

Symposium

Time, Memory, Representation

March 27, 2026

8:45 – 16:30 (EET)



@ Room A270 – Arcanum
University of Turku

@ Zoom
Meeting ID: 660 3212 0302



UNIVERSITY
OF TURKU



Program

8:45 – 9:00	Arrival
9:00 – 10:15	Panel 1: Acts of remembrance
10:15 – 10:30	Break
10:30 – 11:30	Panel 2: Time and temporality: Entanglements of past and future (I)
11:30 – 12:30	Panel 3: Time and temporality: Entanglements of past and future (II)
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Panel 4: Cultural Memory Making in Public Media
15:00 – 15:15	Break
15:15 – 16:30	Roundtable (<i>title TBA</i>)

Abstracts

Panel 1 Acts of Remembrance	3
Panel 2 Time and temporality: Entanglements of past and future (I)	6
Panel 3 Time and temporality: Entanglements of past and future (II)	8
Panel 4 – Cultural Memory and/in Public Discourse	10
Roundtable (title TBA)	12

Panel 1 Acts of Remembrance

Chair: TBA

The Kinetic Unconscious and the Predictive Body in Performance Practice

Nikolay Barzakov (Southwest University, Bulgaria)

Email: nbarzakow@gmail.com

We typically view memory as a static archive of history. Yet, functionally, the brain uses the past primarily as raw material to simulate and predict the immediate future (Schacter et al., 2007). This biological drive for efficiency creates an anticipatory affect—a somatic rush toward the next moment—that effectively hollows out the present, reducing unique experiences to repeatable reflexes. Revisiting André Lepecki's (2006) concept of the kinetic unconscious, this paper examines the body not just as a political archive, but as a site of recursive cognitive loops. These autopilots often override agency, reducing performative practices to a stream of reactive predictions. This research proposes active somatic listening as a methodology to interrupt this cycle. The practice involves deliberately creating a gap between impulse and action. This is not a suppression of the body, but a temporal suspension that allows the performer to recognize the habit and negotiate its trajectory—whether to inhibit, repurpose, or unfold it—before it completes itself. In this expansion, the linear rush of time breaks down. Drawing on Freud's afterwardsness, the paper argues that this acute attunement allows for the re-timing of past excesses. Rather than remaining subject to the scarcity of the future, the performer engages in a generative negotiation with the present, revealing time as an elastic structure capable of reconstruction.

Nostalgia without Nostalgia – 'Heimat' in Nora Krug's *Heimat*

Niina Hanhinen (University of Turku, Finland)

Email: nmhanh@utu.fi

In her graphic memoir *Heimat* (2018) German born Nora Krug, “a homesick émigrée” living in the U.S., tells the story of her reckoning with her family history and the Nazi era atrocities in Germany. Krug examines the feeling of nostalgia for a lost ‘heimat,’ which is the German word for a physical and mental homeland. Nostalgia is usually defined as sentimentality, a yearning over something lost, be it the bygone days or a home(land). It is both a personal feeling and a societal force which preserves cultural heritage. Cultural heritage, or cultural memory, creates a bond between

generations via traditions, language, art, and build environment, and it plays part in identity formation. Heimat is a politically charged concept, tainted with over-enthusiastic nationalism. Krug indicates she has lost a 'heimat' not only by emigrating but as an outcome of the Nazi era. For Krug, the atrocities and the following downplay of "Germanness" after the World War II have made it difficult to feel a connection to the Germany of the previous generations. In this paper I will examine how Krug uses both the *Rückenfigur*, a posture from art history made famous by a German artist Caspar David Friedrich at the beginning of the 19th century, and small tangible objects, like glue or rye bread, instead of glorious national past, in her search for the lost 'heimat' and in an attempt to feel nostalgia without nostalgia.

Memory epiphanies in short story form: involuntary memories as tellable events of past

Riikka Pirinen (Tampere University)

Email: riikka.pirinen@tuni.fi

The presentation explores ways in which literary epiphany, a sudden and brief yet potentially life-changing experience of illumination of a character, is in connection with narrating memories and remembering in fiction. Previous studies suggest that epiphanic moments in narrative interrupt the temporal movement creating a pause that contrasts with the forward movement of narrative pace (Gingrich 2018). However, I argue that epiphany can also engage temporal dimensions in fiction particularly when connected with memories, as it represents the dynamics between past and present. As a sudden and unexpected moment, epiphany evokes or is evoked by an involuntary memory (see Tigges 1999), which appears unintentionally for the fictional character. These significant epiphanic experiences often constitute the most tellable moment of a story (cf. Taddei 2024), the very reason why the story is told (Ryan 2005), especially within the short story form. The presentation proposes via analyses of Alice Munro's and Toni Morrison's short stories that the tellability of memorial epiphanies is achieved through the temporal dynamics inherent in these moments.

