<u>"Flash Forward" - an experiment in Collective Memory Studies</u>

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Table of Contents

1   Popularity of Memory today

> *A generation which ignores history has no past and no future.*
>
> Robert Heinlein,
> Time Enough for Love (1973)

> *It was like having a memory – but not from the past.*
>
> Mark Benford,
> protagonist of *FlashForward*

Both of these quotes as well as a whole branch of recent literary studies are concerned with the vast topic of memory. As has been illustrated by an enormous body of contemporary research during the last two decades, this topic has brought together many branches of science which, on first sight, appeared to be disciplines situated farthest apart. And right now, it seems that the sciences involved are just scratching the tip of the iceberg - Astrid Erll, for example, who in 2010 republished a compilation of works concerned with the wide array of research including individual and collective memory and its derivatives, at the end of her particular essay in this collection, calls for increased collaborative, interdisciplinary research regarding Memory Cultures. [1]

For the last two decades and especially since 09/11/2001, there has been a tremendous rise in global preoccupation with history, memory and remembrance in all fields of human existence. According to Gary Edgerton, television during the "last decade, in particular, has witnessed a dramatic rise in historical programming on television screens all around the world", [2] and can still be called the medium of the masses, although the Internet is catching up rapidly. Edgerton sets out to analyze formats like the US-American *The History Channel*, which provide an audience of millions of people with historical programs. He concludes his essay with the result that these histories "enable unprecedentedly large audiences to become increasingly aware of and intrigued by the stories and figures of the past." [3] So the occupation with history and the past has by now become a major object of interest for both the scientific world and popular culture in almost all media that are available to us.

This thesis will take a closer look at one particular medium, namely a television series, which in my opinion plays with and reflects upon the ways of how the perception of the past and collective memory work. *FlashForward* creates a story in which an event occurs, which shows parallels to 9/11 and affects the whole of humanity. The narrative then follows the lives of archetypical characters of this universe during their quest for a new understanding of their identities and their places in life.

Chapter 2 will briefly introduce the basic concepts and terminology concerned with collective memory in relation to the medium of television. In Chapter 3, *FlashForward* will be object of an integrative analysis trying to unify elements of Television and Collective Memory Studies in order to conclude with Chapter 4 that this television series plays with the concepts of collective memory and adds a new dimension to the discussion about individual and collective memories and pasts.

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1   Astrid Erll et. al., *A companion to Cultural Memory Studies* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010)
2   Gary Edgerton, ""Where the Past Comes Alive": Television, History, and Collective Memory." *A companion to television*, Ed. Janet Wasko (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010) 361–78.
3   Edgerton, 375.

2   An introduction to the concept of Collective Memory in relation to Television

My analysis is going to partly follow the approach of Martin Zierold, who in his work *Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung* [4] sets out to condense the knowledge of the last century and quite fittingly describes the huge amount of various readings concerning the term 'collective memory' and the theories behind it. Parallel to that, I am going to take a look at Collective Memory Studies' founding father Maurice Halbwachs, and then continue with the works of Jan and Aleida Assmann, who adapted Halbwachs' model for a new approach that has kept scientists busy for the last two decades. Ann Rigney, Astrid Erll and Birgit Neumann will then form the conclusive part of the theoretical introduction. Rigney and Erll analyze the relations between recent media and collective memory, while Neumann researches the representation of memory in literature and helps to find a set of tools that hopefully lead to an analysis of a different form of medium: that of a television series.

To begin with media culture theorist Martin Zierold, the challenge inherent in the field of studies concerned with collective memory and its partial synonyms (including 'cultural memory', 'social memory', etc.) is that the

> perspective is a relatively young and rather amorphous field of research, which at present can neither be described by an established label nor is it based on a homogenous canon of basic texts, concepts, or models. Nevertheless, there is a growing tendency in the field of cultural memory studies to attempt to find new ways of integrating the analysis of contemporary media developments into the study of social memory. [5]

2.1   The beginnings: Halbwachs and collective memory

In this comment alone, we find three different terms to describe a phenomenon which at first has been coined by Maurice Halbwachs under the term 'Collective Memory' in his work by the same title. [6] Halbwachs understood that memory can only develop out of the mediation of socialization processes by referring to a group memory, which then leads to the formation of societies. Therefore, a collective memory for every social group such as family, social classes, work communities, etc., does exist. The individual memories, developed out of the before-mentioned socialization processes, later will always relate metaphorically to this social framework of memory. [7] Zierold points out that manifestations of collective memory are not clearly defined: on the one hand, we have the individually-imagined collective memory, on the other hand this collective memory is implied to exist in quite an ontological way. But what Zierold clearly favors in Halbwachs' approach to describing the social processes of memory is the focus on a construc-

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4   Martin Zierold, *Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006).
5   Martin Zierold, "Memory and Media Cultures" *A companion to cultural memory studies*, ed. Astrid Erll et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 399.
6   Maurice Halbwachs, *Das kollektive Gedächtnis* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1991).
7   Zierold, *Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung* 66.

tiveness of remembering and memory. With this constructiveness, Halbwachs implies a selection of what is worth remembering, because every society is said to only choose to remember what has been reconstructed in each society-specific frame of reference. And Halbwachs, according to Zierold, concludes that this selective mode of remembering works as a means to create social or group identities, because by individuals sharing a set of memories, one social group defines its relations and boundaries to other groups. [8]

Marcel and Mucchielli, who recently analyzed Halbwachs' œuvre and agreed on Zierold's notion of its vast importance, underline that Halbwachs, while reasoning about the collective memory of Christians in *La topographie légendaire des évangies en terre sainte* also created two basic laws concerned with how collective memory evolves, a law of fragmentation and a law of concentration. Those laws describe how collective memory deals with specific locations of remembrance: the first one is the development of splitting up a location into numerable parts, and it has to be added that 'location' here is not only limited to the spatial notion, but to multiple other modes of existence as well; the second one is the opposite development of concentrating multiple locations of remembrance into one place, item, etc. [9] Halbwachs' broader understanding of location later inspired Pierre Nora's concept of *lieux de memoire*, which in recent memory science is one of the most influential ones. Although Halbwachs can without a doubt be named the founding father of Collective Memory Studies, recent research over the last 20 years succeeded in furthering and diversifying the topic into a wide variety of different, co-existing approaches.

2.2 Rebirth: Jan and Aleida Assmann's cultural and communicative memory

Jan and Aleida Assmann base their research on Halbwachs' theories and, according to Zierold, follow his social-constructivist view of the past. [10] To put this view in broader terms: the past is the past; it only exists because the viewer constructs and refers to it and brings it back into the present. Jan Assmann in particular uses Halbwachs' theory and implements it in his own, broader concept of memory, which he illustrates with examples of oral societies. [11] He splits up Halbwachs' concept of 'collective memory' into 'communicative' and 'cultural memory' because "Halbwachs [...] was careful to keep his concept of collective memory apart from the realm of traditions, transmissions, and transferences which we [J. & A. Assmann, *T.S.*] propose to subsume under the term cultural memory." [12] For Assmann, the three categories time, identity and memory comprise different aspects of remembrance which relate to each other on three different levels. These three levels are described as follows:

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8   Zierold, *Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung* 66f.
9   cf. Jean-Christope Marcel and L. Mucchielle, "Maurice Halbwachs' mémoire collective." *A companion to cultural memory studies*, ed. Astrid Erll et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 148f.
10   Zierold, *Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung* 68.
11   cf. Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München: C.H. Beck, 2007).
12   Jan Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory" *A companion to cultural memory studies*, ed. Astrid Erll et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 110.

- The inner level,

which includes the personal memory in the form which had been recognized as the only form of memory until the 1920s. On this level, the time frame is defined as the inner or subjective time of each single participant of a given society. The individual memories here are said to fit into the subjective time frame, thus only being occupied with things that form the identity on a very personal level. [13]

- The social level,

which in Assmann's model consists of the before-mentioned 'communicative memory' and of a 'social time'. 'Social time' here refers to a distinction between two types of past: a recent past and an absolute past. Assmann assumes that the recent past (and therefore the social time frame) is set in the realm of three to four generations, which would include a time span of around 80 to 120 years. Societies are believed to communicate everyday knowledge which lies within this time frame and allow individuals to become carriers of social roles by relating to those social memories, thus the formation of social identity. According to Assmann, 'communicative memory' refers to historical experiences which are set in relation to individual biographies, which are part of everyday life and therefore highly informal. This kind of memory involves vivid, active remembering taking part in each individuals' mind, which is then communicated in every-day social exchange. [14]

- The cultural level.

This level relates to the time frame of the absolute past. When referring to dates from this time frame (> 80-120 years), it is assumed that only very few pieces of information can be explicitly recalled by the people involved, the vast amount is metaphorized and guarded by institutions which have been created for the sole purpose of keeping this memory alive. Assmann finds that in this time frame, cultural memory is highly comprised in symbols and metaphors which are narrated through sagas and myths. Those myths generally do not reach an indefinite past, but only so far, as the community involved can relate to it as their own. [15] The concept of identity on this level is that of a diachronic 'cultural identity', which, too, involves the society's sagas and myths. Those myths allow each individual to retrace his or her origin in accordance with the society's traditional past and therefore leads to the formation of social identity, which can then be refreshed or actualized by following generations. Assmann also adds that the symbols, myths and sagas which do reach back to the distant past of the society, are guarded and kept alive by specialized carriers of tradition, such as priests, teachers, artists, etc. This leads to a formal institutionalization of memory. [16]

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13   cf. Zierold, *Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung* 66f.
14   cf. Zierold, *Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung* 68.
13   Assmann, "Communicative and Cultural Memory" 113.
16   cf. Zierold, *Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung* 69f.

2.3   Ann Rigney's *Portable Monuments*

While Assmann uses oral societies as a starting point for his theory and only briefly elaborates on more 'sophisticated', script-based societies, he only fragmentarily succeeds in linking this theory to 'modern' societies, which rely on a multitude of different media (e. g. electronic, audio-visual, etc.) for social ways of remembrance. [17] Astrid Erll, who, with her Collaborative Research Center "Memory Cultures", has had and still has a huge impact on the global discussion of Cultural Memory Studies, states that

> without organic, autobiographic memories, societies are solely dependent on media. [...T]he shape of contemporary media societies gives rise to the assumption that - today perhaps more than ever - cultural memory is dependent on media technologies and the circulation of media products. [18]

The knowledge about this dependency on different forms of media has given rise to a plurality of different voices studying the vast field of memory in an interdisciplinary way. Ann Rigney, who understands memory as a dynamic process, takes up Erll's implicit call by investigating the role literature as a modern medium of memory plays as a social framework for memory. According to her, up to now a special focus of cultural memory studies within the field of Literary Studies has been

> on individual texts, and the ways in which the textual medium is used to shape remembrance by paying attention to certain things than others, to structure information in certain ways, and to encourage readers to reflect on their own position in relation to the events presented. [19]

Rigney requests a wider array of research concerning "the relation between memorability, aesthetic power and cultural longevity" [20] but even now, she claims, evidence does exist which proves that finely-woven, masterfully crafted fictional accounts of a historic event are much more likely to survive the tests of time than narratives that are nearer to the 'objective truth' but lack imaginative decoration. [21] This supposedly can be exemplified by such narrations as *Gone With The Wind* or that of the award-winning movie *The Lives of Others*, which is highly acclaimed as providing the cultural formula for collective remembrance of the history of the GDR. Rigney notices that recently a change in cultural memory studies from 'products', i. e. specific narratives, to 'dynamics', i. e. the way intertextuality works within plurimedial texts, is taking place. Therefore, key terms such as 'adaptation, 'translation', 'reception' and 'appropriation' have grown more and more popular to describe how pieces of art position themselves within the greater cultural context. [22] Rigney finds that literary works function as something that she has labeled 'Portable Monuments', because of their material existence, by which their narration

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17   Zierold, *Gesellschaftliche Erinnerung* 73.
18   Astrid Erll, "Cultural Memory Studies: An Introduction" *A companion to cultural memory studies*, ed. Astrid Erll et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 9.
19   Ann Rigney, "Dynamics of Remembrance" *A companion to cultural memory studies*, ed. Astrid Erll et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 346.
20   Rigney 347.
21   cf. Rigney 348.
22   cf. Rigney 349.

of remembrance can survive many generations and by which they can be reproduced endlessly in direct form of a reprint or by indirect form of an intertextual reference to this work. Furthermore, 'Portable Monuments' are thought of possessing an ability of becoming part of the literary canon due to their immanent artistic value, by which they themselves gain a status of monumentality. [23]

2.4 Astrid Erll and the Mediality of Cultural Memory

Astrid Erll, too, is fascinated with the way fictional narratives are able to alter our perception of the past but relies on a long-term self-cleaning effect of collective memory. She analyzes novels and films as media of cultural memory and begins her essay with a summary of Aleida Assmann's work, who picks up her husband's theory and includes it in the larger frame of 'medial externalization' [24].

