

Timescapes in Childhood Memories of Everyday Life During the Cold War

Mnemo ZIN et Camila da Rosa Ribeiro

Volume 48, numéro 1, janvier 2023

Time Special Issue

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1097287ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.18357/jcs202320547>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Canadian Association for Young Children

ISSN

2371-4107 (imprimé)

2371-4115 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer cet article

ZIN, M. & da Rosa Ribeiro, C. (2023). Timescapes in Childhood Memories of Everyday Life During the Cold War. *Journal of Childhood Studies*, 48(1), 99–110. <https://doi.org/10.18357/jcs202320547>

Résumé de l'article

During the Cold War, linear and future-oriented temporalities were enforced to accelerate social transformation on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Despite efforts to control time by bracketing complex human conditions, children were routinely engaged in everyday activities that followed different rhythms. Building on Barbara Adam's notion of timescapes and drawing on collective biography research, this article examines different temporal experiences through childhood memories of harvesting in a forest, a family garden, and a collective farm. These memories reveal emotionally intense—embodied and embedded—temporal experiences of children entangled within timescapes of multiple and sometimes contradictory dimensions of human and more-than-human times.



Timescapes in Childhood Memories of Everyday Life During the Cold War

Mnemo ZIN and Camila da Rosa Ribeiro

Mnemo ZIN is a composite name for Zsuzsa Millei (Faculty of Education and Culture, Tampere University, Finland, and Department of Education, Communication, and Learning, University of Gothenburg, Sweden), Iveta Silova (Arizona State University), and Nelli Piattoeva (Tampere University). By adopting a collective name, we foreground our entangled, perpetual becoming-with as researchers and human beings who refuse to single out or rank our contributions. Our collective name is inspired by the figure of Mnemosyne from Greek mythology, goddess of memory and mother of the nine Muses. Spanning almost ten years, our research examines childhood memories through the collective biography method, which contributes to writing alternative histories and informs our current thinking about (post)socialist and (de)colonial pasts, presents, and futures. Email: iveta.silova@asu.edu

Camila da Rosa Ribeiro is a doctoral researcher working interdisciplinarily, intersecting decolonial thinking, posthumanism, memory studies, and performance pedagogy. Her PhD dissertation explores relationships between time and subjectivity, specifically how they become entangled to produce visions of futures. She uses collective biography and collective artistic practices to explore how futures are produced in memory accounts of people raised in postcolonial places.

During the Cold War, linear and future-oriented temporalities were enforced to accelerate social transformation on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Despite efforts to control time by bracketing complex human conditions, children were routinely engaged in everyday activities that followed different rhythms. Building on Barbara Adam's notion of timescapes and drawing on collective biography research, this article examines different temporal experiences through childhood memories of harvesting in a forest, a family garden, and a collective farm. These memories reveal emotionally intense—embodied and embedded—temporal experiences of children entangled within timescapes of multiple and sometimes contradictory dimensions of human and more-than-human times.

Key words: *collective memory; childhood; time; harvest; timescape*

During the Cold War, the political control and management of time was critical in a global race for political and economic domination. Linear, future-oriented, and irreversible temporalities were enforced to accelerate the transformation of social life and landscapes on both sides of the Iron Curtain. From five-year plans in socialist countries to economic rationalism in capitalist states, the pursuit of modern(ist) futures entailed unprecedented levels of standardization, mechanization, administration, and synchronization in the management of time, leaving little to chance (Scott, 1998). Stemming from the assumption that humans were fully in control of their own destiny, both socialist and capitalist modernities strived to establish “a socioeconomic temporality seemingly emancipated from natural time ... from the cycles of weather and seasons and the limited power of organic—human and nonhuman—work” (Folkers, 2021, p. 228). In all spheres of life—from factories and collective farms

to schools and family life—the goal was to bracket the natural environment and control human conditions in order to propel societies toward new modern(ist) futures. In this article, we explore different experiences of time, which we encountered as children and narrated in our own memories as adults.

In a “tyranny of time” over childhood, the modernist quest to control time also colonized childhood: developmental trajectories were mapped onto children’s lives in a “rigid production schedule” and children were expected to act with clocks (Wien, 1996, p. 377; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2012). In particular, a chronological and sequential order of modern Western epistemologies located childhood at the beginning of human life, which was organized in stages and ended with puberty (Burman, 2021; Tesar et al., 2016). Childhood was also implicated in a different form of

colonization in which colonized populations were framed as children by mapping their cognitive capacities on the lower rungs of human development (Burman, 2021; Murriss & Kohan, 2021). Closely intertwined with modern human and humanity's development, time and childhood thus became the subject of intense control. During the Cold War, for example, state socialist societies governed childhood and time so intensely that childhood—and real children—came to represent an iconic image of the future as a generation a step closer toward communism (Silova, Millei, & Piattoeva, 2017). Although children's lives were simultaneously regulated by the “physical and biological circles that go beyond human agency” (Shahjahan, 2018, p. 10) as well as nature's rhythms (Silova, 2019), modern technological and scientific development aimed to tame nature's unpredictability, nature's cycles, cosmic rhythms, and children's (vital) biological rhythms in an attempt to (re)align the sequencing of time with human plans for a predetermined future.

