Incest & Literature:

Film screening, reading, and discussion

"*Ce livre lui donne encore raison. Je veux qu'il existe cependant, mais je ne souhaite pas qu'il ait beaucoup de lecteurs. Car ce serait une façon d'exister dans la littérature non pas par mon écriture mais par mon sujet, ce qui a toujours été ma hantise. Et surtout ce sujet-là, que je n'ai pas choisi, ni voulu, ni créé. Exister à mon tour par le biais de quelque chose que je n'ai pas fait mais qu'on m'a fait. Quel cauchemar."*

"This book is the proof. I want it to exist, but I hope it doesn't have too many readers. It would mean existing in literature not for my writing but for my subject. The thing I have always dreaded. And that it should be of all things this subject, which I did not choose, or want, or create. It would mean existing in literature not because of something I have done but because of something that someone did to me. A nightmare."

– Neige Sinno in "Triste Tigre" (2023)

"*J'en ai marre de parler de ça. J'en ai marre que mon travail soit envahi par ça."*

"I'm sick of talking about it. I'm sick of my work being taken over by it."

– Christine Angot in her film "Une famille" (2024)

Event information

1) Film screening: "A Family" directed by Christine Angot (2024)

Date: Tuesday 3rd March, 18:00-20:30

Place: Aava Lecture Hall, Arcanum building, University of Turku, Arcanuminkuja 1

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbHWk0tyD0s

The film will be in French with English subtitles. It will be followed by an optional 30 mins discussion for those who wish to participate.

Synopsis: Award-winning French writer Christine Angot goes on a business trip to Strasbourg where her father lived before dying several years ago. It is the city where she met him for the first time at the age of 13, and where he sexually abused her over the following years. His wife and children still live there. Angot takes a camera and knocks on the doors of her family to push them to clarify their attitudes to her father's crime that stretched over so many years. A cinematographic journey that challenges social norms and family perspectives in dealing with incest.



2) Reading Circle

Date: Tuesday 17th March, 16:30-18:30

Place: Voltaire (M127), Arken building Åbo Akademi, Tehtaankatu 2

To register: https://link.webropolsurveys.com/EP/6FA17ADD2208FEB9

See the "Suggested reads for the reading circle" section below for more information about the book(s) we will be discussing.

Both events are **public, free and open to all**. They are independent from each other and participants are free to attend only one of them or both the reading circle and film screening.

These events are organized by SELMA at the University of Turku and the subject of French Language and Literature at Åbo Akademi University.

The workshop coordinators are:

- Anaïs Duong-Pedica, Department of Humanities, Åbo Akademi University
- Ennaliina Leiwo, Department of Finnish Literature, University of Turku

If you have any question, please email anais.duong-pedica@abo.fi and ennaliina.e.leiwo@utu.fi

About “Incest & Literature”

According to the French association “Face à l’inceste”:

> Incest is an invasion of a child's privacy for the purpose of sexual gratification.
>
> It can take many forms. Sexual assault involving forcing the touch of the child's body with one's own body (rubbing against the child, cunnilingus, masturbation, etc.). The child may be forced to perform masturbation on the perpetrator, kiss them, or touch them where they are asking.
>
> Incest can also be rape, which is any act of forced penetration—oral (fellatio), anal (sodomy), or vaginal—with a part of the perpetrator's body (finger, penis, etc.) or with an object (screwdriver).
>
> Incest also encompasses all forms of sexual exhibitionism, also known as "moral incest" or "incest without physical contact": acts such as having sex in front of one's child, parading naked, making sexually explicit remarks, and watching pornography with one's child are considered incestuous. Using one's child as a confidant for sexual encounters, and photographing them naked or in erotic situations, also constitute incest.
>
> "Pathological nursing" is an incestuous practice disguised as hygiene or care. In this instance, the perpetrator satisfies their urges by performing excessively frequent vulvar cleaning, repeated foreskin retraction, unnecessary temperature checks several times a day, and enemas, often continuing until the child reaches an advanced age. This creates an extremely enmeshed relationship in which the child is treated as a sexual object.