Erll understands that shared versions of the past function in that frame, be it orally, like in J. Assmann's model, or by "[m]ore sophisticated media technologies, such as writing, film, and the Internet [...which] broaden the temporal and spatial range of remembrance." [25] But, according to Erll, when one is to include those different media, which do not claim to be accurate but rather vibrate with collective memory, one has to take the respective audiences into consideration, thus her

> call for two methodological shifts in attention: firstly, from high culture to popular culture; and secondly, from the time-bound media of storage, which allow cultural memories to travel across centuries and even become themselves objects of remembrance, [...] to the space-bound media of circulation, which can reach large audiences almost simultaneously [...]. [26]

Erll claims that in order to set this wide array of concepts in relation to visual media such as film or television, one should not only look at how these media reach that aim but also at how cross-medial relations between those media and former versions of a specific narrative work. Concerning the first, Erll figures out distinct modes of presentation and even a 'rhetoric of collective memory'. In literature as in film, she states, several modes are applicable, which she labels the experiential, the antagonistic, the mythical, and the reflexive mode. [27]

In Erll's model, the experiential mode consists of diegeses which serve as vivid descriptions of experience and are performed by a first-person narrator who, through his narration, enables the recipient to relate to parts of the 'communicative memory'. The second major technique of narration fulfilling these requirements set by Erll clearly is that of *stream-of-consciousness*, which provides a very intense representation of experience in a given diegesis. [28]

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23   cf. Rigney 349.
24   Aleida Assmann, "Canon and Archive" *A companion to cultural memory studies*, ed. Astrid Erll et al.
      (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 97-108.
25   Astrid Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory" *A companion to cultural memory studies*,
      ed. Astrid Erll et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 389.
26   Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory" 389f.
27   cf. Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory" 389f.
28   cf. Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory" 390.

The antagonistic mode helps to form collective memories by inducing a clear-set concept of the enemy of a given society. According to Erll, the best ways to successfully implement such a mode of narration is by having the diegesis use negative stereotyping, biased perspective structures in which only memories of a selected group are presented as true, and we-narration, which helps create a collective identity within the depicted group (e. g. Erich Maria Remarque's depiction of the lost generation in *All Quiet on the Western Front*). [29]

Mythicizing (or mythical) modes are claimed to strongly link a form of narrative to the cultural memory of the recipient. Normally, this is realized by setting the diegesis in the context of a foundational memory which is situated in some far-away past and relates to sagas or myths which are contained in the cultural memory of a given society. [30]

Generally speaking, Erll understands fictional texts as giving their recipients a two-fold opportunity of reflection. On the primary layer, the recipient can observe the story that is provided. On the secondary layer, the recipient then can observe how the same story is presented. Here, an antagonistic mode can then be induced by the use of explicit narrational comments or a depiction of different versions of the past or the chronological inversion of the diegesis.[31]

For means of describing the multiple relations that diachronically develop within the dynamics of cultural memory, Erll uses the concept of 'premediation' and 'remediation':

> With the term "remediation" I refer to the fact that memorable events are usually represented again and again, over decades and centuries, in different media. [...] Remembered events are transmedial phenomena, that is, their representation is not tied to one specific medium. Therefore, they can be represented across the spectrum of available media. And this is precisely what creates a powerful site of memory. [32]

When taking the context of Literary Studies into consideration, 'remediation' seems to have similar features to the concept of Intertextuality, although Erll's focus clearly lies on a diachronic perspective into the past. Remediation uses not only icons and narratives but can also apply whole media technologies and products for the sake of actualization. Erll gives the example of documentary material, which may be reused by narratives concerned with a related topic. In addition to that, a whole style of presentation (i. e. that of authentic documentary material) may be remediated to gain an appearance of authenticity (*effet de réel*). Therefore, a given fictional story appears to be indexically linked to the historical effects it depicts. [33]

'Premediation' seems to involve the opposite diachronic development. It has the same features, but the temporal perspective here points into the future, i. e. the point-of-view of a given element of collective memory which is likely to induce remediations of other

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29   cf. Astrid Erll, "Narratology and Cultural Memory Studies." *Narratology in the age of cross-disciplinary narrative research*, eds. Sandra Heinen et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009) 224.
30   cf. Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory" 391.
31   cf. Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory" 391.
32   cf. Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory" 391.
33   cf. Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory" 394.

possible media. Erll describes premediation as follows: "The term 'premediation' draws attention to the fact that existent media which circulate in a given society provide schemata for future experience and its representation." [34] The question to ask then would be, if 'premediation' can actively be intended by creators of media products. Otherwise this perspective, at least to my understanding, may very quickly drift into the realms of speculation.

2.5   Birgit Neumann: Literature in memory cultures

While Astrid Erll analyzes the ways in which media and memory interact, Birgit Neumann takes a closer look at the one particular medium of literature and examines how collective memory in particular is represented in literature. According to Neumann, narratological approaches are very fruitful within this context, because they "are based on the assumption that works of fiction have specific, genuinely literary techniques at hand to plumb the connection between memory and identity." [35]

Following the approach of Erll and Nünning [36], Neumann presents a new way of describing narrations which represent processes of remembrance or memory formation. Their term 'fictions of memory' is thought of as referring to a "double meaning of fiction. [...T]he phrase refers to literary, non-referential narratives that depict the workings of memory. Second, [...it] refers to the stories that individuals or cultures tell about their past" [37] in order to answer their questions concerning identity. Those fictions of memory as well are said to implement a 'mimesis of memory', which is explained as including the entity of narrative forms and aesthetic techniques by which those fictions succeed in creating and reflecting upon the creation of memory. It is quickly added, though, that this mimesis does not refer to an imitative quality of literature, but rather to its productive quality: "Novels do not imitate existing versions of memory, but produce, in the act of discourse, that very past which they purport to describe." [38] With a reference to Genette, Neumann concludes that this narrative mimesis, rather than working imitatively, is able to produce new forms of memory and to provide the recipient with new points-of-view of the past and therefore adds to and helps with the reconfiguration of predominant cultural memory. [39]

Neumann then lists the different ways in which this mimesis can be produced in literary texts. Regarding the frame of time, predominantly a mode of retrospection or analepsis is chosen. Within fictions of memory, the narrator is dealing with "multi-temporal levels of the past and the present [by which he/she establishes] a reference frame in which each event is [...] both marked by all preceding events and evokes expec-

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34   Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory" 392.
35   Birgit Neumann, "The Literary Representation of Memory", *A companion to cultural memory studies*,
        ed. Astrid Erll et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 333.
36   cf. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, "Concepts and Methods for the Study of Literature and/as Cultural
        Memory", *Literature and Memory*, eds. Ansgar Nünning et al. (Tübingen: Francke, 2006) 11-28.
37   Neumann 334.
38   Neumann 334.
39   Neumann 334f.

tations about events to come." [40] According to Neumann, modern fictions of memory often dissolve the classic, chronological order of narrated events to the effect of a more natural perception of the narrator's present and remembered pasts. In some ways, it may even go as far as to completely dislocate the different time lines in order to create the illusion of a given narrator's maladjusted memory.

A different discrepancy is outlined by Neumann when describing the relation between *experiencing I* and *narrating I*. The highest tension often is created in a narrative when the *narrating I* (which is termed and used synonymously to the *remembering I)* cannot clearly draw meaningful connections to the events the *experiencing I* (synonymously used as *remembered I*) is dealing with. As the workings of memory are clearly related to the formation of one's individual identity, because one's present identity is based on constructions of one's biographical, past identity and memory, this before-mentioned tension can lead to the depiction of an unreliable narrator, who presumably finds him- or herself in a state of cognitive illness and having problems with the construction of his or her identity. Since E.A. Poe's popularization of the term, the main features of an unreliable narration consist of the reader's recognition of inconsistencies, contradictions, ambiguities or divergent norm values. [41] David Fincher's screen adaption of Chuck Palahniuk's novel *Fight Club* [42] may be one of the most famous contemporary realizations of such narrative style, be it in the medium of literature or in that of film.

On the other hand, when the relationship between past experiences and present self is established, the *remembering I* can experience a strong affirmation and consolidation of his present identity, be it positive or negative. The universe of fictions of memory is assumed to exist between those two poles of the continuum, indicating a possible mixture with focus on one or the other side, which includes the simple use of past tense to indicate events of the past and a chronological succession of events on the one hand, and a shift to a self-reflexive, extradiegetic perspective which involves multi-temporal blends of different threads of narration on the other hand. [43]

Neumann observes an increase in the amount of fictions of memory in contemporary literature and, within that field of literature, a rise of 'fictions of meta-memory', which "combine personally engaged memories with critically reflective perspectives on the functioning of memory, thus rendering the question of how we remember the central content of remembering." [44] Those self-narrations by their content not only point to the fact that history and memory do not exist by themselves, but have to be created and *re*-created by each narrator and each recipient. By their form, these narrations of self also play an active role in this recursive process by engaging the reader in repeatedly interpreting and questioning their literary past.

In narratives where the autobiographical mode is chosen and therefore the formation of an individual memory is depicted, Neumann finds that a three-fold fictionalization of autobiographical events of the past takes place: the narrator selects his or her

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40   Neumann 336.
41   cf. Neumann 338.
42   David Fincher, *Fight Club*, 1999.
43   cf. Neumann 336f.
44   Neumann 336f.

main corner stones of remembrance out of the vast pool of individual and/or cultural memory, then appropriates them for his own cause and finally evaluates them in order to form a solid identity by creating a congruent personal past. [45]

According to Neumann, we find a wide use of perspective structures in narratives where a collective past is depicted. Anthropomorphized narrative instances generally use particular perspectives which allow the possibility of

> insight into their level of information and psychological dispositions as well as the norms which govern their actions. Texts with a multi-perspectival narration or focalization provide insight into the memories of several narrative instances of figures and in this way they can reveal the functioning and problems of collective memory-creation. [46]

Clearly, Neumann's analysis is concerned with literary representations of memory, but it has to be added that Neumann's last point may also be adapted to film and television theory, because there the realization of narrative structures often works through focalization techniques.