Although the enforcement of modern linear temporality aimed to act as a “steam iron” that flattened “the temporal folds, knots, and wrinkles of geological time” (Folkers, 2021, p. 228), it failed to create a perfectly smooth temporal surface for modernity's projects to unfold upon. Furthermore, the fall of the Berlin Wall represented both the turbulent opening of geopolitical space and the simultaneous “awareness of temporal velocities and incongruities” on both sides of the Iron Curtain (Walker, 1993, p. 3; see also McKay, 2016). The effects of these incongruities intensified in the decades following the end of the Cold War, making visible the impossibility of the modern(ist) horizon of progress. What previously appeared to be an open horizon of infinite progress and development, had already, during the last decades of state socialism, turned into “the sinister prospect of ecological obligations” (Folkers, 2021, p. 238) and “accumulated injuries” (Mah & Wang, 2019)—from exploitation and poverty to environmental degradation, toxification, and illness—all in the name of progress.

While acknowledging coercive violence inherent in modern(ist) temporalities, we are less interested in discussing time as a disciplinary technology (Foucault, 1977) or its role in regulating, managing, and controlling human bodies and land. Rather, we aim to examine the temporal incongruities—the dense folds, knots, and wrinkles of time—in an effort to consider possibilities for alternative temporal imaginaries that have always existed beyond the linear, irreversible, and teleological chronology of socialist modernity. In particular, we will focus on Barbara Adam's (2008) notion of *timescapes* to understand the relationships, interdependencies, and embeddedness of “the complex multifaced temporal domain that is inseparable from its spatial and material expression” (p. 10). Furthermore, we will use a number of related concepts in our interpretations of memories to highlight the diversity of the context of time, including Tim Ingold's (1993, 2017) discussion of *taskscape*s and Deborah Bird Rose's (2012) attention to the “multispecies knots of time” that tie together the human body and landscape as perpetually coevolving. Combined, these different perspectives bring into focus “the generations of living things, ecological time, synchronicities, intervals, patterns, and rhythms, all of which are quite legitimately understood as forms of time” (Rose, 2012, p. 128; see also Adam, 1998). More importantly, they enable us to see modern humans, not as independent shapers of the land's surface and its future (no matter how much they attempted to inscribe these roles in five-year plans), but as beings entangled with the land, their lives being inseparable from an ecological and geological landscape of the earth and its more-than-human inhabitants.

Using the collective biography approach, our collaborative international and interdisciplinary research project “Reconnect/Recollect” examined childhood memories of everyday life during the Cold War. In collective biography research, participants recall and analyze memories generated in a group together (e.g., Davies & Gannon 2006; Millei, Silova, & Gannon, 2019; Silova et al., 2018; ZIN & Gannon, 2022). Childhood memory stories connect private and public remembering, as well as individual and collective interpretations (Millei et al., 2019). Working with memories, we explored how we “participated in our own past experience” (Haug et al., 1987, p. 35), focusing on the commonalities and differences in the remembered practices and emotions of our own childhoods. In this

process, we focused on how childhoods are contoured by the “tyranny of time” and the associated discourses and practices of progress and development, while being aware of other discourses, silences, and openings to give way to alternative interpretations.

As we delved into the analysis of our childhood memories to explore time and temporality, we noticed a series of memories related to harvests and harvesting, taking place in the forest, family orchards and gardens, and collective farms, which were charged with intense emotions. These were often experiences of urban children who found themselves in unfamiliar surroundings (e.g., rural or agricultural landscapes) and engaging in unfamiliar tasks (e.g., working on collective farms, in family gardens, or spending time together with their grandparents collecting berries or mushrooms in the forest). Not only were these spaces described as being “in the middle of nowhere” in childhood memories, but the experiences themselves were often described as dull, monotonous, slow, or never ending. Memories also carried strong emotions associated with these activities, including feelings of being angry, upset, scared, ashamed, or bored, and sometimes even provoked crying. We decided to explore these memories further to understand what these memory stories might signal in terms of children’s experiences of different temporalities. By bringing attention to these different experiences of time in memory stories, our goal is to make unfamiliar the modern(ist) narratives of linear progress and to make strange the modern(ist) ideal of the capitalist and socialist landscapes as objects of technical development devoid of the complex human and more-than-human dimensions.

