



# Perceiving Children

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**Roberta Bonetti & Elisa Rossignoli**

## **Perceiving Children: “Beware Children”, 150 Street signs of the World**

This paper stems from a participatory action research in the field of visual anthropology and education, concentrating on cognitive processes involved in observing images, or image literacy.

It discusses the ethnographic case of the exhibit “Beware Children” (the original title is “Mai dire squola”) realised in Italy, between 2003 and 2008, in eighty-six primary and secondary schools.

“Beware children” refers to the street signs found near school buildings: it is meant to warn drivers to slow down and proceed with caution. This paper focuses on what can be learned when street signs of this type, used in different countries and continents, are examined and analysed in depth?

Through 150 silhouettes that reproduce/represent the sign “Beware children” the exhibition offers a cross-cultural approach, and follows a pedagogical itinerary informed by a critical observing of images. Properly analysed and probed these signs inform the viewer about the culture that has produced them. They offer alternative point of views on educational models (patterns), style (hairdo and clothing), nutritional habits, gender discrimination, and parental roles.

The show functioned as an arena for ethnographic research. Participants including children, educators, cultural mediators and guides alike generated their own explanations of their educational influences. Beware children is not devised, however, as an accumulation of images to be seen, but rather as an itinerary, i.e. workshop, where visitors can interact with the objects-images and investigate how much reality can lay “behind” one street sign.

**Manuela Cecotti**

## **From Observation of a class of children to the reflection on the relationship between individual and group: film-documenting the insight in a group of training teachers.**

The aim of this presentation is to reflect on the relationship between individual and group through the educational practice.

I report some sequences concerning a training work with a small group of teachers/educators.

Our training included visits in three different nursery schools in three cities in Slovenia, and we had the opportunity to observe teachers working directly.

To have a documentation of all training activity and according to J. Tobin and his colleagues (1989, 2007), I used a work methodology very near to the “video-cued multivocal ethnography”.

So I produced a film called: NEAR NURSERY SCHOOLS...FAR NURSERY SCHOOLS: TRAVEL AS TRAINING. The film shows all the insight process of the training group reflecting on the sense of the experience having the goal to discover different kinds of view about educational services for very young children.

To do this intervention I selected a 5 minutes part of the film. In the selection is possible to catch the moment of the insight of the group about the theme of relationship between individual and group. Educators are talking about the differences between leaving children to stay alone and teaching children to get by.

At the same time, the images of the children show how in Slovenian nursery schools we can find a lot of situations in which children are apparently alone, but in the meantime, the view of the teachers is good scaffolding to their independence.

Comparing different educational perspectives in everyday teacher actions and viewing directly some authentic video recorded images, is a very interesting task.

According to R. Goldman (2007), we can see how the Video Research can be a practice interactive and rich of insights in the Learning Sciences.

**Paolo Chiozzi**

### **Visual Anthropology of Childhood in Florence**

Prof. Paolo Chiozzi – Visual anthropologist, University of Florence

*An Introduction to the Panel: "Visual Anthropology of Childhood in Florence"*

### **Opening Lecture:**

**Prof. Angela Gregorini** – Anthropology of Visual Communication, ANSAS Marche, Ancona

*"Writings of contemporaneity"*

### **Working group on the visual anthropology of childhood:**

*Those of the "Pallaio"*

**Dr. Federica Caroti** – Psychologist and Anthropologist, Florence

*"Diversity at work" - with screening of short films made by children*

**Dr. Stefano Morelli** – Photographer, Degree in Visual Anthropology, University of Florence

*"The ripped structure" - a photo-presentation*

**Ms. Veronica Melani** – Graduate student in Visual Anthropology, University of Florence

*"Twilight of an Identity?"*

**Dr. Stefano Filipponi** – Historian, Director of the MUDI, Florence

*“The Relevance of Visual Anthropology in the re-organization of the Innocenti Museum”*