Together with the technique of focalization comes another important implication: Due to the realization of multiple perspectives, it is possible in these narrations to combine many, sometimes differing versions of collective memory. By that means, the narrator is able to present versions of memory which in the general discourse were or are oppressed or otherwise separated from the generally-accepted collective memory. The multi-perspectivity can also be accomplished on the structural level: the most common feature here is that of intertextuality (or 'intermediality', as Neumann puts it). [47] In film and television studies, this feature is an even stronger one because the use of intermedial references, due to its visual mode of presentation, can be established in an easier way. [48]

Conclusively, Neumann finishes her analysis with a short digression on the three large genres of literature. While she celebrates the prose form within memory culture as providing a possibility to voice memory versions of minorities as well as setting them in context with predominant versions and by that helping to visualize the workings of individual and collective memory, the other genres are claimed to also have specialized forms of representing the processes of remembrance. All before-mentioned features are applicable to the genre of prose, but what is also important for the later outlook to film and television, may be the genre of drama. Here, Neumann finds that when concerned with the presentation of memories or the past in general, those so-called memory plays are likely to use dialogues to portray versions of a given past or, "re-enact past events through the use of flashbacks (which are typically highlighted by theatrical effects such as the fading out of the stage light)." [49]

I want to return briefly to Martin Zierold, who points out that there are even more parameters which ought to be taken into consideration. He calls for a turn in

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45   cf. Neumann, 338.
46   Neumann, 338.
47   Neumann, 340.
48   cf. this work, chapter 2.4
49   Neumann, 340.

Cultural Media Studies away from isolated analyses to a complete survey of interdependencies of media systems in a given society. For example, many of the features of literal memory representation are adaptable to film and television in one way or the other. According to Zierold, those interdependencies ought to be analyzed not only on a material level, but also on a social level, which includes the production and distribution of a so-called 'media offer', i. e. a novel or film on the one hand, and the reception and use of the same 'media offer' on the other hand. [50] Those two sides of the social level can differ enormously. If one only wanted to analyze the social level of the literary representation of e. g. Shakespeare, one would have to take into consideration the differing times the works of Shakespeare were produced in and the times those works are perceived in, which also continuously vary. So, figuratively speaking, we can assume that Shakespeare was read differently in the late 19th century, compared to our readings of it at the beginning of the 21st century. Zierold's call here clearly stands for a demand of a 'bigger picture' in memory studies, i. e. a larger theoretical frame.

3   *FlashForward* as an experiment with the concept of Collective Memory

In the following, I am going to show how the television series *FlashForward* can be set in context to a relatively new form of narration in television by the name of 'megamovie'. [51] Later on, this work will discuss how the format in the particular example of *FlashForward* is intertwined with topics of the recent discourse on collective memory and the narrative will be placed within the realms of Neumann's 'fictions of meta-memory'.

In order to do that, the main characteristics of *FlashForward* as a series will be analyzed by taking an exemplifying look at the first episode of the season. The work is going to investigate the format, genre and content of the series and analyze the narrative characterization of the protagonists and their surrounding social world. It will discover a complex narrative structure which in many ways deals with theories of Cultural Memory Studies, depicting in various ways how the characters cope in different ways with modes of remembrance and events which over time become collective memories.

3.1   Format and Production Information

FlashForward was broadcast on Thursday nights on ABC network with the premiere being aired on September 24, 2009. Since then, an entire season consisting of 22 episodes has been produced and aired. The length of an episode is 60 minutes, which includes commercial breaks and leaves approximately 42 minutes of narration for each episode. The script is based on the 1999 novel of the same title by Robert J. Sawyer and was adapted for the screen by Brannon Braga and David S. Goyer, who had previously worked on successful series such as *24* and *Lost*. The format of *FlashForward* was sold

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50   cf. Zierold, "Memory and Media Cultures", 404.
51   Vincent Canby, "From the Humble Mini-Series Comes the Magnificent Megamovie" *The New York Times*, 10/31/1999. <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/10/31/arts/from-the-humble-mini-series-comes-the-magnificent-megamovie.html> visited 12/25/2010.

in more than 100 countries and worldwide schedule plans were synchronized in order to have each episode of the series globally aired if not on the same day, then at least within the same week. It has enjoyed popularity from Russia over Asia to European countries and the Americas. Marketing strategies involved showing five-second-snippets of Flash-Forwards during the commercial breaks of ABC's successful predecessor *Lost* and huge advertisements all over the US asking 'What have you seen?' and thus calling for active participation of potential viewers even before the first season had been aired. [52] General viewer reception was positive, with an *IMDb*-rating of 8.0 of 10 (17,058 votes). [53]The series was nominated for multiple television awards and won the Primetime Emmy in 2010. Each of the first three episodes reached about 12 million US-viewers alone. [54]

All of the episodes were shot in an aspect ratio of 16:9 (1.78:1) and were filmed with HD-cameras (Panavision F35), resulting in a crisp Hollywood aesthetic. The main cast includes internationally renowned TV and film actors such as Dominic Monaghan, who is known for appearances in *The Lord of The Rings* and *Lost* and Joseph Fiennes (*Shakespeare in Love*, *Elizabeth*) among many others. [55] With a large number of actors on the payroll, the series' producers consider *FlashForward* being one of the most expensive productions in television history. [56] Due partly to an openly-led discussion about the future of the series after ten episodes, viewer numbers dropped to a low of less than 4 million viewers. This drop then was used by the network as the main reason to end the project after the first season. Other reasons were said to be the too complex plot structure, which allegedly drove away more and more viewers, and the funding, which was quickly consumed during the second third of the series production.

3.2 *FlashForward* as 'megamovie'

In my opinion, an application of classic genre borders to series of this format does not do justice to them because of their topic as well as their narratological structure being more complex than the characteristics which one sole classical genre such as Drama is comprised of. Following an approach of Jason Mittell, who challenges the use of 'classic' genre definitions in television, I want to introduce and apply a different kind of classification to this series, because in my opinion it is the best way to describe serial television productions consisting of such levels of complexity as recent formats such as *Lost*, *V*, *Fringe*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Caprica* and *FlashForward* do. [57]

Taking up a definition of Toby Miller's work on TV studies, genre is comprised

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52   cf. *FlashForward: Revealed*, aired in the UK on Channel Five on Nov 30, 2009.
                 <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1680037/> 01/05/2011.

53   The terms "viewer", "recipient", "audience" and "viewing instance" will be used synonymously throughout the whole work and will generally be referred to by use of the male pronoun. This is only done for pragmatic causes and not in order to exclude other genders.

54   *TV Ratings Thursday* quoting Nielsen TV Ratings. <http://tvbythenumbers.zap2it.com/2009/10/23/tv-ratings-thursday-abc-wins-community-flashforward-leno-down-survivor-greys-up/31278> 01/05/2011

55   For a complete list of cast and characters, see Appendix, p.33

56   cf. *FlashForward: Revealed*: 07min28sec.

57   Jason Mittell, "A Cultural Approach to Television Genre Theory." *The television studies reader*, eds. Robert C. Allen et al. (London: Routledge, 2004) 171–80.

of "visual style (how the camera moves and shots are put together), *mise-en-scène* (what appears in front of the camera), and narrative structures [...]." [58] Building upon this classical definition of genre, Markus Reinecke, with his 2006 analysis of *Lost* as an example of a new generation of TV series, sets out to create a framework describing this new category. His framework examines criteria such as a complex genre identification, visual realism, character-driven storylines, a vertical structure of narration, and a presence of supernatural and/or surreal events influencing the story, as well as the narrative form of cumulative narration. [59] In order to put *FlashForward* in this context, I am going to follow Reinecke's classification of 'megamovies' and see how *FlashForward* meets the before-mentioned requirements.

3.2.1 Genre

The question of genre in *FlashForward* cannot be answered clearly. Due to its focus on a character-driven story, one is tempted to label it as *Drama*. Producer and script writer David Goyer calls *FlashForward* an "intimate epic" because it describes "a giant event focused through the prism of a handful of characters", [60] indicating a narratological compound consisting of a frame narrative, namely that of the event referred to as 'blackout' or 'FlashForward', and those narrative threads which follow the characters' ways of coping with the effects of this large-scale event. Through changing modes of perspective from the protagonist's plot to other characters' plots, the viewer learns about the multifarious interconnections the different storylines consist of. Other influences are borrowed from various genres such as *Crime*, *Mystery* and *Science Fiction*.

Science Fiction-elements can be clearly identified in the frame narrative of the global blackout, which is supposedly caused by an experiment conducted by physicists in a particle generator device. The device mentioned in the narrative is similar to that which in reality does exist in multiple facilities, the most prominent one being the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) which is situated at CERN, Switzerland. The narrative takes up the factual global scientific and popular discourse concerned with the positive and negative effects of a recently-finished experiment (April 2009) which claimed to find plausible answers to the universe's origin, and puts this discourse into a hypothetical outcome. [61] The genre of *Crime* is met by the narrative following Mark Benford and his colleagues of the FBI investigation which in the fictional world traces the causes and effects of the blackout. Elements of the *Mystery*-genre are implemented in the conspiracy theory which evolves out of the FBI investigation and is comprised of a global network of evil-doers which manifests in the character of brilliant scientist D. Gibbons.

Regarding the various possibilities of genre description, it quickly becomes clear that one single genre does not fully account for such a complex narrated world which

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58   Toby Miller, *Television studies: The basics* (London: Routledge, 2010) 83.
59   cf. Markus Reinecke, *TV-Serien als Megamovies* (Hamburg: Diplomica, 2007) 93f.
60   *FlashForward: Revealed*: 06min25sec.
61   For more information on the LHC experiment: cf. Omega Tau Podcast: */30/ The Large Hadron Collider - Interview with CERN's Rolf Landua.*<http://omegataupodcast.net/2010/03/30-the-large-hadron-collider/> 01/07/2011.

consists of a wide selection of different genre elements. And, according to Reinecke, these are exactly the features which contribute to a complex classification of genre. [62]

3.2.2 Content

FlashForward portrays an exemplary microcosm of people reacting to a global event. The story involves a worldwide blackout, during which humanity loses its consciousness for a time span of two minutes and 17 seconds. This blackout causes massive destruction and casualties, but also provides everybody with a glimpse of their future six months from the present time.

Within this larger narrative frame, the life of FBI agent Mark Benford is depicted, who in his vision happens to see himself in the future investigating causes and effects of the blackout. During the first season, the viewer follows Mark and the FBI task force which has been called into existence as a response to the blackout, and gets to know a wide array of characters who, in one or the other way, fit into larger social webs of interaction which are all connected to the story of the global FlashForward (which quickly is used as a term for the visions the characters are having) in the end. Due to religious notions attributed to the event, the characters find themselves being driven by determinism in different ways, and a universe with multifarious interconnections between those characters evolves. Moreover, even though the main storyline clearly follows Mark Benford on his quest for understanding, the multiple threads of narration that are woven within this universe each possess an intriguing mixture of narrative and stylistic devices.

3.2.3 Characters and story

In order to exemplify the special form of character presentation used in *Flash-Forward*, the initial eight minutes of the first episode are going to be described and analyzed. This episode by the name of "No more good days" was chosen because in it, all the main narrative threads and characters are introduced as well as the characters' conflicts resulting from the vision. [63] It begins with an immediate introduction realized by a cut from black screen to an upside-down big close-up (BCU) of a man, played by Joseph Fiennes, climbing out of a car wreck. The camera, after an interspersed sequence of point-of-view (POV) shots of details of people dealing with the effects of what appears to be a massive car crash, retracts from the close-up, zooms out via crane shot and ends with a cold blue-grey-colored very long shot (VLS) of a cityscape in utter destruction and mayhem, but still following the character searching for somebody called 'Demetri'. [64] The visual elements, such as the application of a shaky hand-camera, crane shots and editing technique (rapid cuts and cold color filters) as well as the sound elements, e. g. as the imitation of someone regaining consciousness by use of muffled sounds which become clearer after a certain time, add to the general effect of the introductory *mise-*

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62   Reinecke, 61.
63   A more detailed description of the whole episode "No more good days" can be found in the Appendix, p.36
64   Definitions of shots and camera perspectives adapted from: Jonathan Bignell, *An introduction to television studies* (London: Routledge, 2008) 88-97. A full List of Abbreviations is provided in the Appendix, p.32

en-scène. This places the viewer directly in the turmoil the narrated world is dealing with and allows the viewer to wonder what happened: Thus the viewer quickly sympathizes with the character who is pictured as being completely dazed and confused by what has happened to him and the surrounding environment.