Timescape as a methodology

Problematizing time as a “linear linking of past to future,” Adam (2008) explains that it is “a complex, multidimensional phenomenon that involves biographical time, which covers that lifespan from birth to death, generational time, which provides links and attachments across generations of kinship relations and historical time, locating individual and family lives in the wider frames of external events, environments and political landscapes” (p. 7). The concept of timescape emphasizes the complexity and multidimensionality of time, highlighting how it is more than linear or divisible. Timescape has a number of irreducible elements that together with biographical, generational, and historical time construct a timescape. The elements of the timescape include:

- time frame—bounded, beginning and end of day, year, lifetime, generation, historical/geological epoch
- temporality—process world, internal to system, aging, growing, irreversibility, directionality
- timing—synchronization, coordination, right/wrong time
- tempo—speed, pace, rate of change, velocity; intensity: how much activity is performed in given timeframe
- duration—extent, temporal distance; horizon: no duration = instantaneity, time point/moment
- sequence—order, succession, priority: no sequence = simultaneity, at same time
- temporal modalities: past, present and future—memory, perception/experience and anticipation. (Adam, 2008, pp. 7–8)

Adam explains that when several of “these elements are brought together we begin to see patterns of rhythmicity, periodicity and cyclicity” (p. 8).

Moreover, the elements of time do not operate in isolation but implicate each other. They do not necessarily add up to a coherent whole, and the more elements are involved, the more difficult it is to establish compatibility.

Experiencing incompatibility as different elements come together might be what child protagonists in memories describe as feelings of anger, frustration, or dullness. Adam's (2008) analysis grants us granular theoretical and methodological lenses into the study of time and helps foreground the sticky nature of time and the time of nature, that is, time's inseparability from space and matter (Adam, 2004). Elsewhere Adam (2005) discusses the common understanding of time in relation to nature understood as calendar and clock time. This singular understanding of time allowed the inclusion of the land's productivity in socialist five-year plans. Searching time in memories through granular lenses shows, as Adam (2005, p. 8) explains, that the environment is "not merely matters of space but fundamentally temporal realms, processes and concepts. Their temporality, furthermore, is far from simple and singular."

The modern attempts at time management have sought to streamline human and natural times and to disentangle human time from space and body to make it "truly" abstract (see Adam, 2004, referring to Paul Virilio, p. 130). However, in daily practice, nothing was replaced but merely changed or overshadowed, adding more elements to the timescape rather than hollowing it out (Adam, 2004). This layeredness may cause clashes, such as when children need to adjust to the tempo of their working parents or school schedules, or, as our stories show, tension emerges when the lifespan of a growing plant does not coincide with the timing of the school year. The complexity of time however is not given; rather in studies of time it is determined by the chosen temporal frame, and the combination of temporal elements selected, which then delimit what will be possible to see in the analysis. For instance, Adam (2008) exemplifies how a narrower temporal frame of the minutiae of everyday life in a school day foregrounds the linear sequence of events in time, while a wider perspective, such as a whole school year, might also expose recurring cycles and rhythms. We therefore proceed in our interpretation of memories by interweaving the broader time context with everyday events and other temporalities. We also identify elements of the timescapes that might not be immediately recognizable if only the event in the memory was kept in our analytical focus.

Harvesting blueberries and lingonberries in the forest

In the summers, the girl's family left their home in the city of Luleå, northern Sweden, to go to her mother's new husband's parents' home in what seemed to be a remote place in the north of Finland. It was in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by forest and gravel roads. The dense forest with its fir and pine trees made her feel isolated, trapped, and as if it were going to eat her up. Now and then, her mother forced her and her sibling to go into the forest to pick blueberries and lingonberries. They had to do it by hand, and with the blueberries, her hands and legs got all blue and sticky, and it was hard to wash it off. The sticky thing from the blueberry was not even good to lick from the fingers. Picking berries in the forest was scary. It was as if the dense forest never ended, and she was always afraid of getting lost and never being found. She had heard stories about that: people getting lost and never found. That scared her. She always felt a huge relief when she got out of the forest, back to the road and into the yard of the house.

The memory about picking berries in a forest portrays a timescape that is brought together by ecological and social relations and the distinct temporalities of human and more-than-human inhabitants. The merging of different timescape elements produces a deeply felt response as the girl becomes disoriented in both space and time. The spatiality of berry picking is not delimited by a clearly mapped, well-known landscape. Movement through the forest is disorienting as it is determined by the berry bushes' abundance or scarcity and the girl's *pace* of picking the berries. The girl is overwhelmed by her inability to demarcate the forest's boundaries, which also confuses her sense of time: If the forest never ends, when, if ever, will her task be completed? It seems the berry picking does not have a *timeframe*. The direction of the movement is as unknown to the girl as the time she is spending on the task.

