longs for, but reveals himself as a writing ghost with hardly any suitable recommendations, though with some rather ridiculous ones, for his budding apprentice. Lonoff says that an author's individual voice is something "that begins at around the back of the knees and reaches well above the head" (Roth 2007, 47; for similar expressions, see also 51 and 70).

The parodic portrayal of Lonoff carefully resonates with the narrator Nathan's depiction of himself and makes the two of them each other's ghosts. Nathan repeatedly describes Lonoff's style as satire and even self-satire, but he is also confused about its meaning and is incapable of seeing the consequences of his own admiration of Lonoff. He refers to a student paper he had written in which he presents without reservation this venerated author with his "'translated English'" that lends "a mildly ironic flavour to even the most commonplace expression" (Roth 2007, 9). Nathan uses words like irony, satire, and parody in his dialogue with Lonoff and in several references to canonical titles and authors, but he fails to understand the hermeneutics of the concepts. Instead they work as reminders to the reader of how we must see Nathan as a product of Roth's exposure of his protagonist's blindness. By not bringing Nathan to see through his own naivety, the novel exposes the writers as either profoundly caught up in their own artistic egotism in the case of Lonoff or unable to decipher the many material and literary signs to which they are exposed in the case of Nathan.

One of these signs is a short but important reference to the Broadway theatre production of Anne Frank in a letter from Judge Wapter to Nathan that "strongly advises him" (Roth 2007, 66) to go and see it. Roth is unquestionably ironic when he lets Wapter describe the play as an "unforgettable experience" (Roth 2007, 66). The letter is an intervention in a conflict between Nathan and his father, who has vain-

ly tried to instruct Nathan to refrain from publishing a short story that his father believes will compromise the family and reinforce damaging myths about the Jews. Nathan's strict position is at once a defence of art as an independent discourse and also a refusal to depict Jews in an idealised or at least sympathetic way.

This attitude is obviously shared by the author Roth, who uses the Anne Frank story to discuss Jewish identity and self-understanding, and the commercial exploitation of Jewish history. He lets his protagonist invent a copy of Anne in the character of Amy Bellette, a twenty-six-year-old student and assistant of Lonoff, who works in his home and is present during Nathan's visit. Nathan is immediately fascinated by this woman, who plays multiple roles in the novel as a rival to Lonoff's wife Hope, as a child who longs for a father's love, as a student with ambitions in need of a mentor, and as the object of sexual desire for the young visitor. After a sleepless night spent listening to what he thinks is an intimate rendezvous between Lonoff and Amy, Nathan writes a story (chapter three, "Femme Fatale") in which he imagines that Amy is the surviving Anne Frank.

Amy's resemblance to Anne Frank is constructed in the novel as a mix of ekphrases of the well-known black-and-white photos of the Dutch girl, and of the popular Broadway and Hollywood remake of her. In the photos she is close to the real world and to history, and it is this version that Nathan recognises at the first glance, though he also gives her a high Shakespearean forehead. He says of his first sight of Amy: "[...] and there she was, hair dark and profuse, eyes pale – grey or green – and with a forehead that looked like Shakespeare's" (Roth 2007, 11). In the play and film she reflects the child-woman from stage and screen, whose appearance is mysteriously inconsistent: "Here she appeared again. But what had seemed from a distance like beauty, pure and simple, was more of a puzzle up close" (Roth 2007, 15). This second version seems to take power in the listening scene, where Amy begs for the love of her employer, who is old enough to be her father.

This scene, which also has its comical ingredients, echoes the many scenes of listening in the diary, and one episode of eavesdropping in the film of Anne Frank. Instead of alluding to the historically real fear of being found, which must have consumed the families in hiding, it parodically exposes a young man's erotic fantasies and jealous feelings towards his mentor, who seems to have won the young woman's heart. Roth's irony has one of its peripeties at the end of chapter two, "Nathan Dedalus", when his young protagonist digests the scene between Amy and Lonoff that he has just picked up on: "Oh, if only I could have imagined the scene I've overheard! If only I could invent as presumptuously as real life" (Roth 2007, 78). Nothing is more attractive to him than portraying real life, but life is never more real than when it is invented. So he writes a story about Amy as Anne, which is revealed in the novel as chapter three, "Femme Fatale".