Generally speaking, it has to be added that an extensive use of crane shots, CGIs, the use of color filters and a sophisticated editing technique add to a crisp, glossy and polished look of the whole series, which sometimes shows parallels to the outstanding visual appearance which came to prominence in series such as *CSI*. [65]

After this scene, a flashback is applied by means of a short sequence of 'computer-generated images' (CGIs)-element of the series title lettering and a text pane reading 'Four Hours Earlier'. The following sequence is comprised of a series of shots from VLS to medium shot (MS) zooming into a suburban setting of houses and a final BCU of a safe, which is opened by a hand typing numbers on a key panel, then opening the safe and taking out a FBI badge and a holstered gun. The next sequence introduces the viewer to the nuclear Benford family by tracing protagonist Mark's steps on his way to work, his wife Olivia and little daughter Charlie, who is watching television while having breakfast. The composition of warm colors and a soothing background music mixed with every-day noises of radio, television and a telephone talk mediates a general feeling of safety and warmth.

Within the following six minutes, a whole universe of characters, conflicts and interconnections is very efficiently introduced to the viewer within a short amount of time. The camera follows Mark's morning routine on his way to work and later picks up on this narrative thread when showing him during a surveillance session with Demetri. This narrative is cross-cut and intertwined with as well as branched-out to other threads such as the narrative of his wife Olivia leaving for work and the babysitter Nicole staying at the Benford's house and having fun with her boyfriend while little Charlie, whom Nicole is supposed to take care of, is having her afternoon nap. All of these narrative stations again branch out to more complex narratives, e. g. Aaron, whom Mark is paying a visit at an *Alcoholics Anyonymous*-meeting on his way to work or Olivia, who is not only leaving for work herself, but is also calling her co-worker Bryce. Bryce is quickly introduced as having existential problems of his own and his attempt to end his life is also used to culminate the narrative tension building up through these first eight minutes. The other character's lives are glanced at by brief cuts to the ongoing narration of their regular, daily lives. On the technical level, the tension is driven forward by use of increasing speed of cross-cuts between these different narrative threads and an application of tense music and a growing level of noise which ends in a sequence of cars chasing through rush-hour traffic.

The climax of this growing tension follows a cut to a CGI indicating a launch of the character's consciousness to a different level represented by a prismatic stream of colors reminiscent of Kubrick's *2001 – A space odyssey* and a following cut to a sequence

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65   reference to *CSI* as example of outstanding visual technique:
        cf. Victoria O'Donnell, *Television criticism* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2007) 217.

of rapid flashes of distorted, alienated images follows, showing Mark in an office, drinking heavily and looking at a wall which is filled with a vast collection of clues pinned to that wall and set in relation to each other by red strings. Moreover, the viewer learns that the protagonist is hunted by masked men with laser-guided rifles and desperately hides from the intruders. This sequence is crucial to all of the *FlashForward*-narratives, because during the whole season the plot will refer to this sequence of images as Mark's vision, which is providing the main clues for the later-developing investigation.

After the visionary flash follows the abrupt awakening of the characters. Here, the recipient finds himself taken back to the starting point of the episode, the difference being that this time, the plot is narrated in a more detailed way and not depicted in the chaotic, fragmentary mode which was present in the beginning. The man climbing out of the wrecked car can now be identified as FBI agent Mark Benford, with whom the audience by now has become familiar. Thus the tragedy depicted in this scene appears to be even more haunting and devastating. Through a blend of different cuts from Mark's POV and long shots (LS) looking over a vast cityscape suffering from destruction the audience watches and feels with the protagonist, who finds himself in a state of shock and disbelief. After this sequence, the viewer quickly becomes aware of the severe changes which have happened to the narrated world. With the explanation that the FlashForward apparently has happened on a global scale, the vast implications for humanity begin to dawn on everybody. The audience follows all of the characters who have been introduced during the first few minutes and sees each of them dealing with the vision imposed on them in a different way.

3.2.4   Narration

As has been described in the previous chapter, Mark and his vision provide the one narrative element which is going to drive the frame narrative forward during the whole season. With Mark being quickly identified as the protagonist of the diegesis, his point-of-view develops into an internal mode of focalization, which shifts between a perspective looking through the eyes of Mark himself and camera shots following Mark from outside. The protagonist is described as broken character whose main characteristics on the one hand are persistence and loyalty to the agency he is working for as well as to his family. On the other hand, he seems to have had a hard past, which now is catching up with him. He is depicted as suffering and being depressed, thus resulting in the characterization of a broken character.

Apart from this main narrative of Mark, the viewer is offered a huge selection of conflicts evolving out of the futures each of the characters has seen. The point-of-view applied to the hypodiegetic level of each of the character's visions is that of an internal focalization, which always appears in blurred and shaky images put together by fast cuts which are paired with a grey-green color filter and muffled background noise sound, thus giving the visions a unique signature look. [66]

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[66]   cf. Johann N. Schmidt, "Narration in Film." the living handbook of narratology (Hamburg: HUP).
        <http://hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php/Narration_in_Film> 01/07/2011.

The character of Mark's wife Olivia for example finds her marriage being tested by the vision she has had. In her vision she is together with a man who during the first episode is revealed to be physics scientist Lloyd Simcoe. The quest Olivia finds herself on during the entire season is the struggle to keep away from Lloyd whom she repeatedly happens to run into. The internal focalization of the vision is comprised of a succession of shots of BCUs, MSs and MCUs, which indicate the view through the eyes of Olivia. Those shots are intertwined with MSs of her getting out of bed and slowly walking to the staircase of the Benford's home. Lloyd Simcoe on the other hand has had a similar vision of himself being together with an unidentified woman in a house he has never seen before. The vision's realization is similar to that of Olivia but in this instance, the viewer sees through the eyes of Lloyd. Later in the season, different parts of Lloyd's vision are revealed and the viewer learns that in Lloyd's vision, he was obsessed with solving an equation of some sort which even later will be solved as being related to the FlashForward event itself. The example of Lloyd's vision is also a good example to illustrate the working of the before-mentioned vertical structure of narration, which exists besides the serial characteristics of the main threads. *FlashForward* succeeds in narrating little pieces of plots within one episode. On first sight, these pieces appear to be sufficient for the riddles placed within this one episode to be solved. Only later, though, will the viewer gain insight into the larger connections those little pieces of narration were part of. Lloyd's vision at the end of the first episode, for example, only seems to have had the effect of showing him being liaised with Olivia. Later during the season, the audience learns that this had only been a part of Lloyd's vision and that furthermore, he had seen himself being obsessed with some sort of formula, which then complicates the narrative in another part of the series.

The visions of other characters vary in positive or negative meanings: Aaron saw his daughter and him together while before the vision he believed that she was dead. Olivia's work colleague Bryce gained a new will to live from his vision because he saw himself being with a young Japanese woman. The Benfords' babysitter Nicole turns her life around because she saw herself being drowned and concludes that if she begins making up for her sins maybe the drowning, which she interprets as divine punishment, will not happen. And Mark's friend and co-agent Demetri thinks of himself as being dead in six months' time, because he did not have a vision at all. Generally, speaking, all of the characters visions' are narrated by use of internal focalization and the characters' faces are shown in MCU in order to see their emotional reaction to the visions. A different kind of story including drastic measures as a means to take fate into one's own hands is picked up in the narrative of FBI agent Al Gough, who in his vision saw himself being referred to as the murderer of another character by the name of Celia Quinones. Celia on the other hand did not have a vision at all, thus belonging to the group of 'Ghosts'. With Celia's lack of a vision being enough proof to Al Gough that he is going to kill her sometime within the coming six months, he sees himself as having to take responsibility and ends his life by jumping from the roof of the FBI build-

ing in order to prevent Celia's murder from happening. In the narrated world, the fact that destiny is not set in stone, as has been proven by Al Gough in a very drastic way, helps people in dealing with their visions, but doubts remain. It is realized by shifting external and neutral focalizations of the story, which switches to the internal mode when Al Gough's struggle to make sense of his visions is pictured. Thus, it allows the viewer to sympathize with the character and conclusively makes the decision to end his life comprehensible, although it definitely remains one of the shocking elements of the narrative.

Another narrative thread which is woven throughout the whole season of *Flash-Forward* is that of a fourth group of people which appear to hover above all of the chaos; a conglomerate, which is scientifically and technically superior to the rest of humanity in general and the FBI in particular. This narrative thread can be thought of the antagonist thread. Whenever this part of the narration is taken up, the images appear in dark tones and lighting always is very sparse, often only interrupted by one single desk lamp or similar lighting, which through its contrast to the rest of the picture attracts the viewer's attention. Generally, the application of forbidding sounds and music as well as a display of complex machinery or a chess board on the one hand or people having been taken hostage and sitting in dark, ominous places on the other hand indicate that the narration is taking up on the thread of the conspiracy. The audience witnesses this group of masterminds who did not black out during the FlashForward and are now plotting the preparation of a second FlashForward event, which is planned to work on an even larger scale than the first global event. During the investigation, Mark, Demetri and the whole team of the FBI learn that the global FlashForward has not been the first incident of its kind and that the antagonist D. Gibbons in particular has been working on a scheme of enormous dimensions for a long time. The character of D. Gibbons has features of the villainy archetype of a trickster, e. g. he plays mind games with protagonist Mark Benford in order to prove his supremacy and, in addition to being a genius who seems to be able to look into the future as he wishes, is a master in the game of chess. [67] D. Gibbons always is realized as wearing black clothes. He generally is lighted sparsely and only appears in dark and gloomy settings, except for one sequence where he sits and waits for little Charlie in an amusement park. The viewer never gets to see through D. Gibbons' focalization, thus the antagonist stays inapproachable. The symbolic challenge inherent in the chess game being played by D. Gibbons and Mark Benford displays the fight between good and evil and a particular twist of the whole season is that the protagonist/hero does not win in the end but merely succeeds in outliving the negative predictions the first FlashForward triggered by D. Gibbons had brought him.

The narrative threads introduced previously all deal with the enigmas imposed on the viewer, implying larger questions such as '*Will Mark solve the mystery behind the FlashForward?*','*What is the man, who has been awake during the blackout, planning to do?*' or '*Is Demetri really going to die?*', which make the audience stick to the riddles. A large amount of narrative told during the first episode as well as during the whole season,

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67   Character archetypes: cf. O'Donnell, 84.

though, can be categorized as 'characterizing narratives'. Those threads do not fulfill the purpose of driving the main storyline further to an end or solution, but rather help the characters to develop a fuller personality of their own. In order to illustrate this specific type of narrative threads, we may consider the example of Janis Hawk, of whom the viewer gradually learns during the whole season that she first acts as a mole within the FBI and later as a double-agent, whose aim is to gain intelligence on the conspirators who hired her in the first place. A character designed to be a traitor generally is quickly condemned by the audience for it. But with the help of characterizing narratives, the producers of *FlashForward* succeed in creating a story of a difficult past which has led the character to the decision to act as a traitor, against her co-workers and friends at the FBI. Through the use of characterizing narratives, the actions of a character become more comprehensible for the viewer and lead to a character design which appears to be very realistic. [68] This realism often is put into effect by application of different modes of presentation of a character. A combination of different levels of point-of-view such as the internal focalization imitated in the vision sequences or fragmentary use of dialogue sequences help forming a round character such as Janis Hawk, whom the viewer learns to simultaneously question and sympathize with. The form of dialogue in particular, which on first sight often appears to only consist of insider information, is used to push the speed of narration forward by means of actively engaging the audience in filling in the missing information.