Rape, sexual assault and sexual violations are considered incestuous when they are perpetrated against a minor by: “an ascendant, a brother, a sister, an uncle, an aunt, a nephew or a niece or the spouse, the partner of one of the persons mentioned or the partner bound by a civil partnership with one of the persons mentioned, if he has legal or de facto authority over the minor.” Beyond what the law defines as incest,[1] for the “Face à l’inceste” association,

> Incest affects both blood relatives and extended families, as well as adoptive families. But for the victim, this family bond is first and foremost one of closeness, authority, trust, dependence, and love. Thus, the perpetrators can be blood relatives: father, mother, brother, sister, grandfather, grandmother, uncle, aunt, cousin, or in-laws: stepfather, stepmother, cousins, aunt, uncle, etc.

[1] For instance, cousins are not included within the purview of the penal code legislation since marriage between cousins is not forbidden in France. This means that rape or sexual assault by a cousin cannot be counted as a crime of incest. Instead, it would be prosecuted as rape or sexual assault which would need to be proven by demonstrating the absence of consent, regardless of the age of the victim. In this case, incest is therefore treated as an “overqualification” of already existing offenses rather than a crime in itself.

> Incest affects the entire family. That is why nine times out of ten, the incestuous family excludes the victim who reveals the facts, in order to maintain family cohesion.

Literature on child sexual abuse and incest has been on the rise in France, with several of the books getting international recognition and leading to legal reform in the past few years. For instance, Vanessa Spingora's *Le Consentement* (2020) has been translated in over 20 languages (in Finnish as "Suostumus", in Swedish as "Samtycket" and in English as "Consent"), made into a film, and led to the creation of an independent commission on incest and sexual violence against children[2] (CIIVISE) and to the 2021 Billon law, which establishes that adults cannot get sexual consent from a child under 15 years of age. Likewise Camille Kouchner's *La Familia Grande* (2021), translated in over 10 languages, launched #MeTooInceste in France. Both Springora and Kouchner's books enabled a conversation around the difficulty of speaking about sexual violence when committed on children, and the question of the statute of limitations when it comes to incest and child sexual abuse.[3] In France, some of the main legal and political struggles when it comes to incest are the abolition of the statute of limitations, the (re)introduction of incest in the penal code (which took place in 2016), the question of consent (notably in relation to the 2021 Billon law), making incest prevention a governmental priority, raising public awareness in a context of incest denial, etc. Most recently, the relative public disinterest around Caroline Darian's sexual abuse by her father, Dominique Pelicot, following the internationally followed mass rape and chemical abuse trial of Gisèle Pelicot against her husband and 51 other men, as well as the tensions with her mother exemplify some of difficulties encountered by victims of incest within their family and society, which Darian partly explores in her latest book (2025) *Pour que l'on se souvienne* (translated to "För att vi ska minnas" in Swedish).

In 2024, Neige Sinno's *Triste Tigre* (2023), translated in over 20 languages (in Finnish as "Tiikerin raatelu" and in Swedish as "Tvingad Tiger"), won the Goncourt Prize of Finland selected by Finnish students of French. Two decades after Christine Angot's (1999) *Inceste*, which scandalized the French literature world, more and more survivors take to literature to tell their experiences of incest or that of their loved ones. Angot herself won the Médicis prize for her *Voyage dans l'Est* (2021) and went on to direct *Une Famille* (2024), a documentary film on her personal

---

[2] The commission has been encountering challenges in its management notably around tensions amongst its board about prioritizing a victim/child-centered approach. This has led the "Face à l'inceste" association to leave the commission earlier this year in protest.

[3] In France, the statute of limitations for minors who were victims of rape and sexual assault (including incest) is 30 years. This means that a victim has 30 years after turning 18 years old to report and seek prosecution. In November 2025, a proposal for a law was presented to abolish the statute of limitations for rape against minors. In Finland, the limitation period for sexual offense is from 10 to 20 years, however if the crime occurred when the victim was a minor, it can be prosecuted until the victim turns at least 28 years of age.

experience of incest by her father and her family's response to it. On top of this literature, the French discourse around incest is also nourished by a series of podcasts, comic books as well as essays and academic work offering psychological, social and cultural analysis of incest, some of them also by incest survivors (one of the most famous one being Dorothée Dussy's anthropology of incest).