The mix of reality and invention escalates in this chapter, since Amy appears not only as a lookalike but emerges as the real Anne Frank, or believes herself to be so in Nathan's version. She has survived the death camp and has moved to the United States. Here she visits the theatre production based on her own book and sits "amid the weeping and inconsolable audience at the famous New York production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*" (Roth 2007, 80). Amy's identification is complete, and yet is insane. She tells her story of escape to Lonoff, who sympathises with her and her delusions, but who refrains from telling Hope about them, perhaps because she would have confirmed what he knows are the true causes of the girl's mental collapse: "[I]t was for him, the great writer, that Amy had chosen to become Anne Frank" (Roth 2007, 100). Roth's ironies underpin the implied criticism of the patriarchal structures and oedipal tensions that saturate the novel, and also young Nathan's pathetic admiration for his great forerunners in the literary tradition.[7]

The revelation of chapter three as Nathan's own imagination adds to the ironies of the text and emphasises how it parodies the legacy of Anne Frank as collective memory. Nathan's invention of Anne as a survivor in the American cultural scene reflects how her diary was used by powerful influencers who had interests other than commemorating the Holocaust. Roth does not use the word "parasite", but his description of the writers Lonoff and Nathan, and of the theatre production and its audience comes close to a judgement that they are living off and exploiting Anne's life and work. In Roth's ironic style, Nathan's blind admiration of his idol Lonoff becomes a subtle criticism of a narcissistic attitude to literature. The aspiring young man's comment that he has "evolved" his invention about Frank and the Lonoffs while he was lying "in the dark study, transported by his [Lonoff's] praise and throbbing with resentment of my disapproving father" (Roth 2007, 101), seems to be self-ironic but is nevertheless not refined enough to acquit him of the same narcissism.

In Nathan's invented chapter, "Femme Fatale", Amy describes the Broadway production in her testimony to Lonoff. She appears in a New York hotel room to her famous mentor, who has driven down from the Berkshires at night, as a primary witness not of the genocide, but of the play. She had been "[w]eeping hysterically" when telling him on the phone about the theatre experience, and she explains now that her hysterical reaction is caused "by the people watching with me. [...] Carloads of women kept pulling up to the theatre, women wearing fur coats, with expensive shoes and handbags" (Roth 2007, 79). She watches them

7 The novel not only features an ambitious young writer but is also soaked with references to literature through titles, genres, characters, and canonical authors. Its four parts are called "Maestro", "Nathan Dedalus", "Femme Fatale", and "Married to Tolstoy". Amy has taken her name "from an American book she had sobbed over as a child, *Little Women*" (Roth 2007, 81).

cry and listens to their screams, but her problem is not the audience's affective responses; rather it is the thought of what disclosing her survival will mean. "I have to be dead to everyone" (Roth 2007, 80), she thinks, including to her father. Amy has discovered from a magazine that Otto Frank is still alive, but she cannot now get in touch with him because the illusion of her death must be preserved. One of her conclusions, as Nathan presents it, is that the impact of her story would not have been the same if she had been a survivor.

If we read Amy Bellette as a psychoanalytic interpretation, her hysteria results from the shock when she is confronted with her own masquerade. What she witnesses in the theatre is the emotional response from spectators who believe in the story of her deportation and death. To them her survival is a betrayal, and she must hide it. But this psychoanalytic perspective is not Roth's concern. Instead he makes Amy confess to Lonoff that retelling the show to him, her "Dad-da" (Roth 2007, 80), is an imitation of his art. She has staged a little personal drama in the Biltmore hotel, "a joke" (Roth 2007, 80) in her own words, only in order to reuse and perform what she has experienced in the theatre as a typical Lonoff narrative. Amy's testimony, in Nathan's imagination, is in other words an ironic insertion of the great writer's work into the commodification and commercialisation that is the American culture of Holocaust remembrance.