In order to integrate a series in the classification of 'megamovies', a selection of before-mentioned criteria needs to be met. As has been shown in this chapter, *FlashForward* does not only meet the requirement of a complex genre classification, it also partly consists of a vertical structure of narration. Additional to the horizontal, episodic structure of the main plot, the purpose of the vertical structure is realized in episode-long threads which connect to manifold webs of interaction and only gradually develop by the help of cumulative narration. These webs of interaction are realized by an editing technique of rapid cross-cutting, which has been applied drastically within the first episode but also reoccurring several times during the whole season. [69] The result is that of a ground-breaking compression of narration, suspense and narrated time. To add to that, the series depicts the narrated universe in a fashion which makes the world, as well as the characters within this world, appear as realistic as possible. The visual realism in particular with which the characters are implemented, allows the audience to grow emotional connections to the narrated world.

3.3   Flashbacks and *FlashForward*: Collective Memory within the series

The realization of memory and the interconnections between memory and time constitute core elements in the narrative of *FlashForward*. The trailblazing twist to the story

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68   cf. Schmidt, "Narration in Film".
69   For a detailed display of chronological progression of sequences in the episode "No More Good Days", see Appendix, p.35

reveals itself to the audience, when one takes into consideration that the memories illustrated on-screen are not merely 'normal' memories, which would have an action or event of the past as their topic, but rather a prolepsis to visions of the future. Thus, the audiences is witness to characters who, again, are witness within the vision of themselves in a future time. Especially the application of prolepses and analepses within the diegesis and the additional occurrence of future visions which later in the diegesis happen to be referred to as having happened in the past but nonetheless depict the future, is outstanding. The main ties between the series' narration to Collective Memory Studies will be shown as follows.

3.3.1 Intradiegetic remediation and sites of remembrance

The series constantly repeats patterns of remembering by portraying how the characters try to recall their memories of the initial incident. This is not only done by the display of hypodiegetic contents of intradiegetic acts of remembrance when the viewer witnesses the characters trying to remember what they saw during the blackout. Additionally as well as simultaneously, the audience has to recall what has been shown earlier in the season or in a particular episode, when the characters' visions are presented and, later-on, *re*-presented. Following Astrid Erll's concept of remediation, one might call those acts of remembrance within the story intradiegetic remediations of the initial event, the FlashForward with which the whole story begins. [70] The visions as well as the remediations of these visions are realized within the narrative by the use of prolepses, which are narrated in *stream-of-consciousness*-style and put into practice by rapid succession of fragmented cuts and blendings.

Also related to collective memory is the site of remembrance which the narrative introduces as the Mosaic Collective. It consists of a website linked to a database which is established by the FBI team investigating the FlashForward event and has as its goal a collection of reports of what happened to each individual on the globe. These reports then can be searched an analyzed in order to get a bigger picture of the state the global population saw itself in during the visions. The notion within the narrative that this network can be accessed by everybody and is neither filtered nor controlled by any institution in particular pictures an ideal, democratic realization of a memory site. The concentration of collective remembering on such a location of remembrance, which in the narration appears to be the most popular possibility to cope with the memories, because the characters favor the idea of comparing their memories to others in order to see if they fit in a larger context of the blackout in some way, can be seen as a realization of Halbwachs' law of concentration of collective memory. With the internet, and the fictional Mosaic Collective in particular, allowing people to add different forms of media such as written texts, videos, photos or audio messages to the network, one can assume a concentration of collective memory in this *lieu de memoire*, as Pierre Nora has labeled it.

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70   cf. chapter 2.4 of this work.

3.3.2 Narrator and narration

Moreover, the remediations are also linked to the viewer's ability to recall depictions of memories which happened at an earlier stage in order to decide if the narration happening at the moment of viewing can be trusted or not. Thus, the viewer finds himself looking for hints in order to decide if he or she is dealing with a reliable or rather an unreliable narrator. In the case of Mark's thread of narration within *FlashForward*, the audience quickly learns through disintegration or fragmentation of the story's timeline that they are dealing with an autodiegetic and unreliable narrator, which the diegesis explains with an apparent drunkenness of the protagonist. And this case, the last instance of narration consist of an unreliable narrator who can not be fully trusted because he was drunk at the moment of the hypodiegetic narration of the vision. With the character knowing that within the vision he cannot be trusted because of being drunk, he develops a very skeptical attitude towards his vision. The viewer on the other hand realizes the need of being even more cautious if the protagonist is to be trusted or not. Especially the features of the protagonist's narration add up to a form of mediality which Astrid Erll describes as part of an experiential mode of collective memory narrations. This mode is one of the four distinct modes of presentation associated with narrations related to collective memory. [71] Such narrations are though of as strongly contributing to the identity formation of social groups. Identity formation in *FlashForward* is driven by an ever-rising determinism, the question of free will versus fate. With everybody having seen his or her future, humanity quickly splits into three main groups of belief: while one group sets out to do everything in their power to make their vision come true, the other tries to prevent their visions from happening. And, with the character of Demetri, who did not have a vision at all, a third group of so-called 'Ghosts' emerges. The story of a morbid sub-movement of the 'Ghosts', which calls itself "The Blue Hand', is present during almost all of the episodes of *FlashForward*. Members of this group in fatalistic fashion conclude from their loss of vision that when they are going to be dead in six months from the recent point of narration, then they rather would like to choose how to die. Thus, there are meetings held in which the members are given the possibility to commit suicide. The fragmentarization of humanity into groups of belief. An identity formation often is achieved or enhanced through the adaptation of mythical elements, which in *FlashForward* most prominently manifests itself in two groups of people: the group of conspirators and the group of 'Ghosts'. Members of the 'Ghosts of the Blue Hand' in particular not only draw on the mythological background of the term but also mystify their situation by handing their free will over to a cult of people willing to commit suicide. Notions of ghosts in popular tales does include the presupposition that ghosts are dead and haunted. In *FlashForward* this presupposition is expanded further to people who are alive at the moment, but are cursed to die within six months time. The group of conspirators on the other hand embody a very modern version of eschatological myths, which are concerned with death and the end of the ordinary world. In

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71   cf. chapter 2.4 of this work

the story, they are the ones who caused the FlashForward which induced visions in all of humanity. Thus, they are depicted as having divine powers and are able to cast biblical rapture upon the whole of mankind. The quest of man for divine powers is as old as humanity itself and this myth can be said to be actualized and remediated with the addition of scientific elements borrowed from the genre of *Science Fiction*. Furthermore, it can be argued that with such difficult times as those inherent in the narrated world of *FlashForward*, the fictional population is depicted as moving closer together and developing a collective or group identity which is the onset for the formation of collective memory. In other words, *FlashForward* depicts a universe where one particular event is transformed from individual characters' memories to a more abstract mode of remembrance, which can be called an instance of collective memory.

3.3.3   Fictions of memory and meta-memory

With reference to Neumann and her analysis of 'fictions of memory', I argue that the narrative of *FlashForward* can be labeled not only a 'fiction of memory' but also a 'fiction of meta-memory'. [72] As has been shown, the series on one level depicts how the characters deal with a global event, which involves repeated recollection of what happened during this event. A mimesis of memory takes part in the narrated world most prominently in the Mosaic Collective, which constitutes a unique collection of human memories in one place, i. e. database. The recofiguration of memory, which according to Neumann accounts for an important aspect of fictions of memory, is also inherent in the narrative of *FlashForward*, with characters at the beginning attributing the cause of the event to a religious context and later learning that the blackout was man-made. The development of explanations for the blackout throughout the narrative from mythical reasons to a scientific explanation of a conspiracy is just one example of how memories are refigurated within the story. As has been shown earlier in this work, the recipient generally finds a wide use of perspective structures in narratives where a collective past is depicted. In *FlashForward*, we encounter an extensive use of psychological modes of narration such as internal focalization or the technique of *stream-of-consciousness* and an individualization of one event through multiple perspectives. Moreover, one hallmark of *FlashForward*'s narrative is the dislocation of narrated time frames caused by at least one unreliable narrating instance resulting in analepses and prolepses. To add to that, the *remembering I* in the fictional present cannot clearly draw meaningful connections to the events the *remembered I* in the fictional future experiences. My analysis of *FlashForward* concludes that these elements constitute a fiction of memory. The discrepancies between the points-of-view in such diegeses are predominantly crucial to literary texts fulfilling the standards of 'fictions of memory', but in my opinion can also be adapted to different media texts such as the narrative in a television series. Within the special example of FlashForward, the definition of memory itself seems in need of an expansion, because the temporal directionality is not pointing backwards in time to the past, but to a remembered vision of the future.

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72   cf. chapter 2.5 of this work

Following Neumann's definition, the term 'fiction of meta-memory' can also be applied to the series, because in it, the diegesis does not only display a constant *re-creation* of memories by the characters and the audience, but also invites the recipient to reflect upon common modes of remembering not only present in the narrated world but also in similar ones existent in reality.

3.3.4 Extradiegetic remediation

On a different meta-level, the possibility to read *FlashForward* as a metaphor on humanity dealing with the causes and effects of the event which is part of our collective memory and generally known as *9/11*, supposedly is not too far-fetched. The first episode's imitation of the initial footage's filmic style of a shaky, hand-held camera and uncontrolled zooming in and out of the scene can be seen as an example of remediation of or intertextual reference to the images of the 'Falling Man' and the event which has generally been labeled *Nine-Eleven*. One can argue that the large-scale mechanics at work within societies after an event with ramifications of such magnitude occurs, are adapted to the narrated world of *FlashForward*. The particular instance of the Mosaic Collective for example can be called a remediation of popular sites of remembrance such as the virtual wall which had been established as a means to collect the memories of Veterans of the Vietnam War. [73] Furthermore, it can be understood as remediating the controversial discussion currently taking place in the US and worldwide over adequate memorials at and beyond the place which nowadays is known as Ground Zero and which is where the attacks on the Twin Towers carved their mark into the collective memory of the global population. [74]

4   Conclusion and outlook

The premise of this work was to perform a brief analysis of the television series *Flash-Forward* through the lens of Collective Memory Studies. To do that, a selection of concepts and theories concerned with collective memory and its medial presentation were introduced. Then the series was put into context of a classification of 'megamovies' in order to identify characteristics inherent in complex narratives of series such as *Lost*, *Fringe*, *V* and *FlashForward*. As a means of illustrating the complexity of the series' narration, the appendix provides additional information such as the first episode's *mise-en-scène* as well as a chronological sequencing of this episode and an overview of the social relations evolving during the whole season. Later, the characteristics were compared to the discourse of Collective Memory and relations such as the series as 'fiction of memory' and 'fiction of meta-memory' or the presence of intra- and extradiegetic remediations were revealed. What was found in particular, is a narration that adds a twist to the definition of memory, because it turns the temporal directionality of memories around.

73   Udo Hebel, "Sites of Memory in U.S.-American Histories and Cultures." *A companion to cultural memory studies* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 47–60.

