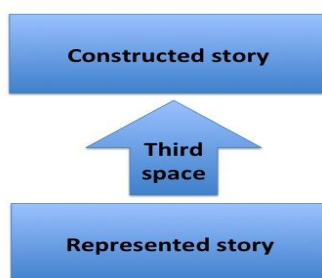


The Mirror Image of Surrogation

The EPTM project suggests a reversal of the process of surrogation in that it is performed by an “end user” rather than a KOP and without the KOE-constructed context of a KOS. Further, the token that will become the surrogate for a memory pre-exists, and the story (the represented thing) may pre-exist, one or more variants may pre-exist, or it may be developed during surrogation.

Figure 3. EPTM Surrogation



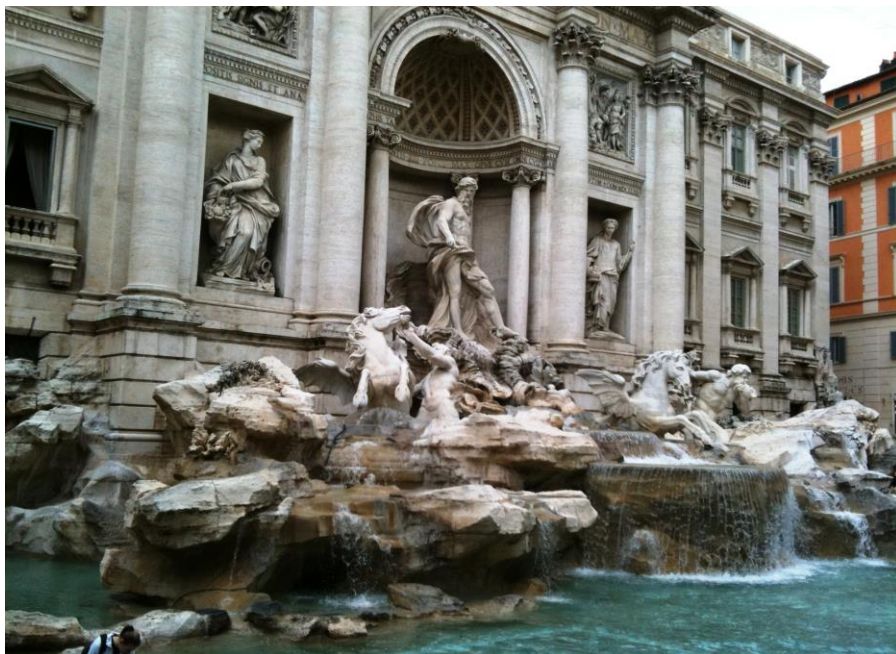
Less radical changes in the role of the surrogate demonstrate that the process can be hybridized. Tagging, for example, typically includes a conventional surrogate which can be expanded by users adding tags after surrogation (e.g., Library of Congress FlickrTM Commons). Some web databases invite users to create surrogates according to KOS devised by KOE. Examples range from the Worthington [Ohio] Memory Project calling for volunteers <http://www.worthingtonmemory.org/volunteers.cfm> to MusicBrainz inviting site visitors to “[b]ecome a part of our global community and start contributing!” <http://musicbrainz.org/>. Both provide templates, instruction, and quality control. These examples illustrate a change in the context which is the Third Space, and demonstrate an alteration in the nature of the surrogate.

Surrogates and Surrogation in the Third Space

In the Third Space there is a seemingly ongoing power shift – from KOP applying KOS developed by KOE with a view to consistency, to a more communitarian approach whether in a local or global community. As part of this shift, the surrogate has shed its fixity and become a fluid component of a flexible system. Assignment of meaning has moved to the user who assumes responsibility for providing context and content in the process of surrogation. Operating outside of the boundaries of KOS, the user may add interpretations that, themselves, may foster meaning-chaining across platforms.

This shift can be illustrated with the following example. Consider a photograph of the Trevi Fountain in Rome, Italy (see Figure 4). The surrogate record of the picture that the KOP creates for the KOS will describe the physical characteristics of the photograph, and provide access to its subject, creator, and location. The Third Space surrogate would require that whatever personal meaning is evoked for an individual (also) be captured. It might be a trip to Rome; it might be an allusion to a film; it might be an allusion to a particular occasion of seeing the film; it might be seeing the film in the company of someone originally encountered on a trip to Rome; it might be some or all of these at different times. Given that that meaning could be manifest in multiple, diverse narratives, opportunities for linking very different surrogates – and the memories they represent – abound. Somewhat like a mind map, a photograph of the Trevi Fountain could foster linkages to memories that, themselves, suggest other connections, and to surrogates associated with those subsequent places, persons, events, activities, or other cherished entities. Not only would there be multiple opportunities for reinforcing a particular memory, but also spaces for enhancing, expanding, and moving well beyond, or diverging from, that memory, even to the point of creating an entirely new meaning-full entity.