**Dr. Antonella Schena** – Librarian, Centro di Documentazione sull’Infanzia, Florence

*“The visual (filmic) representation of Childhoods: the activities of the Innocenti film-library”*

**Dr. Sandro Pintus** – Journalist, Visual anthropologist

*“Two projects related to the new visual-communication technologies”*

*RAISAT Ragazzi – Tuscan Photographic Archive*

Poster

*PUBLICATIONS*

Poster: the series *“Monografie del Pallaio”*

Each volume presents a case-study related to the

*Visual Anthropology of Childhood*

**Angela Gregorini** – Writings of contemporaneity

Contemporaneity needs a plurality of languages and of subjects to be understood in its presence and its form. The program “writings of contemporaneity” presents – through a *bios-graphein* approach – an innovatory process in educational research, where the actors are pupils of primary and secondary schools, who “talk about themselves” through unusual modes of documentation, of witness, and of narration – modes where voice, word, image mingle together.

**Federica Caroti** – *Diversity at work*

My present work is based on a project developed by our group in collaboration with the Italian national TV (RAI Sat) in a primary educational institute in Prato. Moving from the well known methodological suggestions made in the 1960s by Adair, Worth and Chalfen – first of all the statement that still or cinematic images are always *visual interpretations* of reality – we applied them to a program based on Hart’s “ladder of participation”. We could thus produce three short films, based on a shared process involving the research team, the teachers and – what is most relevant – the children themselves: authors of the script, actors, and editors.

The purpose was to analyse the children’s perception of ethnic diversity and their attitude in face of an increasing number of “different” school mates.

The title of my work is the title that the pupils of the 5th elementary class (10-11 years old) chosen for their film.

### **Stefano Morelli – *The ripped structure***

A photographic research on nine Albanian teenagers, illegal immigrants in Italy without family. The first part describes their daily life within an educational community in Lucca (Tuscany), while the second part documents the reactions and the attitudes of their relatives living in Albania. In the third part images become tools of a peculiar mode of visual communication, as the teenagers are asked both to shoot photos themselves and to choose how they prefer to be represented (a sort of *auto-mise en scène*) while looking at their relatives seeing their portraits.

The *ripped structure* refers to the impact of the specific pattern of teenage migration from Albania to Italy on the traditional family structure – as also to the possible arising of a “new” family network and of a new perception of self and identity among teenagers. The research is based on the use of photography.

### **Stefano Filipponi**

The new MUDI (Museo degli Innocenti) will be a polymorphous museum, able to narrate and to connect the history of a multi-secular (?) institution, its artistic and documental heritage, the people who has been living inside it since 1445. The construction of such a complex narration required - first of all – an interconnection between the different “histories” constructed by the many disciplines which had an interest in the Innocenti: art and architecture historians, demographers, historians of childhood and of hospital care-giving.

In such context, a multi-disciplinary approach opens new perspectives in the interpretation of documents and in the narration, and of course it claims also for the collaboration of anthropology – and mainly of “visual” anthropology. Therefore, some months ago we started an interaction with Paolo Chiozzi, initially focused on the study of the institute’s photographic archive.

My purpose here is to present the “state of the art” of that collaboration, and to discuss the opportunities and the problems of a contribution of visual anthropology to the construction of the MUDI.

### **Antonella Schena**

Presentation of the activities referring to the filmic documentation developed by the Innocenti for the National Centre of Documentation and Analysis for Childhood of the Italian Government.

The Centre has the task to implement the knowledge of the child condition in Italy, in order to promote the rights of the children. Of course the film (and more generally the audio-visual) representations of childhood is most important, given the role of the media in the construction of behavioral patterns, stereotypes, social and cultural attitudes. The visual documents are accessible to the public, and of course to scholars and teachers, through the Biblioteca Innocenti Library “Alfredo Carlo Moro”, created in 2001 by the cooperation between the Institute and the Innocenti research Centre of UNICEF.