74   The Virtual Wall: Vietnam Veterans Memorial. < http://www.virtualwall.org/>

So from this work's point of view, it can be claimed to have shed light on an experiment performed along the lines of collective memory within the narrative of *FlashForward*. Interesting about the prevalent generation of television series, which includes examples such as *Lost* or *FlashForward*, is not only the focus on narratives which would have failed completely, had they been produced 15 years earlier, because the inherent complexity would and could not have been grasped by a mass audience of 15 years ago. [75] What to me is even more astonishing is the apparent shift away from simple mediation on the television screen. Nowadays, involvement of the audience on other media channels is an important side effect not only for later sale in DVD-boxes and in fan forums, but also for long-term engagement of the audience. Audience participation was particularly important to the producers of *FlashForward* in order to create a group feeling of a larger collective, at least in the beginning stages of the series. One element of this aspect was the temporal adjustments of the series to reality. The producers set out to give the narration an appearance of real-time story; for that, the timing of the series' broadcast schedule was planned to begin with the narrated time frame. Furthermore, the producers tried to plant strong references to seasonal holidays and other cornerstones of real time on the diegetic level. For example, the episode which was aired around Halloween, consisted of a narrative which showed Mark and Aaron together with Mark's daughter Charlie taking a walk in costumes in order to Trick or Treat the Benfords' neighborhood. Here, the reference to Halloween was clearly put into the story deliberately by the script writers. And with the general suspense growing over time, the audience began wondering what would happen in reality on April, 29, 2010, as well. [76] A different instance of extraordinary viewer involvement can be seen in the fictional network of the Mosaic Collective, which was also established as a real website prior to the series' premiere, so fans were able to respond to the short flashes that were broadcast in the advertisement slots during the airing dates of *Lost*. In an abstract sense, this experiment in linking the audience to the narrative could be interpreted as a different kind of collective altogether.

Martin Zierold, who provided the main framework for this work's basis of understanding collective and cultural memory, ended his analysis with a call for a 'bigger picture' in memory studies, i. e. a larger theoretical frame, which would enable an integration of a wide selection of inputs such as media texts, concepts and theories. This work here can definitely not give an answer to that call, but wants to underline the need for further research within this recent discussion for directions in Cultural Memory Studies. What should always be kept in mind, though, is a short summary coined by Jeffrey K. Olick, who sees remembering as a complex process, "which is always a fluid negotiation between the desires of the present and the legacies of the past." [77] In the case of *FlashForward* as an experiment with collective memory in general, and with fictions of memory in particular, though, one might add: "... and the future!"

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75   This is at least the train of thought Steven Johnson argues and which I find quite convinving.
      cf. Steven Johnson, *Everything bad is good for you* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2005).
76   for viewer's reactions, cf. for example *FlashForward Forum* <http://www.flashforwardforum.com/>
77   Jeffrey K. Olick, "From Collective Memory to the Sociology of Mnemonic Practices and Products."
      A companion to cultural memory studies, eds. Astrid Erll et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 159.

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Appendix

Appendix

Table of Content

APPENDIX: LIST OF ABBREVATIONS AND TERMS

VLS	Very Long Shot
LS	Long Shot
MLS	Medium Long Shot
MS	Medium Shot
MCU	Medium Close-up
CU	Close-Up
BCU	Big Close-up
POV	Point-of-view
CS	counter-shot, also called shot-reaction-shot
crane shot	fluid shot performed by camera hanging from a crane
steadicam	camera mounted to a construction which is tied to the operator's body and balances the occuring movement of a hand-camera, allowing smooth shots with the benefits of hand-camera shot technique

APPENDIX: *FlashForward* – List of Main Cast

actor	also known for	character in *FlashForward*	present in first episode
Courtney B. Vance	*The Hunt for Red October, Dangerous Minds*	Stanford Wedeck	x
Joseph Fiennes	*Shakespeare in Love*	Mark Benford	x
John Cho		Demetri Noh	x
Jack Davenport	*Pirates of the Caribbean, The Talented Mr. Ripley*	Lloyd Simcoe	x
James Callis	*Battlestar Galactica*	Gabriel McDow	
Zachary Knighton		Dr. Bryce Varley	x
Peyton List		Nicole Kirby	x
Brian F. O'Byrne		Aaron Stark	x
Sonya Walger	*Lost, Couplings, The Terminator Chronicles*	Dr. Olivia Benford	x
Christine Woods		Janis Hawk	x
Dominic Monaghan	*Lost, The Lord of The Rings*	Simon Campos	
Ryan Wynott		Dylan Simcoe	x
Barry Shababa Henley		Agent Shelly Vreede	x
Lennon Wynn		Charlie Benford	x
Michael Ealy		Marshall Vogel	
Genevieve Cortese		Tracy Stark	
Seth McFarlane		Agent Jake Curdy	
Gabrielle Union		Zoey Andanta	
Lee Thompson Young		Al Gough	x
Michael Massee		Dyson Frost	
Amy Rosoff		Marcie Turoff	
Neil Jackson		Lucas Hellinger	
Yuko Takeuchi		Keiko Arahida	
Annabeth Gish		Lita	
Rachel Roberts		Alda Hertzog	x
Alex Kingston		Fiona Banks	
Ricky Jay		Ted Flosso	
Callum Keith Rennie		Jeff Slingerland	
Peter Coyote		President Dave Segovia	

33

VILLAINS

GHOSTS

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

SCIENTISTS

FAMILY

COMPANIONS

Jeff Slingerland

Lucas Hellinger

Lita

Flosso

Victor

Alda Hertzog

Dyson Frost

Simon Campos

Zoey Andata

Demetri Noh

Al Gough

Marcie Turoff

Marshall Vogel

Shelly Vreede

Agent Curdy

Stanford Wedeck

MOSAIC NETWORK

Janis Hawk

US Vice President Joyce Clemente

US President Dave Segovia

Mark Benford

Lloyd Simcoe

Dylan Simcoe

Gabriel McDow

Charlie Benford

Olivia Benford

Bryce Varley

Nicole Kirby

Keiko Arahida

Aaron Stark

Tracy Stark

Kate Stark

☞ *used to babysit* ☜

Social relations:

= strong friendship or love/kinship

= friendship

= acquaintance or co-worker

= opposition/enemy

= beginning or ending strong relationship during narrated time

APPENDIX: *FlashForward* Episode 1 "No more Good Days" – chronological progression of main threads

Time/minutes: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43

Plot rows (top group): X43, X30, X9, X8, X6, X2, X1

Plot rows (bottom group): N, M, G, F, E, D, C, B, A

commercial, commercial, commercial, commercial

Narrative Threads

A	=	Mark's quest for understanding
B	=	Bryce's depression & relief
C	=	Aaron's addiction and tragic loss
D	=	Nicole's life
E	=	Demetri's life & problems
F	=	Olivia in her work environment
G	=	Olivia's connection to the Simcoe family
M	=	The Mosaic investigation
N	=	What are "Ghosts"?
Xx	=	vision of x (e.g. X1 = vision of Mark)

Characters with visions in Episode 1:

1	=	Mark Benford
2	=	Olivia Benford
6	=	Aaron Stark
8	=	Janis Hawk
9	=	Stanford Wedeck
30	=	Lloyd Simcoe
43	=	Al Gough

Appendix: FlashForward – Episode 1 "No More Good Days" – Detailed Description of Sequences

# + plot	Time	Who	Where, what & how	Sound/Music	Color/Lighting	Overall effect
1 A	00:00 – 00:50	1 crowd	MCU of 1, hand camera, rapid, shaky movement – zoom out to high-angle LS: scene of chaotic event, destruction, mayhem	scene noises	blue/grey sterile, cold	*enigma 1:* viewer is at first overwhelmed by scene
1,5	– 00:58		CGI: title and text indicating: "4 Hours earlier"			
2 A	– 01:58	1, 2	sequence of 4 shots: VLS of a suburban neighborhood, LS of houses in a blind alley, MLS of one particular house. Cut to BCU of safe that is being opened: inside a note saying "You are a crappy husband! I hate you!", Pan to MS of a bedroom. Man dressed for work, woman still in bed. Note is taken out by male who smiles on sight of the comment. Cut back to safe: show a gun and a FBI badge; taken by male. Pan to MS of man walking towards bed, kissing woman goodbye.	smooth piano mixed with typical morning radio broadcast		Introduction of the Benford family: Mark (FBI agent, loving father), Olivia (doctor) and daughter Charlie
3 A	– 02:28	1, 3	BCU of girl watching a comic, pan to MS, man preparing breakfast for both of them, then leaving for work	smooth piano	orange, yellow, brown warm, soothing	Introduction of Nicole, who is Charlie's babysitter
4 D	– 02:44	1, 4 sanitation workers	Mark leaves for his car, meets Nicole, she enters house	smooth piano		
5 F	– 02:54	2, 3, 4, (5)	cut to MLS of Nicole and Charlie playing on the patio and Olivia, who calls Bryce (not answering) leaves message	Olivia's phone message to Bryce		Introduction of Olivia's work fellow Bryce
6 B	– 03:49	5 crowd, surfers	cut to BCU of Bryce's back of the head, walking along a pier. Pan to Bryce's point-of-view: Pan from pier to beach, watching surfers and the sea. Cut back to CU of Bryce, zoom out to MLS, Bryce pulls phone and wallet out of his jacket, places them on pier railing - VCU of phone and wallet. cut back to MS of Bryce, pan to CS and cut to low-angle CS of Bryce pulling a gun.	continued message, piano & violins, darker	brown-grey, more distant	*enigma 2:* Bryce is depressed and willing to kill himself
7 C	– 04:27	1, 6 group	cut to high-angle VLS of a meeting in gymnasium, which then develops into a crane shot. Ends with MS of Mark sitting in the audience. Pan to speaker, who is struggling to tell his story.	quiet piano, narration of Aaron		*characterizing narr:* Mark & Aaron at an AA support group, Aaron's story of daughter who was killed in Afghanistan.
8 C	– 04:50	1, 6	Cut to a MS Pan following Mark and Aaron from the meeting to their cars.	background noise	neutral	buddy talk between Aaron and Mark. Aaron works at the Department of Water & Power.
9 D	– 05:19	4 boyfriend	Cut: LS pan of The Benford House, followed by pan MLS through their upstairs' corridor. Moving along the camera passes Charlie's bedroom where she is asleep. The view is pans again to the top of a staircase overlooking Nicole and a young man who are making out.	Mos Def: "Quiet Dog"	orange, warm	*characterizing narr:* Nicole seems not to take her job seriously
10 E	– 06:21	1, 7, (11), 20 minor villains	Cut: MLS of unknown blonde woman, imitation of photo surveillance shots. Pan to counter-shot of Demetri photographing the suspect. MS of Demetri and Mark in car on duty, dialogue about Dimitri's reluctance towards marrying his girlfriend Zoey	"Quiet Dog" faded talkover	blue-greyish	*characterizing Narr:* Introduction of Demetri, co-worker and friend of Mark
11 D	– 06:23	4 boyfriend	Cut to MCU of Nicole & boyfriend	"Quiet Dog"		

# + plot	Time	Who	What & How	Sound/Music	Color/Lighting	Overall effect
12 C	–06:40	6	CU of a young woman soldier's picture. Counter-shot CU of Aaron briefly looking at it. Cut to high-angle crane shot Close up of electric equipment on a power pole with Aaron in the background leaving his car and looking up to the pole top.			
13 F	–06:44	2 hospital staff	crane shot of hospital, cut to MS of Olivia talking with a work fellow, scrubbing up and preparing for surgery		grey-blue neutral	*characterizing narr:* Chase of the unknown suspect is of utmost importance. Reality effect through use of camera. Enhanced speed of narration.
14 A	–06:56	1, 7, 20 minor villains, surveillance car crew	photo shots of suspect exiting a building & getting in a car. MS of Mark and Demetri, who tail the escaping suspect. Mark uses radio and calls for support of surveillance car, which then also tails suspect's car. Camera becomes more shaky.	"Quiet Dog"		
15 A	–07:24	1, 7, 8, 9	MS of Mark calling FBI headquarters. MS of Janis, who is a communications officer at the FBI. Sequence of shots showing Mark and Janis talking about the pursuit procedure. Chief of Department Stanford Wedeck joins the radio conference.		green-brown	*characterizing narr:* Janis & Wedeck as the backbone, which coordinates the pursuit
16 A	–08:17	1, 7	LS of suspect's car breaking out of normal traffic, trying to escape. Rapid succession of VLSs, MSs and CUs of Mark and Demetri who take up pursuit. -> stunts, crashes, continuing race: shaky camera imitates the movements of Mark's car during pursuit.	forceful percussion loud traffic noise, screams	grey-blue	
17 B	–08:21	5 crowd	Cut: low-angle MCU tails to MS of Bryce, who raises gun to his throat. Zoom in to CU of Bryce with gun.			
18 C	–08:24	6	MS of Aaron climbing power pole, equipped with tools			
19 F	–08:27	2 hospital staff	Olivia preparing for operation,			Rapid Build-up of tension, viewer confusion
20 B	–08:29	5	cut to MCU of Bryce with gun at his head			
21 A	–08:30	1, 7, 20	The suspect's car crashes, Mark and Demetri try to reach the car in time	orchestra, music rises	grey-blue	
22 B	–08:36	5	cut to MCU of Bryce's back of the head			
23 D	–08:38	4	Nicole in BCU			
24 D	–08:39	3	CU of Charlie asleep			
25 A	–08:40	1, 7	MCU of Mark and Demetri in car			
26 F	–08:41	2	MCU of Olivia wanting to begin with her operation			
27 A	–08:42	1, 7	MS of Mark and Demetri in danger of crashing their car			
28 A	–08:46	(1)	CGI of FlashForward initiation, rapid flashes of images related to Mark	sound of starting airplane	sparkly	Introduction of the phenomenon