Care Is How We Remember: Memory As a Site of Healing in the Good Hair Day Collective

Nia Sullivan (Åbo Akademi University, Finland)

Email: nia.sullivan@abo.fi

This research discusses how the Good Hair Day (GHD) collective, a feminist and anti-racist collective in Finland celebrating AfroFinnishness and afro hair, enacts collective care as a form of

memory-work. We conceptualize collective care as a method and an ethic of counter-archiving that affirms AfroFinnish presence and futurity. Writing from within the GHD collective, we draw on collaborative ethnography to explore how gathering and storytelling, in both informal and organized settings, carry memory, forming embodied archives of healing and futurity. By theorizing memory as a collective and relational practice, this article contributes to AfroNordic feminist scholarship by emphasizing collective care as both a form of survival and an epistemology.

Panel 2 Time and temporality: Entanglements of past and future (I)

Chair: TBA

Metanarratives of Fate: Tragedy, Historicity, and the Temporality of Freedom

Natan Elgabsi (Tampere University, Finland)

Email: natan.elgabsi@tuni.fi

In this presentation, I will describe a contrast between two kinds of temporalities: (1) the temporality of freedom, (2) the temporality of necessity (or fate). The presentation aims at first exemplifying the temporality of necessity (or fate) through a discussion of some examples of myth and tragedy in Greek antiquity, and also how these tragic configurations easily affect the ways in which one thinks about and narrate the past. After that, a discussion of the temporality of freedom will be exemplified by the means of a critique of fate that appears in the work of Plato and Emmanuel Levinas. I argue that an adherence to the temporality freedom regarding the narratives that are told is important to ethical life, as freedom, in contrast to fate, opens the possibility to force the future for the sake of others.

“The Tragedy of Time”: Representation of Chernobyl Catastrophe in Svetlana Alexievich’s *Chernobyl Prayer: A Chronicle of the Future*

Kseniya Fiaduta (Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain)

Email: kfiaduta@gmail.com

On 26 April 1986, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant was shaken by a series of explosions. As highlighted by the historian Serhii Plokhly (2019), the catastrophic explosion released 50 million curies of radiation, the equivalent of 500 Hiroshima bombs, putting the world on the brink of nuclear annihilation. While officials tried to cover up the accident, the Belarusian writer and journalist Svetlana Alexievich spent years collecting testimonies from survivors, giving voice to the otherwise unheard narratives and tragic consequences of the disaster. In this presentation, I will examine the representation of the Chernobyl catastrophe in Svetlana Alexievich’s documentary novel *Chernobyl Prayer: A Chronicle of the Future* (1997/2016), focusing on the novel’s attention to time. As noted by Svetlana Alexievich, the Chernobyl catastrophe challenges our common understanding of time and the world. In the post-Chernobyl world, we find ourselves in a completely new reality that goes beyond our comprehension and imagination. In the face of Chernobyl, the past cannot help us and the future

is terribly terrifying and uncertain. In this tragedy of time, the human being's loneliness and powerlessness is absolute.

Pining for the Future: Transhumanist Nostalgia, Utopia, Community

Jouni Teittinen (University of Turku, Finland)