## **Sandro Pintus**

The paper deals with two new pilot-projects:

- 1) TROOL (Tutti i Ragazzi OnLine – All The Children OnLine): started in 2008 through the collaboration with the Region Tuscany, its aim is to teach children a safe use of internet. The program prepares the teachers, and interacts with the schools. It is actually a social network for children (age 8-12), where they can introduce their own drawings, novels, video, etc.);
- 2) TEEN PRESS (since 2009): a project of the National Centre, for teenagers (13-18). The young “journalists” go around with video and/or photo cameras, and produce reportages with the assistance of teachers and of experts of visual communication

## **Peter I. Crawford**

### **Reminiscence and resilience. The case of Casa Velha, Lichinga, Niassa Province, Mozambique, 1994.**

In the early 1990s, in the aftermath of the prolonged civil war in Mozambique, a group of children, facilitated by the Danish NGO, Ibis, formed an association called *A Casa Velha*, named after the old house they were given by the town council as their ‘headquarters’ in Lichinga, the provincial capital of Niassa in northern Mozambique. Amidst tremendous suffering and with the mayhem caused by armed conflict in fresh memory, the children and young people, aged 8-20, took up typewriters and radio equipment, still and video cameras, drawings, drama and music, to set up an association that provided not merely the only existing network of news and communication but also a platform from which they planted what was most needed in general by the local communities: a seed of hope. While many adults had given up, exhibiting signs of absolute resignation vis-à-vis the effects of long-term armed conflict, these children demonstrated the kind of ‘resilience’ that reaches beyond survival in a narrow sense. Reminiscing on this, my first consultancy task dealing specifically with children and armed conflict, I recall how visual media played a pivotal role to the work of the children, catering for the needs of an adult population that was largely illiterate.

## **Tove Lise Inderberg**

### **The Child as an Other: Ethical concerns and methodological challenges in the anthropological study of children**

During the spring of 2009 I spent a period of approximately six months doing fieldwork in two Australian child care centres, with 3-5 year old children. The children’s autonomous play is central in this research, both as an aspect of methodology and as a focus of analysis. Studying children in the context of formal child care means a delimitation of time and space where adults organise everyday life. Play is one of the primary modalities for the children’s sociality, and in this setting the children’s ‘otherness’ to adults is made explicit in relation to play specifically; playing is something *they* do. Furthermore, play is a realm within everyday life in the child care centre in which the children can exercise authority, and as part of methodology this can help to reduce the impact of power relationships between an adult researcher and the children of study. The case of children in anthropology has been compared with feminism’s critique of gender issues, in that the study of children has traditionally been from an adult perspective in the same way as earlier research has been criticised for being from a male perspective. A fundamental difference between research on gender issues and that of children is that children are

dependent upon others' representation, and it is important that the children's meanings are not lost in the interpretation and analysis.

The main part of the research material is in the form of written field notes, but also includes audio-visual recordings for the purpose of detailed analysis of the children's actions, body language and speech during play interaction. However, there are ethical concerns to be aware of when it comes to studying children specifically, and especially so with regards to images. Children primarily depend on adults to protect their interests because they cannot make an informed decision to participate in research themselves. Because of parents' hesitation to give their consent, the playing I was allowed to record in the first child care centre had a specified and limited number of participants. In the second child care centre, I was not able to videotape the children's play at all. Among the most prominent reasons for this reluctance, were fears of images of children being published on the Internet and a fear of paedophilia.

While images of children are a very sensitive issue, the video recordings of the children's play have proved to be invaluable for this research. Children's play is more than verbal, it is also visual - and the possibility to re-experience situations through recordings is vital for a detailed transcription. The insight gained through this process has also informed the interpretation of the field notes from other play situations. Furthermore, and perhaps the most important point, while not at liberty to show or publish the visual material of the research due to the parents' wish, because of this material, 'direct quotes' and detailed transcription of the video recordings can be included in the text. This is perhaps one way in which, by translating the visual, from images to words, the 'voices' of children can remain part of the research writings. I suggest that because of the prominent visual aspects of young children's forms of knowledge and ways of communicating, visual anthropology can make a significant contribution to the study of children and childhood.