# + plot	Time	Who	What & How	Sound/Music	Color/Lighting	Overall effect
29	08:50		blackness			
30 X1	08:52	(1)	FlashForward vision: rapid succession of flashes, video effects blur, noise, wavering picture, blue tint of picture A collection of these flashes is provided here:	muffled sound, like underwater	strong blue–grey filter	*enigma 3*: Introduction of the phenomenon

- Mark's eye. The iris of the eye becomes a swirl. • Mark in his office, then leaning over Olivia asleep in bed, holding her hand and kissing it. • black and cobalt blue shot of Mark's office.
- Faded picture of a man, on a boat, wearing antique diver's suit, including the metal, helmet. Another man is holding the oxygen tubing. • Charlie smiling with a man's hands gently reaching for her shoulders.
- Black and blue frames. • Mark's darkened office, a yellow, red and blue bullet reading "NOT TODAY". • Mark's office in the dark.
- Unidentified woman license showing her name to be Alda Hertzog. • A Black swan, black and blue frames. • Aaron standing at a podium • Men with guns, laser beams fixed.
- A piece of paper with logo of The Crown Cheese Steak and a crown hanging off of the T. "Help us" in red, is written on the paper. • A calendar page showing April.
- A picture of a 7 headed serpent with a bare tree and a pyramid in the upper right corner. • Mark, in his office, taking a drink from a flask. He is wearing a friendship bracelet.
- A page from a calendar for April 29. 2010. Mark writing "Who Else Knows" on the calendar page. • A plastic sheet protector with an identifier of MOSAIC in the outside pocket.
- One clown mask. • Two mean slowly walk toward Mark's office. They have guns and they are using red laser sighting pointers. • Mark. • Mark writing. • A masked man.
- White doors. • Marks's office. • Two clown masks.
- Mark's hand reaching for the board and touching the Blue Hand note card. • Mark standing in front of a large board with various post-it notes, pins, string, pictures and newspaper clippings.
- A piece of paper reading REDPANDA is directly below the post-it. • Mark leaning against the board. • Yellow post-it with BLUE HAND.
- A red covered passport for United Kingdom and Great Britain and Northern Ireland. To the left of the passport is the upper corner of a plastic bag and NCE is shown written on the white stripe across the bag.
- Mark holding a folder in his left hand and looking at the friendship bracelet on his right wrist. • A sheet protector with a paper in the outside pocket reading "Owners Markings MOSAIC."
- Picture of a man and underneath the picture it reads "Sekunden". • Mark examining a card with "BABY DOLL PHOTOGRAPH" written on it, pinned on top of a picture of a doll.
- Mark examining the board. • Mark examining what appears to be an aerial photo sort. • A post-it reading "D. Gibbons".
- Mark in front of the board, leaning his right hand to it. He is in his darkened office looking at the board while leaning his right shoulder against the board, throwing a piece of paper onto his desk turns around
- and takes a drink from a metal flask then holds the flask to his forehead. He stops and listens, then writes "Who Else Knows?" on a calendar page. The friendship bracelet on Mark's wrist.
- A child's hand holding a friendship bracelet. • Mark's wrist. • Calendar page with "Who Else" on it. The remainder is covered by Mark's right hand, which is sporting a friendship bracelet.
- Red laser beams across Mark's hands. He stops and raises his head slowly. • View outside of Mark's office with 2 red laser beams aiming for their target. Mark cocks his gun.
- A picture/schematic on a piece of paper. • Picture of a baby doll. • Map with a post-it reading "Baltimore". • A plastic bag with a chess piece (queen).
- Men walking around the office in the dark wearing ski caps and masks. Mark being cautious. Men with guns. Mark standing next to doors and looking at the men. • Mark looking out for the men with guns.
- Mark looking out for the men with guns. Men have lasers sites on their guns. Mark taking a drink from a flask then looking out the door glass at the 2 men. Man in a mask, with three tattooed stars on his left forearm.
- Piece of paper on the board with 3 stars. • Picture of a naked man sitting with his left elbow resting on his knee and to the right a picture of a humanoid shape with a long, arcing nose and breasts.
- A color picture of just the naked man. • A calendar box edged in yellow, shaded in blue, a pushpin and a string in the center. Attached to the string is a piece of paper that reads "D-DAY".
- The eye zooming out to Mark hanging in his car upside down and the windshield smashed. Same as the episode opened.

☞ collection of flashes list adapted from: *FlashForward Transcripts* <http://www.losttv-forum.com/forum/showthread.php?t=63631> visited 12/29/2010

# + plot	Time	Who	What & How	Sound/Music	Color/Lighting	Overall effect
31 A	09:36 – 10:03	1 many hurt people	BCU of 1, hand camera, rapid, shaky movement – zoom out to high-angle LS: Mark climbs out of his car wreck to find the whole city in mayhem	scene noises, echoed	blue/grey sterile, cold	Aftermath: first reactions of people involved
32 B	– 10:11	5	crane shot from BCU to MS. Bryce wakes up and finds himself flying on the floor. Cut to Bryce's POV, sees balloons flying into the sky. Cut to low height MCU: Bryce looks around,	sea waves		

# + plot	Time	Who	What & How	Sound/Music	Color/Lighting	Overall effect
33 F	– 10:25	2 hospital staff	cut to low height MCU: Olivia wakes up on the floor of the operation room. Cut back to MCU: rest of staff is awake.	continuous beeping of life guard monitors		
34 D	– 10:32	4 boyfriend	crane shot from low height MCU to high-angle MS of Nicole dressed in underwear, waking up and not knowing what happened. Her boyfriend confirms blackout of both of them.	silence		Aftermath: first reactions of people involved
35 C	– 10:43	6	crane shot from high angle MS to low angle LS of Aaron waking up and finding himself hanging head-down from power-pole, cries for help	silence-fade into noise of chaos, like the sound when coming up from under water	blue/grey sterile, cold	
36 A	– 11:40	1	Cut to MLS pan following Mark, cut to fast set of POV shots, cut back to MLS pan: Mark encounters an Asian who is in need of help, both apparently under shock. cut to shot-counter-shot of Mark watching a burning man trying to escape from his burning car. Then explosion of a gas truck, CGI of burning scrap metal flying towards Mark's POV. shot-counter-shot of Mark and flying burning scrap metal. Zoom in to MCU of Mark having trouble to believe all this. Zoom out to LS following Mark running and jumping onto a car wreck in order to gain a better view position.	orchestra, screams, shouts, noises		
	cut	–	Commercial Break			
37 A	– 12:39	1, 7	high-angle crane shot to MS, cut to MLS, pan through landscape, Demetri and Mark reassuring each other that they are okay, Zoom out to MLS of disaster, Mark and Demetri rush to help people, crane zoom out to LS. Selective focus first on foreground, then on the whole picture. In LS, a skyscraper is shown, into which a helicopter crashes. Zoom in to MS of helicopter crash.	orchestra, screams, shouts, noises		aftermath description Reference to 9/11.
38 B	– 13:08	5 surfers	high angle LS of pier, cut to MCU of Bryce standing up, cut to MS over Bryce's shoulder, look from pier to the sea with drowned surfers. Shot-counter-shot MCUs of anonymus surfers, one calling for help and Bryce answering. MLS of Bryce running from pier to beach.	piano, shouts for help		*characterizing narr:* Bryce's hunger for life overcomes his death wis; he helps hurt surfer
39 D	– 13:30	4, 3 boyfriend	MCU of Nicole talking to her boyfriend, then realizing: cut to crane shot following Nicole running from living room upstairs to Charlie's room. Cut to MCU of Charlie sitting in bed, awake. counter-shot of Nicole looking worried, then relieved. Shot-counter-shot sequence of Nicole and Charlie talking about Charlie's bad dream.	piano continues, grows more tense, violins joining in, tension	blue/grey sterile, cold	Aftermath: first reactions of people involved
40 A	– 15:19	1,7, 20 civilians	MCU of Mark and Demetri using mobile phones to reach their loved ones, but fail. Shot-counter-shot of Mark's POV and Mark in MCU: Demetri and Mark realize the runaway car of the unknown suspect is there, too. They approach car, open back door, encounter suspect. low-angle MS from the dark interior of car: Mark and Demetri capture the suspect. Short, aggressive interrogation sequence of Demetri in MCU, Mark trying to calm him down. Shot-counter-shot: Suspect tells part of her "dream", Demetri cannot make sense of it and gets more aggressive. Civilians in despair approach the group, ask for help, Mark tries to calm them down. Crane-shot LS pan to MCU of one civilian telling the news he heard in the radio: Event also happened in other cities. MCU shot-counter-shots of Demetri and Mark arguing about what they can do to help; Mark leaves for Olivia.	Orchestra, intense		Aftermath and introduction of the suspect