The *timescape* emerges as unfixed or limitless. Unlike school time with its distinct beginning and end, its division into standard-length lessons, the experience of picking berries seems infinite. Time and space fold into each other, leaving the girl with no temporal or spatial anchor and causing a strong emotional response marked by fear, anger, anxiety, and a strong desire to return to the predictability and certainty of her urban life.

The plants in the forest bring a different element of time to the timescape. They live at a different *tempo*. Trees and berries grow in an *asynchronous* symbiosis. The growth of trees unfolds over a span of decades and centuries, composing a dense forest whose *timeframe* and change is hard to discern in the short span of the girl's visit time. The berries' life cycle is shorter and, from a human perspective, perhaps more clearly composed of distinct, visible *sequences* scripted by human consumption of berries tied in with their *timing* of ripening. Human's attention to growing plants is determined by their extractive value. The *intensity* of the forest captures human attention during spring and the ripening season. Trees offer protection for berries, and somewhere beneath the surface their roots interweave, sharing nutrients and mingling with insects, fungal threads, and microbial life. Their cohabitation is composed of the *rhythms* of changing cosmos, seasons and weather conditions, soil richness, water, gradations of light, the biological *rhythms* and life expectancies of coexisting plants and animals.

For the girl in the story, perhaps due to the unknown elements of time foreign to the linear and predictably sequenced urban life and school-time, the cohabitation experienced in the multiple timescape elements within the forest environment is not evident. More-than-human species seem to exist in a different time to her; not understanding them and their proximity might even be scary for her. She does not consider her own well-being as dependent on the nutrients offered by berries. Just as berries depend on soil, microbes, fungi for nutrition, or trees for protection from excess sun, the girl too is part of this relationality that she is not aware of. In the modernist idea of nature—dismembered into discrete elements with some becoming conceived of as “natural resources” to be subjected to human manipulation and control (Merchant, 1980; Scott, 1998)—nature's more-than-human dimension is rejected, including the agency of its other-than-human inhabitants and their codependence on each other.

The mother imposes a task on the girl to collect berries in the forest during their summer break. The *timing* of the berries' ripening gives reasons for picking. The girl is taken by surprise: Her mother made her go to the forest only “now and then,” signalling unpredictability of the task that probably interrupted the girl's other plans for the day. She is not aware of the *cyclical time* and *rhythms* of the seasons defining the *timing* of these tasks. School or work schedules are human designed and governed. The growth of berries in the forest is neither dictated by nor adhering to the scientifically modified approaches of growing fruits and vegetables on farms where plants are *scheduled* to ripen uniformly and in a *sequenced* manner to provide food all through the year. And yet, the thread of mechanized nature haunts the story, as the narrator accentuates how the girl picks berries with her bare hands. The berry juice is described as a “leaking thing” that stains her entire body causing disgust and marking her further alienation from the surroundings of the forest. Picking berries by hand, as opposed to by machinery, puts humans literally “in touch” with more-than-human worlds, leaving enduring marks on them (e.g., stained hands from the juice of blueberries and lingonberries).

The berries and the mother create the *temporal modality* of the *future*. Through the berries ripening over the coming years along the cycle of seasons, the linked tasks of the girl to collect and clean the berries and the mother to preserve them, and later on their family enjoying the berry jam during the nongrowing seasons, together produce a *synchronization* of plant and human tasks. The berries thus connect present and future, as well as different seasons and tasks performed throughout the year. Planning for cold winters, when nutritious food is unavailable or too expensive, the mother conserves berries to maintain a healthy diet and protect the family from colds in her

roles of a caring mother and a prudent wife. Illness would disrupt the family's everyday routines, determined by standardized work and school times. Berries thus mediate by bringing nature's *temporality* into the family's life while simultaneously helping the family to *synchronize* with the *temporalities* of their urban lives later in the year. As such, the very acts of picking and preserving berries simultaneously bring attention to the "multispecies knots of time," signalling a silent acknowledgment that "all living things owe their lives not only to their forebears but also to all the other others that have nourished them again and again, that nourish each living creature during the duration of its life" (Rose, 2012, pp. 130–131)—blueberries and lingonberries included.

Off from school to harvest cucumbers

It was a gloomy, gray day in early fall. But for the girl there was a bright side to it. School was cancelled and instead the children piled up in a big bus that took them to the farm fields on the outskirts of the city. It was a day to help the collective farm pick the last harvest of cucumbers. It was wet and cold, but it did not matter much, because the kids were excited to skip school and spend the day together outside.