### **Teresa Longo and Thierry Roche**

#### **The schools of the others**

When the school scene is open, the child is launched towards his future. At the same time, adults select the parts of his memory that fit the frame. Adults' representation of life and ideas incorporated in the institution more than school programs and pedagogies build this scenario. The drama unrolls through rites of space and time semiotics, by symbols, gestures, common rules and their interpretations by the school's "inhabitants".

Our bet, as for other visual anthropologists, is that the camera, as a complement to written/oral narration can help to enter the implicit scenario.

An increasing fragmentation of educational research has contributed, since the eighties, to exclude children from the attention of researchers. Economic or managerial approaches focused public attention on school efficiency and sustainability, reducing children to cost-benefits calculation for families and state.

Looking for "childhood" before the idea disappears is a political concern and also a scientific option towards the complexity of the social phenomena.

On the basis of this vision, the project "The others' schools" was born: visual anthropology and comparative education get together in a team of our University.

In our project, we chose to study three school classes in three different countries, France, Italy, and Rumania trying to answer a question: how, in each school, cultural diversity is negotiated? How foreigners' children or children speaking a non official language compare their memory and their projections towards the future to the world shown by

adults? Which is in the school the space of the “allophone”? How he/she contributes to manage the spaces and scenarios of those belonging to the official language and culture of the country?

We will present the images of the ongoing research in Rumania. We filmed the school of Țărta, a Transylvania village in a splendid landscape: the river, the Carpathian Mountains, the plain, the medieval age ruins. Here lived and still live Germans, Magyars, Gipsy, false-Gipsy (non auto-declared Gipsy) and children speaking Italian and Spanish because of their past migrations in those countries.

Țărta in 2009-10 is a rural poor village, where there are no more machines to cultivate the land.

In Țărta twenty years after Ceausescu’s regime and after the socialist education system, there is a school looking for modernisation, looking towards Europe. How? How teachers project children in to the future? To whom the past belongs? To what part of time and space children of different languages belong?

During our research some problems and questions have been asked to us and we would like to ask them to this meeting:

- The scenario is at same time an object researched by empirical experience and theoretical construction. What relation and equilibrium between the two is there in a visual experience?
- Relationship between narration and film. How to make them dialogue in order to construct complementarities?
- Children and camera. Some of them ignore us, others impose their protagonism. How to deal with this?
- We work in the school and in the village: is the school a closed theatre and cinema a window opened over closed shutters?

**David MacDougall**

#### **PRAYAS CHILDREN’S HOME FOR BOYS – NEW DELHI – Photo Exhibition**

Prayas Children’s Home for Boys, where I filmed *Gandhi’s Children*, and from which these images come, lies on the northern fringe of New Delhi in Jahangirpuri, a resettlement colony whose residents were moved from inner-city slums some decades ago. It is still a poor area. There is a ragpickers’ colony nearby and an open field which used to be the city’s largest livestock market. Immediately next to the children’s home is a sewage pumping station for the surrounding area.

The home is run by Prayas, an Indian NGO also known as The Institute of Juvenile Justice. Prayas (which means “an attempt”) is funded by the local and central governments and by donations from individuals and Indian companies. Based in New Delhi, it was founded in 1988 by an Indian police officer, Amod Kanth, who later became a New Delhi Commissioner of Police and has held similar posts elsewhere in India. Prayas is involved in a large number of child protection activities, including advising the Indian government on juvenile justice legislation, operating health services, a children’s emergency telephone service, and several shelters for boys and girls. In recent years its activities have been extended to Bihar, Gujarat, Assam, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Some of the 350 boys at Jahangirpuri are orphans, some have run away from home, some have been lost or abandoned, others are former street children, and still others have been picked up by the police for minor crimes. They range in age from 3 to 18, but most are within the 6-18 year age range. About half the boys in the home are “Homewalas” and are allowed outside to attend the local elementary and secondary schools. The others



are “Courtwalas” who are detained for various periods of time under a magistrate’s court order. They are not allowed to leave the grounds. They attend “informal education” classes or vocational training courses within the home.