# + plot	Time	Who	What & How	Sound/Music	Color/Lighting	Overall effect
41 — A	– 16:37	1	MS crane shot sequence following Mark running through the city, witnessing the destruction the blackout has caused. Pan to POV and back everytime Mark sees something noticeable: a broken power pole sparking with electricity, looters in the street, a cab going havoc, army helicopters over the city, and a kangaroo on the street, which Mark watches in bewilderment.	Orchestra, intense	blue/grey sterile, cold	Aftermath: description of worldwide effects of the Blackout
42	–17:15	people in distress	Cut to MS of Mark approaching a crowd of people gathering at a "tele"dream" story, watching the news. Shot-counter-shot MCU of people, the TV sets in shop windows and Mark, all in disbelief. News tell that the event has had global dimensions. Cut to black.	Orchestra News voice		
43 — A	– 17:57	1, 2 crowd in hospital	Cut to MS of Mark, hears phone ringing – dialogue shot-counter-shot MS of Mark on street and steady-cam following Olivia in hospital rushing to help wounded people. Talk about blackout that apparently affected everybody both of them knew of. Olivia hangs up, continues work in hospital.	low-key music, dialogue of Mark & Olivia, street & hospital noise		
44 — F	– 18:16	2, 5 hospital staff	steady-cam, quick cuts to staff, Olivia, Bryce (arriving on scene), emergency case: young boy who knows Olivia's name although she apparently has seen him the first time.	orchestra grows more dense, hospital noise		*enigma 4* relationship Olivia-Dylan-Lloyd
45 — A	– 18:25	1, 9	Cut to VLS of skyscrapers, helicopter shot slowly flying through the area, cut to office floor, MLS of Wedeck and Mark marching purposefully through the office hallways, crowds of FBI agents, very busy, LS pan following Mark & Wedeck on their walk, talking about new developments, cut to MS pan	office noises		
46 — A, F, G	– 19:43	1,2, 5, 9, 31, 41	cross-cuts in MS between the further development of scene 45 and an operation Olivia is performing on Dylan Simcoe, who apparently knows her but to her, the child until now is a total stranger and only one of many patients. Mark and Wedeck talk about the event, which seems to have happened at the exact same moment and had an exact duration of 2min17seconds. cut to newsflash reporting mass casualties and civil unrest in china.	office noise, cross-cut with ER sounds		
47 — A	– 21:58	1, 8, 9, 41, 42	cut to MS of Wedeck in front of a slideshow. cut to POV of Mark, who is standing in the opposite corner of the room. MCU cuts between Wedeck, Mark and other FBI agents: FBI crisis meeting, agents collecting facts. cut to Mark in CU, superimposition of very short sequences of his "dream". Tries to tie together those fragments and to set them in relation with the present. Other agents agree with Mark's description of his "dream", theirs seem to have happened in a similar way. Mark learns that those dreams didn't happen in the past but rather depict a future event -> vision of April 29, 2010, 10pm, which is half a year away from the point of narrated time. Shelly and Agent Curdy confirm their visions were concerned with exactly the same time frame. Wedeck deducts that all of mankind's conscience seems to have jumped forward in time for 137 seconds to the date of April 29, 2010, 10pm.			*enigma 1:* more details
	cut	–	Commercial Break	smooth piano, solemn music,		
48 — A, X43	– 23:00	1, 7, 20, 43	Cut to VLS of skyscrapers, army helicopter beginning to land on roof. Cut to MLS of office, Demetri & the suspect arrive. Suspect state that their organisation ("we") are not to blame for the blackout. Demetri tells her that no matter what, the suspect still is a terrorist. Out of the background Mark arrives. MS Shot-counter-shot of Demetri & Mark welcoming each other, Al Gough arrives on the scene with more clues to the visions. He confirms the date of his vision fits to those of the others and wants to test if the woman, a Scotland Yard agent called Fiona Banks, he saw in his vision did see him as well.	dialogue between Mark, Wedeck and other agents		*enigma 1:* more details
49 — A, X44	– 23:40	1, 7, 42, 43, 44	Cut to MS of Fiona Banks marching through different office hallways, talking on the phone to Al Gough, confirms his vision. MCU shots of Mark, Al Gough, Demetri, Shelly and Wedeck in FBI office, tensely listening to Al Gough talking to Fiona.			

# + plot	Time	Who	What & How	Sound/Music	Color/Lighting	Overall effect
50 — X1, M	– 24:45	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, FBI team	Cut to a television talkshow discussion the global event. Cross-cuts of Mark, Olivia, Bryce, Nicole, Charlie and the whole FBI team. Olivia sends a ironic short message to Mark, saying she hopes "to never see him again", but clearly meaning the opposite. When one of the experts discussing the causes & effects of the blackout on the TV broadcast mentions that the event seems to be a "grand mosaic" being put together, Mark sees another piece of his blackout vision. Superimposition cuts of CU of Mark, a piece of paper saying "Mosaic", and Mark again. Mark states that "Mosaic" in his vision described something about the investigation of the blackout's causes.	broadcast voices, Mark talking		*enigma 5:* introduction of "Mosaic"
51 — X1, X8, X9, M	– 27:35	1, 7, 8, 9	low-angle MS of Janis, Demetri, Mark and Wedeck talking in the hallway. steady-cam moving around the three of them. Mark talking about the vision and the investigation he was following in there. The team learns that Demetri has not had a vision, but he quickly deflects the topic to the suspect, who is locked in a room, waiting for someone. Janis shares her vision of getting a sonograph, apparently being pregnant with a girl at the time. Wedeck had a vision of "a meeting", as he calls it, clearly being slightly embarrassed of having seen himself on the toilet, reading the newspaper and remembering to articles of the sports page. MCU shot-counter-shot sequence of the team discussion the next steps: Demetri recommends that all of them should write down their visions, Janis thinks one step further and wants to create a website on which everybody is able to share their particular visions. The FBI then would be able to scan that database in order to search for patterns concerning the origin of the blackout. Mark connects this idea to his vision of the Mosaic and Wedeck proposes to set up an inter-agency task force dealing with this idea. Demetri is the sceptic who does not want to blindly want to follow the vision Mark had, but according to Wedeck, all of this seems to be reasonable and the right thing to do. He appoints Janis, Mark and Demetri of being in charge of the whole Mosaic operation, which is concerned with two questions: a) what caused the event and b) will it happen again. cut back to low-angle MS of the team.	low-key orchestra, talk between the core team	blue/grey sterile, cold	*enigma 5:* Details of "Mosaic"
52 — X1, M, N	–29:55	1, 7	VLS of skyscrapers being lit by the setting sun. Cut to CU of an almost empty pinboard subdivided into columns of the upcoming months. MS of Mark working to recapitulate his vision of it and Demetri collecting the first pieces on the board. Reference of Mark to a friendship bracelet he was wearing in the vision. With Demetri not having had a vision at all, both of them realize that Demetri supposedly had to be dead by then.	low-key orchestra, Demetri's voice		
	cut		Commercial break			
53 — D	– 30:40	1, 4	Cut to high-angle VLS of the Benford's neighborhood. Cut to MLS of Mark sitting on the stairs to the first floor, Nicole coming down to him. Shot-counter-shot sequence of CU of Mark, Nicole in the background (out-of-focus), and CU of Nicole. Talk about information regarding the blackout. Nicole brings up the notion that the blackout is a punishment of God for all of people's sins.	silence	orange-brown, warm	*characterizing narr:*
54 — G	– 32:15	2, 5, 31	Cut to MS of hospital room. MCU of Bryce and Olivia talking about Dylan Simcoe, who is asleep. The boy has lost his mother during the blackout, which caused the plane she was on to crash, is autistic and until now, they are waiting for his father to arrive. MS of Olivia and Bryce walking out of the room, talking about how they cope with the effects the blackout has on them. Bryce tells Olivia about himself having had a difficult time , on the verge of suicide, but the glimpse of his future completely changed things for him. Bryce sees the vision as a divine gift. Olivia is rather negative about it, because she saw the end of her marriage.	piano beginning with Bryce confessing to Olivia	green-brown and orange, warm	Aftermath: how is the Benford family and friends coping with the problems resulting from visions
55 — G, X6	– 34:36	1, 6	Cut to MS of the Benford's kitchen. Cut to CU of Mark, who confesses to Aaron, that he saw himself drinking again -> history of alcoholism. Shot-counter-shot of Mark confessing and Aaron listening intensely. While Mark is very downhearted because he thinks that this cannot be avoided, Aaron tells him not to take those visions too seriously because with having seen the future, you still are able to change it. Aaron then tells Mark of his vision, in which he saw his daugther alive and him being with her.	very dark, night, moonlight		religious notion of the blackout

41

# + plot	Time	Who	What & How	Sound/Music	Color/Lighting	Overall effect
56 — A, X2	– 38:05	1, 2, 3 (30)	LS of the Benford's house and garage. Cut to MS of Mark repairing the automatic garage door opener; Olivia arrives. CU of both intimately talking to each other. Cut to MS, pan to CU of Mark and Olivia in Charlie's room, bringing her to sleep. Cut to MS of bedroom, Olivia and Mark lying in bed. Mark tells Olivia about his vision, but omitting the fact that he was drinking in the vision. Then asks Olivia what she saw. At first she is very reluctant and too upset to tell him, but confesses in the end that she was with another man. Cut to vision sequence, depicting her as getting out of bed, walking towards the staircase and, in the living room, seeing a man whom she claims to have never seen before sitting half-naked in front of the fireplace. Then her again, looking very caring down to him. Cut back to MCU of Mark and Olivia, he trying to soothe her and telling her that those visions are not bound to become true.	Mojave's Three: "All Your Tears", cut to silence, smooth piano growing more tense		
57 — G, X30	–38:33	5, 30, 31	Cut to hospital hallway, following the POV of a stranger, who apprehensively walks towards the room Dylan Simcoe lies in. When in the room, the camera stays at the door and from a distance watches the man encounter Bryce, who in defense rises and asks the stranger who he is. The man introduces himself as the father of Dylan, Lloyd Simcoe. For further details about Lloyd's son, Bryce refers Lloyd to Olivia, who is supposed to be back in the morning. Cut to CU of Dylan, cut to small sequence of vision of him seeing Olivia, cut back to Lloyd, affirming Bryce that he is going to wait with Dylan.	smooth piano, rising	night, dark, grey-blue filter	*characterizing narr:* Introduction of Lloyd Simcoe / *enigma 4*
58 — A, X1	– 40:20	1, 2, 3	Cut to LS of the Benford's pool and terrace. High-angle crane shot to MS of Mark sitting on a swing in the garden. CU POV of Mark looking up to a first-floor windows in which stands Olivia. Cut back to MS of Mark, now with Charlie present. Shot-counter-shot sequence of Mark and Charlie talking about why she is not in bed. Charlie admits to having had a bad dream. Mark takes her to sit on his lap, wanting to soothe her, but she refuses to talk to about her bad dream. Then Charlie gives Mark a friendship bracelet – cut to short sequence of vision depicting the same bracelet – cut back to him accepting her present. Mark is haunted by parts of his vision and takes Charlie into his arms, looking into the sky. Crane shot from CU away to high-angle LS of both of them sitting on the swing.	smooth violins crescending to powerful orchestra		
59 — M, N	– end	7,8,?	Cut to LS of FBI office cubicles with several agents still at work, MS to MCU of Demetri sitting in cubicle, watching youtube-videos, talking on the phone to his girlfriend Zoey, Janis interrupts him, he postpones talking to Zoey about his vision until his coming home. MS of Demetri hanging up and going to Janis' cubicle. CU shots of Demetri and Janis talking about everybody having lost consciousness during the event. Janis then telling him that, after her having checked thousands of US surveillance tapes, she found one sole person being filmed in a conscious state walking around in a Detroit football stadium while the rest of the people in the stadium is unconscious.	orchestra continues, at the end rises to strong crescendo		*enigma 6:* who are those strangers?

CHARACTERS:

1	=	Mark Benford
2	=	Olivia Benford
3	=	Charlie Benford
4	=	Nicole Kirby
5	=	Bryce Varley
6	=	Aaron Stark
7	=	Demetri Noh
8	=	Janis Hawk
9	=	Stanford Wedeck
11	=	Zoey
20	=	unknown suspect
30	=	Lloyd Simcoe
31	=	Dylan Simcoe
41	=	Agent Curdy
42	=	Shelly Vreede
43	=	Al Gough
44	=	Fiona Banks
Y	=	Unknown man in stadium

PLOTS:

A	=	Mark's quest for understanding
B	=	Bryce's depression & relief
C	=	Aaron's addiction and tragic loss
D	=	Nicole's life
E	=	Demetri's life & problems
F	=	Olivia's life in her work environment
G	=	Olivia's connection to the Simcoe family
M	=	The Mosaic investigation
N	=	What are "Ghosts"?
Xx	=	vision of x (e.g. X1 = vision of Mark)

CLASSIFICATION OF SHOTS:[1]

VLS		Very Long Shot
LS		Long Shot
MLS		Medium Long Shot
MS		Medium Shot
MCU		Medium Close-up
CU		Close-up
BCU		Big Close-up
POV		Point-of-view
crane shot		fluid shot performed by camera hanging from a crane
high/low angle		camera view from above /from below (birds/frog's perspective)
pan		sideward movement of camera

1 cf. Jonathan Bignell, *An introduction to television studies* (London: Routledge, 2008) 88–96.