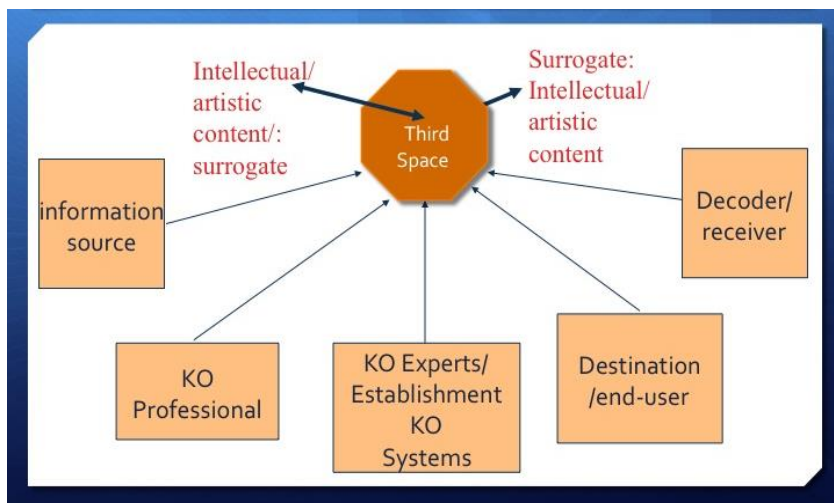
Figure 4. Trevi Fountain, Rome, Italy



The possibilities for connecting memory, and thereby, for encouraging a limitless number and direction of innovative linkages, suggests an even greater power for the surrogate – not only to lead to physical or digital “objects” – or resources in their broadest sense – but also to lead *away from* them to further discovery. For individuals dealing with cognitive decline, this new power of surrogates promises to open memory from something usually associated with the past, to a rich activity of unconstrained meaning-making in the present. For children, the connections encouraged by this re-visioned Third Space surrogation may simply be a further aid to imagination, and, no doubt, more conventional, though creative learning.

The Third Space displays and accommodates the various discourses brought to bear on the meaning of the surrogate. For example, the KOP may bring local facets while the KOE focuses on standardization for sharing (see figure 5 KO Discourses in the Third Space). Collectively these discourses construct the Third Space that in turn defines the meanings of the intellectual and artistic content of that mark the surrogate. Another outcome from the power shift from KOP and KOE to user is a repositioning of authority. As responsibility for validating the surrogate that represents the memory (or object, entity, etc.) moves to the individual, the “author” of that memory, as told in a personal narrative, becomes the sole “authority”. Validation of whatever constitutes the surrogate sufficiently to evoke “the memory”, or “a memory” rests with the narrator (originator). While that might suggest that each surrogate would thus become a unique representation, and by its attribution to one individual, be disconnected from the memory surrogates of another or others, the actual vehicle for linkage resides with the “token” – the surrogate that stands apart from all memories, but likewise serves as an anchor for individual memory.

Figure 5. KO Discourses in the Third Space



Conclusion

This is both the paradox and the power of the memory surrogate. This is also the point at which we might attempt to rejoin the usual practice of KO with Third Space surrogation. This is where we might reconcile their complementarity, rather than seeing divergent approaches and outcomes. The surrogates of physical and digital “objects” (in their broadest sense) created by KOP for KOS, and informed and “validated” by KOE standards, could be viewed as a first point of discovery, or a base for next-stage Third Space surrogation. Finding a photograph of the Trevi Fountain becomes the starting point for evoking memory, whose Third Space surrogation launches, in turn, potentially limitless meaning-chaining and further linkages to other memory surrogates – whether supported by KOS surrogates or otherwise. In this latter scenario, the surrogate ceases to be a static representation of a “real” thing, becoming, instead, a kind of engine or driver for meaning-making, likewise for memory-making.

Social media and opportunities for group engagement in a variety of creative activities online – both those reliant on specialized skills, and those welcoming to the novice – have fostered an environment that thrives on changeability and high risk. Patience for information delivered top-down, and seen to be the (sole) domain of an exclusive cadre of experts is waning. Our suggested rethinking of the surrogate from the perspective of Bhabha’s Third Space offers an alternative. Likewise, this apparent move to greater fluidity should foster a greater tolerance for rapid, sometimes unpredictable change, offering the potential for a sustainable future for KO.

Acknowledgement

Howarth thanks the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for funding the Exploring Pathways to Memory project under its Standard Research Grants program, 2008-2012. She is likewise grateful to those who participated in the study.

References

- Bhabha, Homi. K. (1994). *A Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Chandler, Daniel. (1998). The Transmission Model of Communication <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/short/trans.html>
- Howarth, Lynne C., and Hendry, Erica. 2013. Memory cues, recall strategies, and Alzheimer’s Disease. In *Scholarship in action: data, innovation, wisdom: proceedings of iConference 2013, February 12-15, 2013, Fort Worth, TX*. <https://ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/39555/267.pdf?sequence=4>
- Shannon, CE. (1949). *A Mathematical Theory of Communication*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press