The instructions from the collective farm worker who was assigned to supervise the children were strict and clear: "Take metal buckets and begin collecting the cucumbers. Leave behind large, overgrown ones, because they are too big to be used by anyone. Only collect the medium and small sized cucumbers. Once the bucket is full, bring it back and empty it into a large box." The supervisor stood there counting the buckets of collected cucumbers to increase productivity. It felt like a competition.

The cucumbers were cold and wet. The leaves of the plants were prickly. The buckets full of cucumbers were heavy. Why didn't she take the gloves her mother suggested earlier this morning? Why is time moving so slowly? What to do with the large cucumbers? Just leave them behind? This just did not sound right. Making sure that neither the collective farm supervisor nor the teacher saw them, the kids smashed a few big cucumbers against a huge rock. The cucumbers exploded everywhere, fresh smell and cold juice landing on the kids' faces. This definitely gave a great feeling of satisfaction and added some entertainment to an otherwise boring day. But the supervisor noticed it soon, so the secret fun activity was abruptly interrupted.

It was just the beginning of the day. How would they survive the rest of the boring day? The big, overgrown cucumbers were still there, peeking through the leaves, waiting to be picked up. What to do? Then another idea. Why not hide the big cucumbers in the middle of the bucket, between the small ones on the bottom and the top? Then, the bucket would fill in fast—super fast!—and the productivity would increase, too. Surely the supervisor would be happy! Another great moment of fun and entertainment. But then, caught in the act again. Scolded and shamed, the girl and her friends went back to picking the cucumbers. Still a few more hours left and a large field ahead of them. The big, overgrown cucumbers were everywhere, staring at them. Not letting them pass by. Surely, there is another way to use them. What will it be?

And children continued to explore new solutions.

Cucumbers are growing on a large monoculture plantation. The *timing* of their ripeness is not synchronized: If they are not checked and collected regularly, they will grow too large. To *synchronize* the harvest process requires adjusting the *timing* of picking with the *tempo* of growing cucumbers. Their *asynchronous* growth becomes obvious in the presence of large cucumbers on the field. The cucumbers simply grow; they can't wait until child labour is available to pick them at the start of the school year in the fall. When children arrive, the cucumbers are already

too big and unusable, clearly illustrating that the land has its own *rhythm*, whether humans attend to it or not. *Calendar time* defines the duration of summer vacations and the start of the school year. Although children return to school in the fall, the *timing* of the harvest, determined by the *tempo* of growing cucumbers, takes precedence over schooling. In the rural town especially, the modern, linear school time seems to coexist with the circular rhythms of the seasons in the *sequence* of school schedules too.

The five-year plans sought to calculate food demand and laid claim to statistical certainty mandating productivity prescribed thereon in volume projections (Bockman, 2011). The system needed to ensure that volumes of food matched or exceeded production, and it needed the workforce at hand for *timely* harvest. Modern technology and science were tasked to ensure and control high and *timely* productivity through fertilizing, pesticidal protection, machine tilling, and watering. In the memory story, the strictly planned *timeframe* is interrupted by weather events, lack of sun, floods, or drought. For that reason, crop *timing* continues to be open and unpredictable; risks arise despite modern knowledge and mastering. The economic value of harvest is defined by its size, yet large cucumbers have no value for people as they are not good for consumption. They are economic loss and excess. *Timing*, especially *synchronization* with nature, appears as part of control over nature.

The excess large cucumbers are left on the plant or thrown away, played with, considered as not of value anymore. Children interrupt the *temporality* of harvesting by smashing cucumbers hence the *tempo* of harvest is altered. Big cucumbers also trouble the *temporality* of harvest as they grow outside its *timeframe*. Children decide not to ignore the excess of big cucumbers and interfere with the *temporality* of the harvest in this way as well. The *intensity* of the harvest changes as children smash cucumbers into rocks, exploding their fresh smell and cold juice into the environment and onto kids' faces, or hiding big cucumbers in the middle of the bucket, speeding up productivity. Children seem to enjoy this intensity. School competition is exchanged with picking competition. Modern socialist productivity sits at the core of both *timescapes*.

The *temporal modality* of the harvest is manifold. There is a future-oriented calculation originating in the five-year plans and their competitive spirit. Entwined with that, the future orientation of education and childhood is also present. Children, while glimpsing future-orientedness as they compete, experience the harvest intensely in the present both in its fun and its numbing monotony. Although children are excited about a day off from school, their experience of harvesting cucumbers turns out to be boring and monotonous. Their feelings make the *duration* of the harvest day even longer. The morning is gray and cold, the cucumber plants are wet, and the buckets are heavy. Children feel uncomfortable in this space. The temporality of the harvest in this context is further altered. The repetitive and *sequential* process of bending, picking cucumbers, filling the buckets, and emptying them is interrupted by the creativity of children's play. This disruption affords the rhythm of the *timescape* in which the changes of *intensity* and *tempo* are absorbed in the monotonous activity for the rest of the day. While momentarily creating a much-needed disruption of the monotonous day, these various experiences of time do not appear to knot together into a single tapestry. Rather, they seem to be abruptly cut off—cucumbers being towed away without offering nourishment to those who harvested them, children leaving the fields without an expectation to return, and the aroma of freshly crushed cucumbers quickly fading from children's memory.