I lived at the Jahangirpuri home and filmed *Gandhi’s Children* over several months at the end of 2005. I was assisted by an Indian postgraduate student from Delhi University, Siddhartha Kumar, who joined me for part of each day. The home was built in 1993, but by the time I arrived its facilities were already deteriorating. There was broken plumbing, defective lighting, and other problems. The boys lived in dormitories ranged around two central courtyards. These “sadans” are named after famous Indians, such as Gandhi, Nehru, Bose, Shastri, and Mother Teresa. Much of my filming took place in Gandhi Sadan. During the time I was filming, the home suddenly received an influx of 181 child labourers, who were among more than 400 recently “rescued” from embroidery factories in police raids.

In my filming I tried to give a sense of the daily routine of the institution and what it was like for the boys to live there. I also followed the fortunes of a few individual boys. One had been abducted, another was a seasoned street dweller, another had become separated from his family during a fire in his slum area. Others were orphans or runaways. Some were pickpockets. I taught several of these boys how to use a video camera, and they made a film of their own about the home entitled “Pani” (water).

### **Minamide Kazuyo**

#### **The Meaning of the Ritual from the Children’s Point of View: Through the Filmmaking of “Circumcision in Transition”**

In a Bangladeshi village, all boys in Muslim families are expected to get circumcision when they become seven or eight years old. The purpose of my first film “Circumcision in Transition” is to examine how people and children themselves understand the ritual and the nowadays’ transition in the way circumcision is practiced due to the advancement in medical technology and in education.

As a master’s student major in cultural anthropology I started my fieldwork in *Jamalpur*, a central northern district in Bangladesh in 2000. Since then I have done my research at the same village for three years in total. My interest has been in children’s socialization and the impact of the expansion of education in their lives. Since the latter half of 1980s, the number of primary schools has been rapidly increasing in rural areas, and children have started to go to school where their parents had no experience.

During my second stint of long-term fieldwork in 2003, I was invited to two boys’ ritual ceremony of circumcision: one was for my “classmates”<sup>1</sup> Jafrul, and the other was for one of the relatives of my local host family<sup>2</sup> Anand. Both of them wanted me to record their ritual with my video camera. When I showed the raw footage of my video after each ceremony, people reacted remarkably. As Jafrul got circumcised by a traditional skilled circumciser while Anand did by a medical doctor, people preferred Jafrul’s case, in the traditional way, because it followed their “proper formality,” like sweet foods for celebration should be served or they should have a prayer meeting in ritual. Then I planned to edit these two cases of ceremonies following their criticisms. However, in the process to edit the video, people had gradually changed their comments. Two and half years after the ceremony, I showed them edited clips which were divided into two: Anand’s and Jafrul’s. Unlike the

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1 In order to describe children’s daily lives from their point of view, I tried to be just “a friend” of children. I had attended their school, a primary school run by Bangladeshi national NGO, almost every day during my stay. Mainly I sat in a classroom of grades four to five where one of my informative age-groups had studied.

2 I stayed at a local host family one of whose daughters got married with a man who worked at the NGO running the school.



first time I showed the footage, they said that both cases may occur nowadays. One of the Muslim leaders in their village taught me the meaning of circumcision as “Sunna (custom)” in the purpose of purification in Muslim context and that they could follow the custom whether traditional or medical. Of course I showed the footage to both of the boys and got interviews to look back on it. They remembered the ritual as their good memory. They enjoyed playing the main characters in the ceremony and getting celebrated by their relatives. Also, they recognized themselves as “a man” or “a Muslim” through the event.

It means, I believe, that their custom of circumcision has been working exactly as their initiation ritual, whichever they perform it in the traditional or medical way. The title of this product “Circumcision in Transition” has two meanings; how people accept the technological change of the way of circumcision is practiced, and children’s transition/identification from childhood to adulthood. This film has showed these cultural functions of the ritual from their point of view.