Roth's novel has many semantic layers, mirrors, and doubles, and its predominantly ironic style makes it a complex narrative and a challenging read. Roth unquestionably replies to the strong tendency to sanctify the Holocaust, and the risk of being read as a violator of the Jewish inheritance was not far off at the time the novel was published.[8] His earlier provocative publications and his controversial status in the American literary scene meant that Roth was indeed prepared for a lot of negative reaction, and as expected, many contemporary critics accused him of trivialising the memories of Anne Frank.[9] To read the novel as a frivolous account of the Jewish genocide and a disrespectful treatment of the Jewish destiny, it must first be assumed that Roth is mocking Frank's diary. He evidently takes a great risk when he lets his fictive character Nathan change the most sacrosanct myth in Jewish-American culture and the rich connotations of martyrdom around

8 Among the critical voices arguing against trivialising the Jewish experience was Elie Wiesel. In a famous review of the TV series "Holocaust", he concludes: "The Holocaust must be remembered. But not as a show" (Wiesel 1978). R. Clifton Spargo points at "luminaries such as Theodor Adorno, Eli [*sic*] Wiesel, and Lawrence Langer", who argue that "to treat the Holocaust through fiction is already to trivialize it" (Spargo 2001, 91).

9 R. Clifton Spargo refers to a review by Jack Beatty as perhaps the "most condemnatory" (2001, 114). In *The New Republic*, October 1979, Beatty calls Roth's appropriation of Holocaust history a severe "lapse of taste" (Spargo 2001, 114).

Anne Frank's life and death, but a closer reading must recognise that the object of parodic reinvention for the novel is not the diary itself but the ways in which it has been adapted and customised into the American production of commercial and sentimental memory.

There are parts of the novel that diverge from the generally ironic style of Roth, and these are the passages in chapter three where Nathan describes Anne Frank's life, destiny and diary. He reveals earlier, in a telephone conversation with his mother, who criticises him for his stubborn attitude to Judge Wapter, that he has not seen the theatre production, only read the book: "I didn't see it. I read the book. *Everybody* read the book" (Roth 2007, 69). His rejection of the play is contrasted in the "femme fatale" chapter with an unironic account of the birth of an author, Anne Frank. Here, Nathan's – and surely Roth's – unreserved admiration of the young Dutch girl's talent shines through: "Who realized she was so gifted? Who realized we had such a writer in our midst?" (Roth 2007, 87). Even her Jewishness is addressed when Nathan learns from the diarist about how minimal the Jewish rituals were in the household, and about the father who reads "Goethe in German and Dickens in English" (Roth 2007, 93) instead of the Bible to his two girls. Ultimately, the "ghost" (Roth 2007, 95) in the novel is Anne, whose haunting presence in the life of Nathan throws shadows into every corner of his existence. However, her ghost does not haunt him like the phantom we know from Abraham and Torok's psychoanalytical theories.[10] Instead, she is a ghost *writer*, and so the astonishing achievement of Anne Frank as an author can be considered the novel's primary concern in its interaction with the past.

An interesting approach to the novel's parodic structure is proposed by R. Clifton Spargo, whose enlightening and comprehensive reading discusses *The Ghost Writer* in its ironic negotiations with American commercialism. Spargo argues that Roth "transforms Nathan's potentially trivialising appropriation of a Holocaust story into a parodic account of a cultural memory already implicated in patterns of falsifying commemoration" (2001, 111). He states that for Roth it is a critical commonplace that fiction might act as a "distorting lens" (Spargo 2001, 88) in its remediation of history. By overstating this distortion through pure invention, *The Ghost Writer* addresses the "very possibility of interpretation" (Spargo 2001, 88). Spargo's aim is to reveal how Roth's novel "recalls several layers of cultural memory through which Anne Frank has been made a property of the American

10 Abraham writes: "It is a fact that the 'phantom,' whatever its form, is nothing but an invention of the living. Yes, an invention in the sense that the phantom is meant to objectify, even if under the guise of individual or collective hallucinations, the gap produced in us by the concealment of some part of a love object's life. The phantom is therefore also a metapsychological fact: what haunts are not the dead, but the gaps left within us by the secrets of others" (Abraham 1994, 171).

popular imagination" (2001, 89). In this project, he also reflects substantially on the "give and take between history and cultural memory" (Spargo 2001, 89) and wonders how fiction can be "whimsically inventive and perhaps irresponsible" (Spargo 2001, 88–89) in relation to historical facts, but how it also takes the opportunity to show "just how much or how little people make of the history available to them" (Spargo 2001, 89).