Apple harvest

It is a weekend in autumn. The girl goes with her whole family to the village where her grandparents and aunt live. The girl loves going to the village as it is a place where usually all her aunts and cousins gather for weekends. It is apple picking season, and everyone is trying to make it to the village for the weekends to help grandparents with the harvest. It is a sunny but chilly and windy morning. Everyone

gets ready to go to the orchard, taking all the necessary tools. Once they get to the orchard, Grandpa gives everyone the instructions and divides the workforce to pick the apples from the lower branches of the trees, to use the stairs, to climb the trees, to distribute apples in the boxes, to load the boxes onto the farm tractor and take them home. Grandpa knows who is good at what.

The girl loves climbing the trees, but because she is the youngest (12 years old) everyone is worried for her to do so. They warn her to pick the apples in the right way—with the stems—and put them in the bucket gently so the harvest will keep longer. Grandpa finds a smaller bucket for her so that she does not have to carry a heavy load.

As the girl starts climbing the tree with her bucket, her mom and aunts check on her and tell her not to go onto higher branches, which annoys the girl. The trees are about 8 to 10 metres high. She knows that she can reach the branches that others cannot. She feels it is risky to climb onto higher and thinner branches, especially when the wind is moving the branch she is standing on or holding on to. However, the girl has been climbing the trees for as long as she remembers, and she can sense how much pressure she can put on and distribute onto the branches so that they don't break, and she trusts that the branches will also hold her.

To reach the apples, she pulls down a branch with one hand and picks the apples with the other one. As the branch gets free from the fruit and she lets it go, the branch jumps higher and the girl feels that she is liberating it from the heavy weight. She becomes more enthusiastic to reach the thinner branches that could break if the fruit weight is too heavy. She also enjoys taking breaks by sitting comfortably on a branch and eating apples. Although she gets tired and feels pain in her legs, she wants to help relieve the trees from the heavy weight, and she moves from one branch to another and then to another tree.

Apple trees are grown and harvested manually in the family village in the autumn, usually on a weekend when everyone is able to leave their busy working lives to travel to the countryside. The girl recognizes the circular pattern that marks her anticipation of the season and particular days of the week—a long-awaited weekend. This is the time and space for the communion of a family spread out across multiple spaces. This communing intensifies tasks at each season, in a synchronic pattern between fruit ripening and human assembling. The memory story narrates a choreography of tree, girl, wind, thin branches, apples, preceded by the pollination dance of the bees and apple flowers during the springtime. The intense *tempo* of these interactions does not break apart from the apples' *sequential* time (from seed to fruit, orchestrated according to the sequence of seasons). Tempo and sequence are indivisible, "knotted," temporal elements composing the webs of time patterns that renew and perpetuate life (Rose, 2012). Therefore, life always happens as "a multispecies project" (p. 131) in knots of temporal patterns manifested on embodied rather than metaphysical levels, through alliances with members of different species.

The familial gathering is composed of distinct *timeframes*: a generational timeframe that reinforces intergenerational links and kinship and a biographical one that becomes a part of the girl's childhood experiences and reminds her of growing up, because she can now perform particular tasks and take risks. There are also distinct *temporalities* related to growing and aging. Human tasks are prominently related to the *tempo* (speed and intensity of performing tasks) during a weekend-long (*timing*) activity. The trees' monumental stature announces their wide *lifespan*, which contrasts with the girl's youth and small body. The smallness of her able body mirrors the particular period when the physiological, metabolic, and biochemical processes work to assemble expanding flesh tissue. The body, as "a network of cross-kingdom alliances" (Margulis & Sagan, 2000, as cited in Rose, 2012, p. 127), is not emphasizing end points, thus marking the child's desire for climbing, working, and pushing her physical achievements further.

The girl gets on with her work with a (small) basket but hears female commands for her not to climb too high. The pickers' sense of safety is extrinsically determined by the height of each tree, not according to the support the tree offers. But the girl's own sense of physical preservation is not simply dismissed for the sake of productivity. Her disregard for the warning is informed by a sense of safety activated through the improvised dance (Manning, 2007) with the tree, when hands, branches, head, legs, and balance respond *synchronously* to the swing of leaves, branches, wind, apples. The girl's confidence and improvisation are supported by the more-than-somatic memory acquired while climbing other trees, as other branches held her. Trees have bounced the girl's weight time and time again, so she recognizes that the precarious feel of branches swinging is part of a familiar sway. Thus the *temporal distance* between the previous fumbling and ascending trees to the present of picking apples is compressed, even if unconsciously. The challenge triggered at each particular apple branch reconnects with *previous* climbing experiences, at the same time that new memory is cocomposed at multiple levels. The improvisational journey with previous and current trees, with apples and basket, are fully implicated in her crafting of herself as belonging to the work community.