### **Lene Birgitte Mirland**

#### **LARM – thoughts about children in the new Moesgaard Museum**

Moesgaard Museum is a research and dissemination institution, whose work is about identifying human life diversity on the basis of the disciplines archeology and ethnography. In 2013 the museum will open in a new museum building with interesting outdoor areas, which means we can finally realize the desire to create optimal settings for modern dissemination of scientific research and its methods, and create experiences for all kinds of people through modern exhibitions and various types of activities.

The expansion project has given us the opportunity to look carefully at ourselves and look out into the world to find out how we can convey knowledge about cultures in the past and in the present in a way, which is meaningful for our many visitors, including children, as this talk will focus on.

We have in the past year developed a new department in the museum, which we call LARM. The department name - or rather the concept name - is a juxtaposition of the initials of the words learning, activity, reflection and motivation, which are the key words for the type of activities, we want to create.

Most of the department’s activities will be targeted at children and adolescents in primary and secondary education, but we will also work to develop activities for children in day care centers, children and adolescents who visit the museum at leisure, colleges, adult education and the like. In addition, we will establish a family club.

This talk will present the ideas behind the new museum and LARM with special emphasis on those activities that we will create for, and especially together with children.

### **Max Mauro**

#### **Is it just a ball? Audiovisual practice and the transcultural worlds of teenagers playing football**

Sport is gaining popularity among social researchers and practitioners of different disciplines as an “arena where it all comes together: race, class, gender, nation, capitalism, empire, neo-liberalism, globalization” (N.K. Denzin, 2006). By adopting the visual as a medium rather than an object of analysis (MacDougall, 1998, 2005), I believe that a lot could be learnt about the meaning of sport for youth of different

ethnic background and the ways of construction and reconstruction of the ideas of race, belonging and collective identity.

Taking Ireland as a case study, namely one suburban area of Dublin with high percentage of residents of immigrant origin, during the first and a half year of my PhD program I have embarked in an ethnographically situated audiovisual practice that has the members of two youth football teams as its main protagonists. Through textual and audiovisual modalities of representation, in this paper I will present some observations that have emerged during my fieldwork with an Under 14 football team composed by boys of African background and white Irish boys.

I will also give an update of my fieldwork, which more recently has taken me to engage with a team of 16-17 years old boys of African and Eastern European origin. I will touch one of the key questions of my research, namely the sense of belonging and the ways the football team offers an arena for boys of immigrant background to negotiate their place in the local and national community. I will then reflect on the catalytic role of the video camera in doing social research with young people.

In particular, I will show how the presence of the camera can “provoke” revealing and performative moments with and among the boys, that take place on the training pitch or on its surroundings usually before or after the training session.

**Ylva Jannok Nutti**

### **Creating, exploring and expressing Sámi identity in young Sámi documentations**

#### **A co-operation project between Sámi museums and young Sámi**

The presentation shows parts of an on-going co-operation project Sámi Youth. (The Sámi museums which cooperate are Ájtte, Duottar ja Sámi Musea, Jåhkåmåhkke, Sámemusea Siida, Anár, Várjjat Sámi Musea, Vuonnabahta, as well as Saemien Sijte, Snåsa).

In the project co-operation between young Sámi, schools and Sámi museums take place with the aim of involving the young Sámi as active participants at the museums. The young Sámi are participating in issues that are related to them from point of their age and about thirty young Sámi from the North Sámi, Lule Sámi and South Sámi areas participate in the project.

The Sámi children and youth grown up in varied environments; some come from rural reindeer-herding families, others from coastal areas and some live in totally urban areas. Sámi children and youth are not reflected from point of their own perspective very much in the documentary material of the museums or collections. They are seldom involved in the work of the museums and the museums are not present in the virtual spaces where children and young people spend time. Therefore the aim of the project is to increase children and young people opportunities to participate in creating of the Sámi cultural heritage; “to let young Sámi tell their own story in their own way”. The reality among Sámi children and youth varies significantly, but they also have a lot in common. For some of the children and youth the Sámi identity is strong, while others do not master the Sámi language and have grown up in environments where the Sámi connection hasn’t been emphasized. However, common to them all, is the challenge they face when it comes of creating, exploring and expressing their Sámi identity and cultural belonging in a society dominated by a majority culture.