Spargo's reading is highly relevant to the discussion of travelling memories, and I concur with him when he suggests that literature can be a distorting lens through which the past is changed into a different present. I also accept his point in foregrounding parodic invention as a response to the various uses of a historic text. Because of this invention, the novel is clearly about the "very possibility of interpretation" (Spargo 2001, 88) and addresses the many problematic ways in which the past is remembered in the collective memory. I am more reluctant about the word "falsifying", which is reasonable to a certain point in the context that Spargo analyses, where the diary is re-enacted and performed in a truly "distorted" way. However, the premise of the concept of falseness is the theoretical dichotomy of the dualism of right and wrong. As a text about interpretation, Roth's ironies reject clearcut oppositions and instead provoke the reader to reconsider their convictions and prejudices. Its motif of travelling – on many levels – joins in with the moving of memories but refuses, as I see it, to fix the interpretation as either true or false. The erotic and oedipal motif that the Broadway and film adaptations pick up and expand for instance are not pulled out of the blue, which would make them "false", but have some explicit base in references in Anne's diary. These motifs are textually anchored but are enlarged and altered to adjust to a foreign audience and a different commercial market. As a novel about interpretation, and with parodic invention as a stylistic strategy, Roth's commemoration project highlights these implications of the diary's cross-cultural travelling.

My reading of *The Ghost Writer* in the context of mnemonic migration emphasises the inventive possibilities of fiction. Roth uses the Anne Frank motif to hypothesise how an imagined life of the deceased girl would look like if she had survived. He also transfers her from the context of war in Europe to an American post-war commercial culture, where the genocide of the Jews reappears as tear-jerking entertainment. Even the established literary scene is given a critical self-examination as a responsible working-through of the crimes of the past. However, Roth also recognises the potential of fiction for documenting the past and preserving the memory of it. Embedded in his parodic narrative of a young man's pathetic admiration of his immediate forerunner is a story about a girl who managed to write a text that affects him deeply. In the perspective of travelling memories, *The Ghost Writer* contributes to our understanding of the ways in which fiction

works as a site where remembrance is negotiated in the tension between history and parody.

Invention as space

Moving on to the contemporary literary scene, I have chosen a Norwegian novel as an example of mnemonic migration. The plot of Kristian Klausen's *Anne F.* (2021) gives both literal representation and an aesthetic thematisation to the question of travelling memories, which is highly relevant here. Unlike Roth, Klausen does not make use of ironic rhetoric, but rather he examines the ways in which space and materiality work in aesthetic articulations as preservers and inventors of memory. Both authors indisputably share an admiration of Anne Frank and her diary, and this also motivates the comparison.

The Diary of Anne Frank has appeared in three translations into Norwegian, by Inger Hagerup in 1952, by Tormod Haugen in 1995, and by Bodil Engen in 2010.[11] The play by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett has been translated and performed in Norway several times, but it has not, as far as I have been able to establish, been reviewed in a critical way like the American theatre production. The reception of the diary has first and foremost focused on the Jewish girl and her family's tragic history in continental Europe, and until recently the story of Anne Frank was not linked to the fate of Norwegian Jews, a fate that for a long time did not get much public attention.[12] Only during the past decade and thanks to the books by Bjarte Bruland (2017), Marte Michelet (2014, 2018) and Synne Corell (2021) has the involvement of the Norwegian police and bureaucracy in the deportation of the Jews and the confiscation of their property triggered extensive debate. Recent life writing from second and third-generation Jewish family members has also been important in illuminating the experiences of the Norwegian Jews and their descendants.[13]

While *The Ghost Writer* parodically deals with American adaptations and receptions of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Kristian Klausen's 2021 novel *Anne F.* engages

11 The 1995 version, which was published on the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation, was the first complete edition.

12 The destiny of Norwegian Jews was not totally unknown but for a long time it was generally ignored or silenced. Important contributions to their story are Herman Sachnowitz's testimony *It Also Concerns You (Det angår også deg*, 1978) and testimonies published by Lothe and Storeide (2006) and Lothe (2013). However, it is probably correct to say that there has been a boom in attention to the history of the Jews in Norway over the past ten years.