Even if the girl's work rhythm is *accelerated*, it could still pulse through intervals for comfortably sitting down and eating apples. Nevertheless, the family's working rhythm contrasts with trees', as humans' work pace can only be considered fast or slow in relation to the amount of apples available on the trees. This dictates how the *timing* of every task can be measured, from filling baskets, distributing the apples in boxes, loading the boxes onto the tractor, and taking them home. While the human work is bound to the calendar timeframe of the weekend, and the efficiency of collecting apples is considered according to the amount of fruits in this timespan, in a parallel temporality, the apple trees' productive rhythm is spread out across seasons and years in multispecies cyclical cooperation. The memory story thus alludes to an intertwined relationship of care and reciprocity between the human and the apple tree. In this memory story, the different temporal elements unfold and complement each other in ways that highlight interdependence, producing a harmonious emotional atmosphere retold in the memory.

Concluding reflections

The three memories analyzed here offer interesting insights into how time and temporality appear in childhood memories of everyday life during the Cold War. Despite the modern(ist) efforts to control time and space by bracketing complex human conditions and flattening nature's temporal cycles, these memory stories tell about a whole world outside the brackets that continuously haunted and reshaped the technical vision of modernity on both sides of the Iron Curtain. While children were socialized to function within the tightly managed environments that focused primarily on social and human taskscapes and relied on modern, linear clock time, they were also routinely engaged in different tasks and activities that followed different rhythms, such as picking berries in the forest, collecting cucumbers on a collective farm, or harvesting apples in a family orchard. Within these taskscapes, children experienced and *felt* different temporalities coexisting at the same time, often colliding with the temporal norms and expectations mastered at school and home—the unpredictable timing of ripening berries in the forest interrupting the children's summer holidays, or the monotonous harvesting of cucumbers on a collective farm demanding precise selection and repetitive movements. The various experiences of time tell about emotionally intense, embodied experiences of children finding themselves entangled within a timescape consisting of multiple interwoven dimensions of human and nonhuman times.

In two memory stories, the unfamiliarity of these multiple, nonlinear temporalities often triggers a strong emotional response—ranging from anger and boredom to a sense of total disorientation and desperation—bringing into focus children's awareness of different temporalities and their varying rhythms. Ingold (2011) explains that the rhythmic quality of taskscapes—whether picking berries, or harvesting grapes and apples—occurs “not against

a static background but in a world whose manifold constituents undergo their own particular cycles,” requiring the practitioner’s rhythmic gestures to attune to the multiple rhythms of the environment (p. 60). Therefore, any task is itself a movement unfolding within the “network of movements” both within and without the body where rhythms constitute “a dynamic coupling of movements” and “every coupling has a specific resonance, the synergy of the practitioner, the tools they may be using, the environment within which they are performing the activity” (p. 60). When this resonance is not synchronized with others—when the rhythm is off—a taskscape provokes strong emotional responses narrated in children’s memories. Unable (and sometimes unwilling) to fully attune to the rhythms of the taskscapes—either emerging from nature’s own temporal orders or those of the modernist project—children may feel disoriented, not only in time but also in space. Yet, the memory of apple harvesting tells the story of attuning to different temporal elements within the taskscape, including those of trees, daylight, wind, apples, and more, forming interwoven threads that fold into each other, resulting in a different emotional state of joy, comfort, and satisfaction.

Using a collective biography approach, we followed different time elements and their relationalities to bring into focus the different timescapes that (have always) exist(ed) alongside the modern(ist) linear ones, reminding us that the temporalities of human activities cannot be severed from the web of life and the unfolding trajectory of other-than-human temporalities. By making visible the multitude of timescapes of the Cold War—by following their lines, knots, and tangles and exploring relationships among them—we can see how modern humans constitute an ecological and geological whole with the earth and its more-than-human inhabitants. In this tapestry, “there are no insides or outsides, no enclosures or disclosures, only openings and ways through” (Ingold, 2011, p. 84). As we begin to attune to and follow these different temporalities, we can see that the modern(ist) story of linear, irreversible, future-oriented temporality is neither a singular nor a universal one. It exists alongside and within knots entangled with other temporalities, offering possibilities for alternative temporal imaginaries. By focusing on embodied and embedded time in childhood memory stories, we can thus see the points of intersection between different patterns of time that reflect both the temporal diversity and complexity of the world, which is never fixed but is constantly transforming itself.