Translations of French memoirs on child sexual abuse and incest have been popular in Finland, and books such as Vanessa Springora's *Le Consentement*, Neige Sinno's *Triste Tigre*, and Caroline Darian's *Et j'ai cessé de t'appeler Papa* (translated in Finnish as "Et ole enää isäni", in Swedish as "Och jag slutade kalla dig pappa" and in English as "I'll Never Call Him Dad Again") have all inspired broad media and literary discussions in Finland after being translated to Finnish. For instance, Finnish media followed particularly closely the aftermath of the publication of Springora's novel, as its release coincided with public lawsuits related to child sexual abuse involving the Finnish cultural elite, as well as campaigns calling to reform the Finnish legislation on sexual offences, especially towards children.[4] In Nordic literatures, incest was brought into public discussion by Norwegian author Vigdis Hjorth, whose 2016 novel *Arv og miljø* ("Will and Testament" in English; "Perintötekijät" in Finnish; "Arv och miljö" in Swedish; "Héritage et milieu" in French)[5] led to a family lawsuit and a literary response by her sister, Helga Hjort, in the form of the novel *Fri Vilje* (translated and independently published in English as "Free Will"), which accuses Hjorth of making false accusations of incest. Together with Hjorth's 2020 novel on the same topic, *Er mor død* ("Is Mother Dead" in English; "Onko äiti kuollut" in Finnish; "Är mor död" in Swedish; "Mère est-elle morte" in French), *Arv og miljø* has become a central reference point in debates on the ethics of autofiction in the Nordic countries.[6] A contemporary Finnish autofiction novel on incest *Toinen silmä kiinni* (One eye closed) by Tiina Katriina Tikkanen was published around the same time, in 2020 by *Atena*, the same publisher as Sinno's *Tiikerin raatelu*. In 2025, Tikkanen returned to the theme of incest with another autofictional novel *Kerro minulle äidistäsi* (Tell me about your mother), which tells the story of a woman abused by her father as a child, and her relationship with her mother.



sexual crimes legislation was put into action in January

[5] Vigdis Hjorth's *Arv og miljø* has been translated into over 20 languages.

[6] See an English overview of the controversy around autofiction and "revenge novels" here and here.

In the first part of the workshop, we will watch Christine Angot's (2024) documentary "Une famille" ("A family") followed by a 30mins discussion of the documentary (which attendees are free to opt out of). The film will be in French with English subtitles.

In the second part of this workshop, we will discuss some of this literature, its significance in France, but also its relevance in the geographies in which they have been translated (Finland, Sweden...), as well as the ways in which the authors write the subject of incest and the relationship between literature and incest in these books and for the authors. It will also be an opportunity to de-mystify incest by discussing what it actually is according to victims/survivors, experts and grassroots collectives and reflecting on what is socially and culturally at stake within the question of incestual abuse.

Suggested reads for the reading circle

You can read one or several of the books suggested below, in French, or in their English, Finnish, Swedish (or any other language!) translations. While the suggestions for this workshop are specifically tied to France, people are encouraged to bring in other references they may have from other geographies.

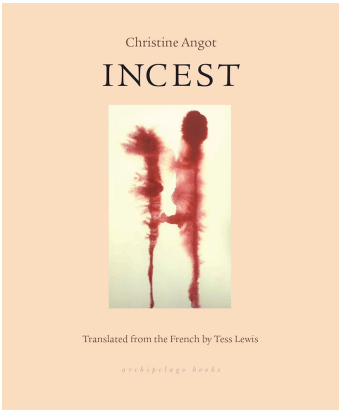
A list of books about incest and child sexual abuse at the Turku city library: https://vaski.finna.fi/List/2170453

You can also order books via https://www.adlibris.com/fi



“Triste tigre” by Neige Sinno (2023) –
available in French at the Turku city library

- Finnish translation: “Tiikerin raatelu” (2024), translated by Sampsa Peltonen – *available at the Turku city library, Åbo Akademi University library, and University of Turku library*
- Swedish translation: “Tvingad tiger” (2024), translated by Emma Majberger - *available at the Turku city library*
- English translation: “Sad Tiger” (2025), translated by Natasha Lehrer – *available at the Turku city library*