13 See Mona Levin 2015, Monica Csango 2017, Nina F. Grünfeld 2020 and Irene Levin 2020.

instead with the creation and the critical survival of the book. It does not reflect on current controversies around the fate of the Norwegian Jews but focuses entirely on questions of aesthetics and remembrance. Klausen's invention is to move the war story from Amsterdam in the Netherlands to Drammen in Norway, a city of about 26,000 inhabitants in 1940 and 66,000 today, and to reflect on the memories in their relation to space. The author calls his novel a "contrafactual fantasy" and writes in a note that it is "spun out of certain biographical markers and is replaced into new (Norwegian) places" (Klausen 2021, 137).[14] He informs the reader that the ways in which Jews were treated in the Netherlands have reappeared in the novel's Norwegian context, where the situation was slightly different, and that historically speaking some of the descriptions of Drammen in the 1940s are incorrect. His intention, in other words, is not to recapitulate the people, environments, and events from the past in a historically accurate way, but to create a new universe with well-known historic people and a recognisable local landscape. As a contribution to the cultural memory of the Holocaust, *Anne F.* certainly keeps the historic trauma alive, but uses the allusions in the diary to elaborate on the transformation of memories and on the commemoration processes themselves. Like Roth's novel, it dissolves the static opposition of wrong and right and draws attention to the ways in which memory is produced by a more dynamic process of travelling.

Anne F. features Otto Frank as its main character and is a third person narrative written from his point of view. The novel's plot is set in the past, mainly in the period from October 1942 to the liberation in 1945, but with a few retrospections and a summary of Otto Frank's life until 1949 (the real Frank died in 1980). Dates and hours are usually precisely noted and correspond well to historic events, but time as a human way of understanding is principally constructed through space, using several strolls around the city, and a central sculpture. The strolls are corporeal practices, and the sculpture is a physical object, but both motifs serve as an aid to understanding how memories are embedded in an environment and essentially connected to materiality. A third aspect of the mental-material issue lies in the metafictional dimension of the novel, which is about writing as a memorising practice.

Anne F. leads the reader into a geography with a lot of Norwegian place names. In the very first sentence we learn that Otto Frank has locked himself out of the house at 17 Griffenfeld's Street, where the family has taken refuge, and in the rest of the chapter we follow him through a city with names like Selmer's Street,

14 "en kontrafaktisk fantasi [...] spunnet ut fra visse biografiske markører og omplassert til nye (norske) steder". All the translations from Norwegian in this chapter are mine.

Konnerud Street, Bragernes and Strømsø Square, into the Lauritzen bookstore where he buys a notebook for Anne, until he ends up in a café in the Globusgården department store from where he looks down at the bronze sculpture on a roundabout. In the last chapter we learn that in the autumn of 1945 the family's apartment at 29 Sehested's Street has been sold because Otto Frank cannot stay in a flat filled with memories of his dead family members. From his new dorm in the paper factory district Grønland, he can view the past, which is represented by the two former addresses at Griffenfeld's Street and Sehested's Street. His life, in other words, is summed up in a triangle of street names and from a point of view where the past is always present.

With this significant use of names, semantic threads are drawn between perceptions from sensations in the present and remembrance of memories of the past, and accordingly between time and space. The place brings back memories, and in the thoughts of the fictive character Otto Frank, mental ribbons are tied between places he experiences now, and people with whom he visited those places in the past. In a paragraph towards the end of the first chapter, the narrator explains this application of names as a way of remembering and preserving relationships. Here, Otto Frank looks back not only at his own experiences in the houses he has inhabited but also at places and streets he experienced together with a former girlfriend Synnøve Bakke, and with his youngest daughter Anne: "He associated her [Synnøve] with Erik Børresen's Street, Engene, Haugen's Street, Blich's Street, Tollbu Street, and Lange's Street. Strangely enough, Anne also loved to walk with him through the city, and then they inevitably had to walk through the same streets, exactly the same streets"[15] (Klausen 2001, 16).