Email: jiteit@utu.fi

“I am a man of the 21st century who was accidentally released into the 20th. I have a deep nostalgia for the future.” My presentation zooms in on this sentiment, here voiced by the transhumanist author F.M. Esfandiary: what does the paradoxical notion of “nostalgia for the future” entail? How does it relate to the notion of utopia (described by Baudrillard as the inverted mirror of nostalgia) and potentially feed into the affective (de)construction of community? In addition to articulating this notable aspect of the transhumanist mindset (its projected contemporaneity with the future), the paper aims to further the theoretical discussion vis-à-vis the two-way dynamic between utopia and nostalgia. More specifically, I examine whether the familiar division of utopian discourses into process utopianism and “blueprint utopias” can be usefully mapped onto Svetlana Boym’s distinction between “reflective nostalgia” and “restorative nostalgia.” What process utopianism (the “hope” of Bloch, the “desire” of Fredric Jameson) appears to share with “reflective nostalgia” is a critical attitude towards excessive idealization and fantasies of fulfillment, combined with an appreciation of the utopian/nostalgic affect itself and the future-oriented action it might catalyze. So-called blueprint utopias, on the other hand, share with Boym’s “restorative nostalgia” a more straightforward belief in an actual state of things (an actual past or an actual future) to be realized or re-realized. The transhumanist sentiment of “nostalgia for the future,” I suggest, casts into particularly sharp relief this more general dynamic between nostalgia and utopia.

Panel 3 Time and temporality: Entanglements of past and future (II)

Chair: TBA

Temporalities in Testimonial Literature from the Gulag Archipelago

Lovisa Andén (Åbo Akademi University, Finland)

Email: lovisa.anden@abo.fi

Testimonial literature is a literary genre, famous for describing experiences of concentration camps, labor camps, genocide and the like. Furthermore, testimonial literature bears witness in a double sense: both to the objective reality it testifies to and to the significance that the historical events held for the witness. Therefore, it is entangled in different forms of temporalities: on the one hand, the inner temporality of the subjective experience, and on the other, shared, historical temporality. This paper discusses the entanglement of these temporalities in the case of testimonial literature from the Gulag Archipelago, drawing on a phenomenological understanding of time, memory and experience.

Narrating Three Generations in Women's Fiction

Fatima Borrmann (KU Leuven, Belgium)

Email: fatima.borrmann@kuleuven.be

While the mother–daughter dyad has long served as a key framework for feminist analyses of generational change/belonging, the grandmother has remained comparatively underexamined. Only recently has emerging work in feminist sociology and ageing studies begun to address the analytical limitations of two-generational models and argue for the importance of three-generational frameworks that foreground emotional reciprocity, interdependence, mutual care, and the social value of later life. Such approaches challenge dominant narratives of generational conflict and decline by highlighting the complexity of women's multigenerational relationships when viewed from a feminist lens. This paper contributes to these debates by examining cultural narratives that center the grandmother as a formative presence in the granddaughter's feminist identity formation and as a key agent in processes of historical memory and revision. Focusing on contemporary cultural production, which has seen a surge in biographical and autobiographical narratives authored by granddaughters about their grandmothers, such as Vona Groarke's *Hereafter* (2021), Kate Grenville's *Restless Dolly Maunder* (2023), and Lea Ypi's *Indignity* (2025), I will demonstrate how the grandmother has become an

increasingly significant figure for women when thinking about inheritance, memory, migration, and dignity in later life.

Slow Narratives of Addiction Recovery

Avril Tynan (University of Turku, Finland)

Email: aatyna@utu.fi

Often framed as uniform and teleological stories of ‘tragedy to triumph’ (Voronka and Grant 2022; Woods et al. 2022), generic recovery narratives promote coherence and closure. Throughout my research, however, I have found that recovery narratives bring out and highlight the contingencies, uncertainties, and ambiguities of past experiences as they continue to impact upon the present. I have argued that narratives of recovery are incoherent, messy, and complicated, giving voice to polyvalent and polyvocal experiences that blur the binaries between illness and health and between narrative and its absence. Across a range of narratives, recovery does not ensure closure or conclusion but is instead positioned as the starting point to a slow and meandering story. In Augusten Burroughs’ *Dry* (2003), a critically-acclaimed memoir of his recovery from alcohol addiction, periods of sobriety are narrated with an unmistakable slowness that mimics both the moniker of AA terminology—one day at a time—and characterizes the time of recovery as distinct from addiction. In Amy Liptrot’s *The Outrun* (2016), as well as the accompanying film (2024), slowness emerges in the simultaneities and coexistences of the present to elucidate the everyday challenges of recovery. Building on Marco Caracciolo’s concept of slow narratives (2022), as well as the work of Lutz Koepnick (2014), I trace these slow narratives of addiction recovery and argue that slowness holds a key to a reconceptualization of the linear and teleological arc of the hegemonic recovery narrative.