The participants explore and express their identity in photos, films and in written texts. In the presentation especially parts of some films and photos are going to be shown and discuss around themes of traditions and modernity from point of children and young

peoples wish to take an active role in creating of Sámi identity and cultural heritage and against stereotypes.

### **Liesbet Ruben**

#### **“IT IS NORMAL TO BE DIFFERENT”**

Liesbet Ruben will share some of her thirty years experience in Tropenmuseum Junior, an ethnographical museum for children from 6 to 13 years up, in Amsterdam.

Tropenmuseum Junior developed a working method in which the children themselves become part of the exhibition and play their own role in narrative “routes” in which they experience that “it is normal to be different”.

Tropenmuseum Junior uses all means of communication in a comprehensive approach: Stories, theatre, sound, images, light, hand-on objects, activities, old and new media in an innovating setting and human interaction with staff from the culture on exhibit.

She will also screen a documentary film made by anthropologist (and primary school teacher) Florian van den Breemer. The documentary ‘I am Mumbai’ shows how Dutch primary school children familiarize themselves with the city of Mumbai. This takes place in Amsterdam, in the Tropenmuseum Junior’s exhibition ‘Ster in de Stad’ (Star in the City). At the museum the staff is trained to receive visiting groups. At school, the children prepare for their visit by reading the stories from the book specially written for the exhibition. During their museum visit everything and everybody come together. Guided by the staff, the children bring the exhibition to life. The documentary portrays how children as individuals become familiar with stories, objects and activities from Mumbai.

### **Ditte Marie Seeberg**

#### **Childhood in Bhutan - a visual presentation of an exhibition in progress.**

Relating to former experiences with making “lively” exhibitions for children, the last one about exile Tibetan culture in Nepal “**Tibet was my home**”, this visual presentation will focus on the preparations of a new exhibition to be ready in 2011 about Childhood in Bhutan.

Bhutan is a small Kingdom in the Himalaya. It’s a country which has a very old Buddhist culture in its original settings, including the magnificent richness of color and symbols in cloths and buildings and, at the same time, facing a rapid confrontation with post-modernity.

According to some self-referenced mottos, Bhutan is one of the “happiest countries in the world” – but at the same time, one of the poorest ones, in economical terms. The government has in their policy, implanted a vision for its people which they call *Gross National Happiness*, from where they want to estimate the *happiness* of their people on various levels.

During my fieldwork in Bhutan November and December 2009, I met a lot of children and young people who with ease talked about *Gross National Happiness*. When I returned in march/April 2010 with photographer and graphic designer Jens Kirkeby, from Aarhus University, to collect visual and auditive material and objects for the new exhibition, one of the ideas was to let the children themselves express their own ideas about *What made them happy during a day*. Their answers were rich and moving.

A visual taste of the collected material for the exhibition will be shown in this short presentation of the exhibition in progress.

**Thea Skaanes**

**Designing for learning: The UNESCO collections - case story for the transmission of ethnographic knowledge to children through museum practice**