Together with the strolls around the city streets, the sculpture *The three districts*[16] is central to the novel's reflections on time and space. The name of the sculpture is allegorical, as it does not depict districts but is shaped as three women, and this urges consideration of the intertwined relationship between verbal and visual representation. Klausen informs the reader in a note that the artwork was made by Per Hurum in 1952 and therefore does not have an authenticating function. The real sculpture from 1952 appears in Klausen's 2021 novel as an ekphrasis denoting a piece of art from 1942 that always oscillates between the verbal three districts and the visual three women. Klausen uses this material motif

15 "Han forbandt henne [Synnøve] med Erik Børresens gate, Engene, Haugens gate, Blichs gate, Tollbugata og Langes gate. Det snodige var at Anne Frank også likte så godt å gå turer sammen med Otto gjennom byen, og da gikk de jo uunngåelig i de samme gatene, nøyaktig de samme gatene".

16 "De tre bydeler".

that he establishes through his protagonist's memories to emphasise and scrutinise the power of art to engage in memory processes.

The ekphrases in *Anne F.* are dominant parts of the text and thus underscore the sculpture's significance in the novel's exploration of memory-making. Its triangular form and dynamic character are qualities that mirror the novel's own structure. In the first chapter, Otto Frank sits in the café in Globusgården and looks down at "a sculpture group in bronze on a plinth" (Klausen 2021, 9).[17] It depicts three naked women with their backs turned toward each other and holding hands, who are meant to represent the three districts Bragernes, Strømsø and Tangen.[18] However, to Otto Frank they not only express the geography of the city but also reflect his erotic life and the three women he has had relationships with. These women – Birgitte, Synnøve and Edith – are then described one after the other, with Edith as the most important because she is the one he marries and with whom he has his two daughters, Margot and Anne.

The sculpture itself is far from static, as it corrodes, and acquires marks and a turquoise-green shading, but Klausen emphasises its ability to set perceptions, thoughts, and memories in motion. At first it reflects Otto's three girlfriends, but it changes meaning in the two last chapters, as he tries to return his life to normal after the war. He approaches the sculpture again reluctantly, as if he fears it has been transformed, and now indeed it does not appear like it did before. In his re-experience, one of the women is still Edith, but now she is totally devastated by grief and suffering. In his thoughts she is "[n]aked and lost in the death camp"[19] (Klausen 2021, 124). The two others are no longer Birgitte and Synnøve, but Margot and Anne, who, before he knows what has happened to them, "constituted a ring of hope"[20] (Klausen 2021, 124). As Otto perceives the sculpture at different times in his life, it changes meaning and triggers memories of various kinds. Ekphrases of the sculpture work as manifestations of how an aesthetic object provokes, materialises, and processes memories.

The last ekphrasis of the sculpture points to the third important aspect of the novel's investigation of the mental and material relations in acts of memory. On a metafictional level it constructs an analogy between the sculpture's work as a memory site and the creation of both the diary and the novel. In this ekphrasis Otto verbalises his thoughts about the implications of this analogy: "Anne stood there and held the hands of her sister and mother, they made up a circle of living,

17 "en skulpturgruppe i bronse på sokkel".
18 "representere de tre bydelene Bragernes, Strømsø og Tangen".
19 "[n]aken og fortapt i dødsleiren".
20 "utgjorde en ring av håp".

because they would always be living, in the diaries"[21] (Klausen 2021, 129). The common denominator of artwork and fiction is, in other words, the ability to preserve and animate memories, which is expressed in this thought by the metaphor of "living".

The diary that Anne writes is not only a theme in the novel and a pretext for the remediation of it, but also a material object that somebody must provide for, take care of, and distribute. These circumstances attract a great deal of attention, and the "living" literature explicitly occurs as a product of targeted strolls to and from the bookstore and the attic. This narrative strand starts with the story of how Otto Frank buys a diary with the brand name "Andvord", a word he recognises because it reminds him of the German "Antwort", meaning 'answer'. The intertextual relevance here is that Anne Frank's diary is today read as an answer to the German aggression and the Jewish genocide, while the novel we are about to read, *Anne F.*, is an answer to the diary. Klausen positions his project in the frames of Holocaust remembrance, but most of all he underscores the material conditions and the memorising possibilities of creative fiction.[22]