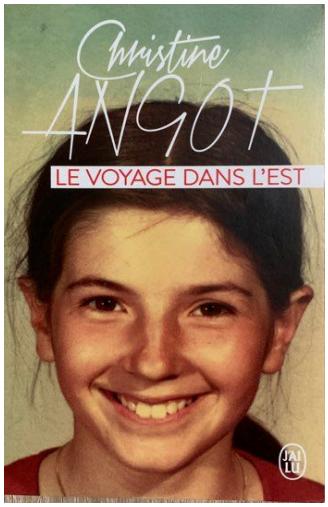
“L’inceste” by Christine Angot (1999) – *available in French at Åbo Akademi University library*

- English translation: “Incest” (2017), translated by Tess Lewis



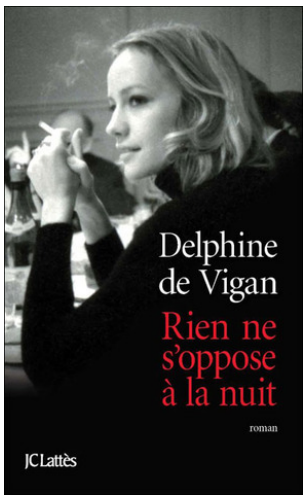
“La famillia grande” by Camille Kouchner (2021) – *available in French at the Turku city library*

- English translation: “The Familia Grande” (2022), translated by Adriana Hunter - *available at the Turku city library*
- Swedish translation: “La Familia Grande” (2022), translated by Maria Bodner Gröön - *available at the Turku city library*



“Le voyage dans l’Est” by Christine Angot (2021) – *available in French at Åbo Akademi University library*

While the book has not been translated to English, Swedish nor Finnish, here is a translated except in English entitled “A Trip to the East of France” translated by Armine Kotin Mortimer (2024).



"Rien ne s'oppose à la nuit" by Delphine de Vigan (2011) – *available in French at the Turku city library and Åbo Akademi University library*

- Finnish translation: "Yötä ei voi vastustaa" (2013), translated by Kira Poutanen – *available at the Turku city library, Åbo Akademi University library, and University of Turku library*
- Swedish translation: "Ingenting kan hindra natten" (2013), translated by Helén Enqvist - *available at the Turku city library*
- English translation: "Nothing Holds Back the Night" (2014), translated by George Miller - *available at the Turku city library*

Podcast series and episodes on incest (in French)

Fracas. 2020. L'inceste ou la mécanique du silence - avec Dorothée Dussy. https://shows.acast.com/fracas/episodes/lincesteoulamecaniquedusilence-avecdorotheedussy

France Culture. 2021. Inceste : entendre la parole des victimes pour repenser l'éducation, l'ordre social, la justice. *Radio France.* https://www.radiofrance.fr/franceculture/podcasts/etre-et-savoir/inceste-entendre-la-parole-des-victimes-pour-repenser-l-education-l-ordre-social-la-justice-8294960

France Culture. 2022. L'inceste (4 épisodes). *Radio France.* https://www.radiofrance.fr/franceculture/podcasts/lsd-la-serie-documentaire/la-loi-du-silence-1519060

Injustices. 2020. Ou peut-être une nuit (6 épisodes). *Louie Media*. https://louiemedia.com/injustices-2/ou-peut-etre-une-nuit

Les couilles sur la table. 2021. Qui sont les incesteurs ?. *Binge*. https://www.binge.audio/podcast/les-couilles-sur-la-table/qui-sont-les-incesteurs

Les couilles sur la table.2021. La loi de l'incest. *Binge*. https://www.binge.audio/podcast/les-couilles-sur-la-table/la-loi-de-linceste

Programme B. 2020. Inceste, le prochain combat. *Binge*. https://www.binge.audio/podcast/programme-b/inceste-le-prochain-combat

Un podcast à soi. 2020. Inceste et pédocriminalité : la loi du silence. *ARTE Radio*. https://www.arteradio.com/son/inceste-et-pedocriminalite-la-loi-du-silence

Un podcast à soi. 2025. Climat incestuel : Grandir sous la menace. *ARTE Radio.* https://www.arteradio.com/son/climat-incestuel-grandir-sous-la-menace

Vivre, Libre : Le Podcast. 2026. Enfants, sauvages. *Rinse FM.* https://www.rinse.fm/episodes/amandine-gay-vivre-libre-le-podcast-13-01-2026-1400

News, academic articles, interviews, and reviews (in English, French, & Finnish)

Optional additional reads or listens for those who wish to go further.