References

- Adam, B. (1998). *Timescapes of modernity: The environment and invisible hazards*. Routledge.
- Adam, B. (2004). *Time*. Polity Press.
- Adam, B. (2008). The timescapes challenge: Engagement with the invisible temporal. In B. Adam, J. Hockey, P. Thompson, & R. Edwards (Eds.), *Researching lives through time: Time, generation, and life stories* (pp. 7–12). Timescapes Working Paper Series No. 1 <https://timescapes-archive.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/47/2020/07/WP1-Researching-Lives-Through-Time-June-2008.pdf>
- Bockman, J. (2011). *Markets in the name of socialism: The left-wing origins of neoliberalism*. Stanford University Press.
- Burman, E. (2021). *Developments: Child, image, nation*. Routledge.
- Davies, B., & Gannon, S. (2006). *Doing collective biography: Investigating the production of subjectivity*. Open University Press.
- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (2004). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (B. Massumi, Trans.). Continuum.
- Folkers, A. (2021). Fossil modernity: The materiality of acceleration, slow violence, and ecological futures. *Time & Society*, 30(2), 223–246. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0961463X20987965>
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. Vintage.
- Ingold, T. (1993). The temporality of the landscape. *World Archeology*, 25, 152–174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00438243.1993.9980235>
- Ingold, T. (2011). *Being alive: Essays on movement, knowledge, and description*. Routledge.
- Ingold, T. (2017). Taking taskscape to task. In U. Rajala & P. Mills (Eds.), *Forms of dwelling: Twenty years of taskscapes in archeology* (pp. 16–27). Oxbow Books.
- Haug, F., S. Andresen, A. Büinz-Elfferding, C. Hauser, U. Lang, M. Laudan, M. Lüdermann, and U. Meir (1987). *Female sexualization: A collective work of memory* (E. Carter, Trans.) Verso.
- Mah, A., & Wang, X. (2019). Accumulated injuries of environmental injustice: Living and working with petrochemical pollution in Nanjing, China. *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, 109(6), 1961–1977. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2019.1574551>
- Manning, E. (2007). *Politics of touch: Sense, movement, sovereignty*. University of Minnesota Press.
- McKay, A. (2016). Introduction. In A. Hom, C. McIntosh, & L. Stockdale (Eds.), *Time, temporality, and global politics* (pp. 1–19). E-International Relations Publishing.
- Merchant, C. (1980). *The death of nature: Women, ecology, and the scientific revolution*. Harper Collins.
- Millei, Z., Silova, I., & Gannon, S. (2019). Thinking through memories of childhood in (post)socialist spaces: Ordinary lives in extraordinary times. *Children's Geographies*, 20(3), 324–337. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2019.1648759>
- Murriss, K., & Kohan, W. (2021). Troubling troubled school time: Posthuman multiple temporalities. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 34(7), 581–597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2020.1771461>
- Pacini-Ketchabaw, V. (2012). Acting with the clock: Clocking practices in early childhood. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 13(2), 154–160. <https://doi.org/10.2304/ciec.2012.13.2.154>
- Rose, D. B. (2012). Multispecies knots of ethical time. *Environmental Philosophy*, 9(1), 127–140. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5840/envirophil2012918>
- Scott, J. C. (1998). *Seeing like a state*. Yale University Press.
- Shahjahan, R. A. (2018). Re/conceptualizing time in higher education. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 18(1)1–12.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2018.1550041>

- Silova, I. (2019). Toward a wonderland of comparative education. *Comparative Education*, 55(4), 444–472. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050068.2019.1657699>
- Silova, I., Millei, Z., & Piattoeva, N. (2017). Interrupting the coloniality of knowledge production in comparative education: Postsocialist and postcolonial dialogues after the Cold War. *Comparative Education Review*, 61(S1), S74–S102. <https://doi.org/10.1086/690458>
- Silova, I., Piattoeva, N., & Millei, Z. (Eds.). (2018). *Childhood and schooling in (post)socialist societies: Memories of everyday life*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tesar, M., Farquhar, S., Gibbons, A., Myers, C. Y., & Bloch, M. N. (2016). Childhoods and time: Rethinking notions of temporality in early childhood education. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 17(4), 359–366. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1463949116677931>
- Walker, R. B. J. (1993). *Inside/outside: International relations as political theory*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wien, C. A. (1996). Time, work, and developmentally appropriate practice. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 11, 377–403. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0885-2006\(96\)90013-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0885-2006(96)90013-7)
- ZIN, M., & Gannon, S. (2022). Scenes from a collective biography of Cold War childhoods: A decolonial ethnodrama. *Cultural Studies <-> Critical Methodologies*, 22(3), 235–244. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15327086211068194>