Gradually, Anne fills the notebooks, and the family's helpers, Jan and Miep Gies, buy new ones. Chapter one is a detour in the memories of Otto Frank past the places he went on his stroll with the primary goal of purchasing the book, and then the end of chapter three is a parallel narrative with Jan and Miep Gies in the main roles. On Jan's trip to the Lauritzen bookstore, the reader learns about his work as a lecturer at the Latin high school, his fascination with the literature of antiquity, his many travels in the world of literature, and his only real journey, which was to Sicily with his wife Miep. We learn about Miep's work in the school kitchen, how she meets Jan on her way home, how they buy food with their

21 "Anne sto der og holdt hendene med sin søster og mor, de dannet en krets, av levende, for de ville nå alltid være levende, i dagbøkene".

22 Even Philip Roth is concerned with the material conditions of literary creation. Firstly, in a comic way, he describes Nathan's reluctant considerations when he climbs onto Lonoff's desk the better to hear the couple above him: "I had gone far enough already by expropriating the corner of the desk to compose my half dozen unfinished letters home" (Roth 2007, 75). Secondly, and quite elaborately, an emphasis on materiality is put in Nathan's account of Amy's illusion of having written Anne's diary. In Nathan's imagined story, she orders the book from Amsterdam and picks the package up at the post office: "When she had finally untied the string and unfolded, without tearing, the layers of thick brown paper, it seemed to her that what she had so meticulously removed from the wrappings and placed onto the lap of her clean and pretty American girl's beige linen skirt was her survival itself" (Roth 2007, 86). From that position, a retrospection on the beginning of her writing starts: "Until she ran out of pages and had to carry over onto office ledgers, she made the entries in a cardboard-covered notebook that he'd given her for her thirteenth birthday" (Roth 2007, 86).

coupons and finally bring the food and the diary up to the attic. In this way, the city strolls are closely tied to their most important function as a prerequisite for the creation of a text.

After the betrayal and deportation of the families, it is Miep Gies who launches a rescue operation to find the texts that Anne has written. Her risky undertaking is meticulously described through her wanderings through the city and into the house, until she finds the notebooks strewn around in the attic. She picks them up and puts them in a shoe box that she puts under her arm as she goes to Strømsgodset church, passes the churchyard, and walks up to Thomas Bjerknes's street. When the war is over and Otto Frank has come home, he is given the shoe box by Miep: "It contained two green Andvord books, two blue Emo books, six black Moleskine books, three larger Moleskine books, and eight Leuchtturm books in different colours"[23] (Klausen 2021, 127). The last part of the novel depicts Otto's struggle with editing and transcribing the notebooks, and his futile attempts to interest Norwegian publishers in publishing it. As an alternative, he buys a tape recorder and reads the text that Anne wrote and he transcribed, and then finally he sits down to listen to his own reading of Anne's diary. The narrator explains that he does this because his sight is deteriorating, but by listening to his own voice, and to the silences and cracklings from the tape, Otto gets a richer experience of his memories than he could get only by reading.

Klausen's 2021 novel underscores the inventive character of his universe but maintains a relation to the text it is built on that makes the reader reflect on the connection between them. *Anne F.* positions itself in a contemporary landscape as a novel that emphasises memory as invention, but that does not have the parodic elements that Roth uses from his American point of view in 1979. Instead it foregrounds spatiality as an aesthetically pertinent approach to remembrance, and so it fits into the discussion of travelling memories in ways that first and foremost highlight materiality as an essential requirement for memory. It proposes an understanding of mnemonic migration as a process of transition that is fundamentally based upon and distributed by physical objects that help memories travel, and on which those memories even ultimately depend.

Material objects like streets and sculptures are usually considered static and the opposite of movement and travel. In his book *Space and Place. The Perspective of Experience*, Yi-Fu Tuan underscores that place is "essentially a static concept" (1977, 179), but he also offers various approaches to understanding the relationship between time and place, and reflects on "place as time made visible, or place as

23 "Den inneholdt to grønne Andvord-bøker, to blå Emo-bøker, seks sorte Moleskine-bøker, tre større sorte Moleskine-bøker, og åtte Leuchtturm-bøker i ulike farger".

memorial to times past" (1977, 179). In a similar vein, Astrid Erll emphasises how mnemonic constellations "may look static and bounded when scholars select for their research, as they tend to do, manageable sections of reality (temporal, spatial, or social ones), but they become fuzzy as soon as the perspective is widened" (2011, 14). Kristian Klausen's novel addresses the seemingly stable object of a sculpture and the static space of the urban landscape in fuzzy intertwinements with memory processes, both as the mental phenomenon of individual remembrance, and the media phenomenon of the book and the tape recorder.