The UNESCO collections are hands-on ethnographic collections that go out to schools and other teaching facilities as research based and transportable cases. Organized around specific themes and locations, and situated as time specific products and of the collectors gaze, the collections offer a contextual snapshot from a great variety of places, such as, e.g. Sri Lanka, Bolivia and Greenland. The collections convey research based ethnographic perspectives and this link to ongoing research enables the collections to provide new insights and knowledge of relevance for school children and adults alike. The collections encompass ethnographic objects, textual information, written by the collectors, films, magazines, recordings, books, digital multimedia resources, such as well informative dias shows. The key part of the collections, however, is the objects themselves. Their tangibility, spatiality and embedded meanings are at the center of the collections, providing their unique plasticity and potential for hands-on transmission of ethnographic knowledge in local schools. Currently, the UNESCO-collections have 26 collections that are used nationwide. The UNESCO collections as a concept was developed in 1964, financially supported by the United Nations educational, scientific and cultural organization, UNESCO. As such, the collections' use in schools has been extensive. However, their long history also gives rise to constraints and the need for a conceptual upgrading. Since 2008, the collections have been continuously restructured and the concept revisited. In this process an experimental workshop, "Touch the World", was designed. The aim was to make use of the collections' unique strengths – their plasticity and materiality - and use these as premises - or dogmas - around which to design the exhibition. This take on exhibition making confronted us with some practical challenges. Still, in sticking to the dogmas, we found our grappling with the practicalities of the exhibition to spark of new creative ideas. "Touch the World" gave us the opportunity to reflect upon the educational potentials of the collections, gaining insights into the possibility of future initiatives, including working within the nexus of user-driven participation and learning through the active engagement with the collections. The workshop made use of web 2.0 technologies in combination with the children's face-to-face interaction with ethnographers and the hands-on handling of the ethnographic items.

This paper is an account of work in progress and an outline of the themes with which we have worked on to be continuously faithful to the tie between the research based ethnographic knowledge and the transmission of this knowledge to children.

**Christina Toren**

**The stuff of imagination: what we can learn from Fijian children's ideas about their lives as adults**

By means of an analysis of Fijian children's essays about the future, this paper explores ideas of sociality, personhood and the self that are the very stuff of intersubjectivity and thus of the imagination. The material presented here bears on a single aspect of data derived from 75 essays by Fijian village children aged between 7 and 15 years old collected in April 2005: their constitution over time of a spatiotemporal orientation towards a view of generations to come. This partial analysis is the first part of a larger project, which will look at all aspects of the data derived from the essays as they vary together. The paper uses this example of spatiotemporal orientation to show how, seen through the perspective derived from long-term participant observer fieldwork, data

such as these enable an ethnographic analysis of how people make meaning – showing it to be an historical process that has much to tell us about continuity and transformation over time.

**Trond Waage**

**“I come to realize...” Studying meaning transition among school girls through a filmmaking process**

A problem in Anthropology has been to get relational material of such a quality that the ethnographic descriptions can be used to analyze how meaning categories are established and are changing (Asad 1986, Bhabha 1999). Ethnographies that can describe such processes are of great importance in the studies of young people, where categorization systems and social organization are changing rapidly. Doing research on children/youths can be a real challenge. How to get a dialogue based fieldwork with timid and shy youths who responds, “I don’t know” or “It is boring” to almost any kind of questions? The lack of trustful relational data has characterized what broadly might be called “youth-research” and was one of the reasons why we in 2005 at Visual Cultural Studies, at University of Tromsø started to teach, what the social services in the different communities we work are calls, “youth at risk” to make films about their own lives. In this presentation will I screen one of the almost 50 films made through these “Youth gaze courses”, called “*Skolelei*” (Tiered of school (14min)) made by two girls (13 and 14 yrs) and me (43 yrs). The film is one of 5 films that came out of a course we had at a small special-school for “school shrinking girls” autumn 2009. The key sequence in the film is on the youngest of the girls taking us downtown, loitering. She shows me/ the camera all the important places and explains all kinds of details about these arenas and the people there, she give us “sociology of loitering”. In the following sequence are we back at school filming the screenings of what we just have filmed in town. The film continues this way; the girls’ gives comments on comments, discussing meaning categories. In the paper will I briefly explain the context and then the process where the film was made, what the filmmaking process led to socially, for the girls and for the teachers, but my main emphasize is to discuss what potential such material has for youth research. I will claim that this kind of ethnographies helps us to understand youths meaning making processes and through that are we able to get an understanding of the complexity of culture making.