We think that time and temporality is a vital aspect of every study of childhood and children’s lives, since “[t]ime is constitutive of human life and society. Of course it is constitutive of human life in nature: all life is in time. … It is also a condition of human sociality that is achieved again and again in the continuously incarnated contemporaneity of face-to-face interaction. As an essential dimension of individual, interactional and institutional existence, time confers an elementary historical character upon all human life in society” (Luckmann, 1991, p. 151).

This Early Career Workshop is designed for PhD and Post-doctoral researchers (maximum 2 years after PhD). During the workshop, we bring multiple theoretical and methodological perspectives to open up discussions related to childhood and time and link those to participants’ own research.

Childhood Studies has been quite aware and sensitive about the temporal dimension of childhood. From its early days the field considered the importance of situating
childhood, not only in its proper spatial and cultural context, but also within its proper temporal framework. Drawing on the work of the Philippe Aries (1962), the field argued for an understanding of childhood as a social construction, as a phenomenon which is situated in time-space, in opposition to understandings which saw childhood as universal and timeless. At the same time, the field sought to challenge dominant developmentalist understandings of the child, as a not-yet-adult, a becoming rather than a being, and all the assumptions that go with such an understanding (incompetence, immaturity, irrationality, etc). This systematic re-theorization of the child meant that the focus of childhood studies became the real, living children, who like adults are beings rather than future-oriented becomings. From within this new orientation, childhood studies scholars explored the temporalities of childhood, not just in terms of their structuring effects on children—time of childhood—but also in terms of children’s own experiences—time for children—and how such experiences in turn give shape and form to particular temporal frameworks (James, Jenks and Prout, 1998).

Understandings of the child as a being rather than a becoming have in turn been problematized with new conceptualizations acknowledging the temporal dimension of the changing child, so that children today are recognized as both beings and becomings, a move which has clearly reinserted the problematic of time in theorizations of the child (Uprichard, 2008). Yet, as Hanson has pointed out, we need to complete the being-becoming temporalizing of the child by integrating also the ‘been’, the child who has a history and not just a present and a future. Moreover, and beyond the temporalizing of the child’s life as a becoming, the future needs to be further problematized and explored as a productive invitation for a renewed understanding of children and childhood in the 21st century when children are asking to be taken more seriously as future-makers (see Spyrou, forthcoming).

**We discuss**

a) the structuring effects of time on childhood (how childhood is socially and culturally constructed—how in other words it is a relative phenomenon and time is key to understanding this; how this structuring provides definitions and offers understandings of what childhood is, what children are and can and cannot do, etc;

b) how time shapes who is a normal child and who is not; how generation as a relational concept and one which is situated in particular historical and temporal frameworks shapes children’s identities and experiences of the world, etc;
c) how particular social spaces such as schools, preschools or family play a role in time-spaces of childhood;
d) how children themselves experience passage of time through childhood (such as adult and child notions of time which stem from different social positionings, etc);
e) how new ontologies of the child operate with non-classical understandings of time;
f) the usefulness of problematizing some of the temporally-informed concepts used in childhood studies, such as age, ‘being and becoming’ (and ‘been’ as Hanson has argued recently), and ‘generation’.
g) beyond focusing on children as beings – dominant understanding of childhood in childhood studies for over three decades - how can we also integrate more successfully the temporalities of the past and the future in to childhood studies?

References
TENTATIVE PLAN for Early Career Workshop

[Link to Tuni Events]

SESSION 1: 9:30AM – 12PM

READING GROUPS

Rationale: We discuss how selected readings explore the question of time in relation to childhood, and how these authors’ views on time might problematize some of the childhood studies / early childhood education / history of childhood etc. field’s assumptions or key theoretical ideas, and the participant's own ideas and research. During the Reading Groups we provide an opportunity for small groups to discuss a particular theme related to time and childhood through some useful readings. The group leader works as a facilitator who guides the discussion in productive ways to highlight the significance of time as an important dimension of our efforts to understanding children and childhood.

GROUP 1 Researching childhood through memories of childhood
FACILITATORS:  
▪ Zsuzsa Millei
READINGS: (TBA)

GROUP 2 Children’s conduct of everyday life: Tackling unequal conditions for co-developing daily socio-material practice across time and space
FACILITATORS:  
▪ Niklas Alexander Chimirri  
▪ Charlotte Højholt  
▪ Maja Røn-Larsen
READINGS: (TBA)

GROUP 3 Time and temporality in Child- and Developmental Psychology – raising critique and opening possibilities
FACILITATOR:  
▪ Pernille Hviid
READINGS: (TBA)
GROUP 4 Childhood in acceleration society
FACILITATOR:
▪ Hanne Warming

READINGS: (TBA)

GROUP 5 Working with the future in childhood studies
FACILITATOR:
▪ Spyros Spyrou
▪ Eva Gulløv

This session will work with the concept of ‘the future’, aiming to sufficiently problematize it in order to render it useful and productive for childhood studies scholars who seek to engage with this temporal condition in their research. As that which is not yet here, enveloped with various degrees of uncertainty and unpredictability, the future poses challenges and opportunities for a childhood studies which seeks to temporalize its object of inquiry and offer critical understandings of its constitution. The future is at once absent and vague in children’s lives, yet also present in the form of visions and plans, investments and prescriptions. Children themselves symbolize the future and in this sense ideas of the future are an inseparable part of the very object of childhood research. The session will grapple with the concept of ‘the future’ and the opportunities it affords for theoretical and methodological rethinking and innovation for childhood studies as a field.

LUNCH 12PM – 1PM

SESSION 2: 1PM – 14:30PM

PANEL DISCUSSION
Rationale: The panel will discuss how they conceptualize time and how they see that as an important consideration in their research, including some methodological pointers.

SHORT discussion setting presentations:
Panel:
- Spyros Spyrou (Future)
- TBA

Q & A

COFFEE BREAK: 14:30PM – 15:00PM

SESSION 3: 15:00PM – 17:00PM

REFLECTIONS ON CHILDHOOD AND TIME: MOVING FORWARD WITH ONE’S OWN WORK

Rationale: Participants reflect further on the panel discussion, reading group’s readings and discussions and relate that with current thinking in their respective fields and their own plans for research. Participants and facilitators help formulate productive theoretical and methodological considerations for planned projects of the participants and future research.

FACILITATORS:
Zsuzsa Millei; Pernille Hviid; Niklas Alexander Chimirri; Charlotte Højholt; Maja Røn-Larsen; Spyros Spyrou; Hanne Warming; Eva Gulløv