The triangular pattern of the novel, which is manifested by the three women in different assemblages, the three districts, and the three addresses through which Otto Frank remembers his past, corresponds to a material matrix that foregrounds memory as a vibrant negotiation with spatiality. My reading of the novel's triangular pattern emphasises three strands of its thematic, which are its elaboration of the strolls, its focus on the sculpture, and its metafictional aspects. A last reflection on this triangularity is that it may underpin a hermeneutics of memory that refuses to see it in a dualistic sense as a relationship between past events and present commemorations. Artistic works and literary fictions intervene in these processes, thereby problematising their status as straightforward mental and material transporters of events. The notion of travelling memories receives a reciprocal but anti-linear dimension that calls for a dynamic understanding of their ways of working. My interpretation of *Anne F.* has unearthed the understanding of what Astrid Erll calls the "multilinear and often fuzzy trajectories of cultural remembering and forgetting" (2011, 14).

Conclusion

Both of these novels are part of the collective remembrance of the Holocaust even though their immediate concerns are both decidedly subjective and clearly local or culturally specific. Both authors are undoubtedly impressed by the young Dutch girl's talent for writing, and they use her text as an inspiration for their own. Their admiration is not explicitly mentioned, but it serves as an implied motivation for bringing her story into their projects, which deal more with the creation of literature than with the destiny of the Jews. In these two novels Anne Frank's diary does not represent first and foremost an occasion to investigate the Jewish genocide as a historical catastrophe, or the policy of extermination as an antisemitic ideology, but gives the chance to consider the different aesthetic effects of remembrance of the genocide. Both authors take it for granted that the historical circumstances are well known, letting them emphasise instead the aesthetical aspects of the processes of remembrance and remediation. The memorialising effect of

their fiction is nevertheless unquestionable, and it demonstrates how Frank's book has successfully travelled and been used in new cultural contexts.

In Roth's *The Ghost Writer*, the remediation of Frank's diary works as a symptom of an American cultural imperialism that is relatively blind to otherness and past atrocities. The novel, with its ironies, directs its gaze inwardly to the Jewish-American community's reluctance to cope with its past, and outwardly to the mass media industry's servile adaptations to mainstream entertainment. Roth's parodic invention of Anne Frank as a post-war immigrant in the US and the hypothesis of her watching the play based on her own book demands a critical reflection on the ways in which Holocaust memory is remediated. This metafictional thematic, with its focus on a series of remediations, turns the question sharply onto the novel itself and illuminates various mechanisms of mnemonic migration.

In Klausen's *Anne F.*, the diary is thematised as a literary expression that allows past events and people to be remembered and to stay aesthetically alive. *Anne F.* is not critical and ironic in the way *The Ghost Writer* is, and it is reconstructive where Roth's is deconstructive, but Klausen's use of fictional invention has a similar overstating profile. The narrative concept of moving the internally displaced people from Amsterdam in the Netherlands to Drammen in Norway facilitates a thought experiment where various aspects of remembrance can be aesthetically scrutinised. In his contrafactual fantasy, Klausen proposes material objects and an urban landscape as an important support for, or substance of, memory, thus emphasising both the mental and mediative processes of remembrance.

Both novels address transcultural remediations and inspire reflection on the very act of aesthetic transformation of memories. Both novels scrutinise how aesthetic articulations not only remember the past and work as memory agents, but may also independently reflect on the mental and mediative processes of remembrance. Different in attitude but comparable in mode, the two novels investigate the relation of a literary text to its antecedent sources and foreground a hermeneutics of invention. As fictions of a distinct meta-discursive kind and of complex intertextuality, they offer sophisticated approaches to the meaning of travelling memories.

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