Barats, Christine. 2025. #MeTooInceste dans la presse : Dynamiques et caractéristiques d'une médiatisation en France relayée à l'international. *Communication*, 4 (1), https://journals.openedition.org/communication/19991

Camhi, Leslie. 2025. Neige Sinno doesn't believe in writing as therapy. *The New Yorker*, April 4, https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/neige-sinno-doesnt-believe-in-writing-as-therapy

Cata, Isabelle and DalMolin, Eliane. 2004. Écrire et lire l'inceste : Christine Angot. *Women in French Studies* 12, https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/222/article/498914/summary

Cée, Cécile. 2026. Gisèle Pelicot, le déni dans la joie. *Politis*, February 17, politis.fr/articles/2026/02/gisele-pelicot-le-deni-dans-la-joie/

Chrisafis, Angelique. 2025. 'The anger became bigger than shame': the writer whose memoir of child abuse has taken France by storm. *The Guardian*, April 5, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2025/apr/05/neige-sinno-interview-sad-tiger-sexual-abuse-memoir

France Culture. 2024. Neige Sinno, prix Femina 2023 : "Oser penser, c'était ma démarche". *YouTube*, youtube.com/watch?v=vF2zpuPFP0c

French Institute UK. 2025. Lauren Elkin in conversation with Neige Sinno. *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0bhVQlmoh0

Hanscombe, Elisabeth. 2025. Why do we blame mothers?. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement*, 16, https://jarm.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/jarm/article/view/40757

Kirjaluotsi. 2024. Neige Sinno: Tiikerin raatelu. November 29, https://kirjaluotsi.fi/neige-sinno-tiikerin-raatelu/

Lange-Henszke, Magdalena. 2025. Reclaiming One's Own Voice. Incest as Social Exclusion in Christine Angot's Work. In E. Tichoniuk-Wawrowicz and M. Karczewska (Eds.), *The Unheard: Images of the Marginalized Stranger Throughout Centuries*. Göttigen: V&R Unipress.

Leleux, Fabielle-Charlotte. 2024. Écrire l'inceste. *Topique* 161, https://shs.cairn.info/article/TOP_161_0107

Madesta, Tal. 2025. Neige Sinno et Kaoutar Harchi, écrire contre les silences. *La Déferlante*, October 27, https://revueladeferlante.fr/neige-sinno-et-kaoutar-harchi-ecrire-contre-les-silences/

Petocz, Orsolya Katalin. 2022. Love, grief and violence – A study of Camille Kouchner's *La Familia grande* (2021). *French Cultural Studies*, 34 (4), https://doi.org/10.1177/0957155822114349

Ranskaa raakana. 2025. Ranskaa raakana! #156 – Tiikerin raatelu: vieraana Sampsa Peltonen. Ranskaa raakana September 24, https://isosavi.podbean.com/e/ranskaa-raakana-156-%E2%80%93-tiikerin-raatelu-vieraana-sampsa-peltonen/

Simic, Zora. 2025. Friday essay: Trauma memoirs can help us understand the unthinkable. They can also be art. *The Conversation,* October 2, https://theconversation.com/friday-essay-trauma-memoirs-can-help-us-understand-the-unthinkable-they-can-also-be-art-257018

The Hindu. 2026. In Bad Faith: Violence Against Women | Neige Sinno in conversation with Priya Ramani. *YouTube*, youtube.com/watch?v=UvNux-GzxrQ

The Shakespeare and Company Interview. 2025. Writing the Unspeakable: Neige Sinno on Abuse, Memory, and Language. The Shakespeare and Company Interview, June 5, https://podcasts.apple.com/hu/podcast/writing-the-unspeakable-neige-sinno-on-abuse-memory/id1040121937?i=1000711679132