Panel 4 – Cultural Memory and/in Public Discourse

Chair: TBA

Transnational Time and Tradition. The Commemoration of the 1896 “Hungarian Millennium” in the Spanish Catholic Press

Aitor Insunza Núñez (Autonomous University of Madrid, Spain)

Email: aitor.insu@gmail.com

In this paper, I survey representations of historical time in the Spanish conservative press at the turn of the nineteenth century motivated by the Hungarian Millennium of 1896. The unfolding of this event—which commemorated the thousand years since the settlement of the Magyars in the Pannonian Plain— was granted extensive coverage in Spanish Carlist, Catholic, and monarchist newspapers, where it occupied a prominent place in the international news section. Even though the Millennium was a nationalist commemoration meant to exalt Hungarian history and culture and, as such, drew from long-established imaginaries (as well as others constructed explicitly for the occasion), the event’s significance reached well beyond the Austro-Hungarian borders, attracting considerable international attention. Not only did the international press cover the Millennium but also took part in shaping how the link between Hungarian tradition and history was represented. In the Spanish context, this coverage took place against the backdrop of imperial nostalgia and a profound national identity crisis (a position epitomized by the intellectual cohort known as the Generation of ’98). Conservative Spanish newspapers demonstrated notable interest in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the nationalist rituals developed to commemorate the event. I contend that the historical–temporal factor was key in shaping a geographically distant yet ideologically proximate space within late nineteenth-century conservative thought: as a point of temporal reflection in European history, the case of the “Hungarian Millennium” was used by these newspapers to draw a divide between tradition and modernity.

Memory, Fictionality, and Narrative Positioning in Oral History Interviews of Finnish Politicians

Nanny Jolma (University of Tampere, Finland)

Email: nanny.jolma@tuni.fi

This paper examines oral history interviews of former Finnish MPs (1988-2018) by applying approaches of literary and narrative studies. I focus on the use of the verb “remember” as a means of

narrative positioning. The large digital corpus is lemmatized enabling me to locate the mentions of the memory process for closer analysis. In the interviews conducted by the Library of Parliament, the MPs are asked to reflect on their personal history and their path of becoming a politician. Thus, they are institutionally and practically guided to deal with memory as well as personal and professional identities. I analyze these sense making processes by applying theories of narrative positioning (Bamberg 2004, Depperman 2015) and recent studies on fictionality as a question of quality and use of certain narrative features (Hatavara et al. 2023, Mildorf 2023). The interviews provide repeated use of memory related vocabulary, diverse narrative positioning, as well as meta-level discussion about expectations considering autobiography, memory, and politics. My analysis shows how the former Finnish MPs position themselves in the narrative interaction and in relation to the conventions of telling one's memories.

Emancipated Female Duel: A 19th Century Newspaper Hoax in Cultural Memory

Judit Kerpics (University of Szeged, Hungary)

Email: juditkerpics@gmail.com

In the summer of 1892, a sensational story hit the European press. Princess Pauline Metternich-Sándor and Countess Anastasia Kilmannsegg fought a sabre duel to first blood over a disagreement on the International Music and Theatre Exhibition in Vienna. The alleged duel resulted in lighter injuries on both sides. In a statement shortly afterwards, the princess herself denied that the duel ever took place. The idea originated in *La Tribuna* (Rome), but a wide range of European newspapers published it – with or without scepticism – and soon it evolved into a topless duel with more and more embellishments. The rather erotic depiction of ladies dueling half-naked was nothing new by the end of the 19th century, but after it was associated with this particular duel between influential aristocrats, the number of visual representations of this scene increased, and it also has a theatrical impact. The many narratives of the hoax live on even today: in books on fencing history, blogs and magazines it is told as a lesser-known episode of the Austro-Hungarian Empire's history. Some are still sceptical, some approach it with imperial nostalgia, some from the perspective of women's emancipation, or as a queer narrative. In my presentation, I will examine the narrative perspective of 19th- and 21st-century retellings of this duel, with a particular emphasis on how a hoax finds its way into cultural memory and what kind of cultural identity-shaping effect all this has? How did a colorful tabloid news become an iconic moment of women's emancipation in the 21st-century online public?

Roundtable: *Intersections of Time, Memory and Life Writing*

Niamh Gordon (University of Glasgow, United Kingdom)

Email: n.gordon.2@research.gla.ac.uk

Koko Hubara (University of Turku, Finland)

Email: smhuba@utu.fi

Sara Villamarín-Freire (University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain)

Email: sara.villamarin@usc.es