

Year Report 2014: EASA Anthropology of Children & Youth Network

Organization:

Chair: Dr Sandra J.T.M. Evers, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, VU University Amsterdam

Staff: Sarah Duisters (ended her mandate on 31 December 2014), Anne Schouten, Moos Pozzo.

Members: The Network currently has 407 members.

Organized events in 2014

In 2014, the Network held its monthly seminar meetings (a list of seminars is provided below), in addition Dr Sandra J.T.M. Evers gave the following lectures:

- Lecture at the UBC Learning Exchange. Speaker to discuss the position of refugee children in Vancouver and their potential of cultural navigation, Vancouver, 6 May 2014.
- Global summit of childhood (organized by the Association for Childhood Education International) titled: "Cultural Encounters and Migrant Children's Networks: Education, Mediation and Code-switching Practices." Vancouver, 11 April 2014.
- Invited speaker at the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Psychology and Education, 20 March 2014, Children's lived realities and reflections on family history: Ethics and methods of working with children.

Dr Evers was also appointed as Ambassador for Childhood of the Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI, <http://www.acei.org/>). The ACEI has consultative status with the [United Nations](#)

Publication of special issue of the European Journal of Development Research (EJDR) by Network members (publication was the fruit of a 2010 conference of the Network and discussions during the monthly seminars):

Evers, S.J.T.M., Shanti George, Roy Gigengack and Roy Huijsmans (2014) special issue of the *European Journal of Development Research* entitled: 'Generationing' Development: Situating children and youth in development processes (issue 26.2 April 2014).

List of monthly seminars

15 December 2014

Documentary 'Play no matter what!' and the concept of Social Circus

Kim van Haaster, director and producer of documentaries at Kim van Haaster Audiovisuele Producties

Kim van Haaster will introduce the concept of Social Circus that is closely related to the topic of the documentary 'Play no matter what!'. The documentary was made in Romania in 2013. After the screening there is time for questions.

Synopsis

Rachitoasa is the hilly hometown of Alexandra and Noni, two Romanian teenagers at the age of fourteen. There is not much else to do in Rachitoasa but to go school, work the land, help out in the household, or hang out on the streets. But one glorious day a bunch of funny looking, foreign people come to live in their village and stay a while. They turn the abandoned and rundown school building down the road into a colorful place for them to play! Ash and Jolien and the two teenagers become friends and hand-in-hand they play and figure out what they are good at and what is valuable in life. Playing is the most powerful way of learning, no matter the circumstances.

14 November 2014

Moving across languages and learning traditions

Leslie C. Moore, associate professor of Teaching & Learning and Linguistics at The Ohio State University, and Fulbright Scholar at Universiteit Utrecht

In this talk I present an overview of my research on the social and cultural patterning of children's language learning in communities whose members use multiple languages and participate in multiple language traditions. I examine such patterning in three multilingual African communities. First, I discuss language learning and use in a village in the Mandara Mountains, identifying several features of social life that worked together to reproduce and reinforce norms of multilingualism. Second, I examine Fulbe children's socialization into Fulfulde, Arabic, and French across secular, religious, and domestic activity settings. Third, I discuss Somali-American children's experiences of language learning and double schooling (participation in Qu'ranic and public schooling). In studying African children's experiences and developmental trajectories as learners and users of multiple languages across contexts, I seek to expand and deepen our understanding of how everyday practices shape language learning in culturally distinctive ways that may be transformed over time and space.

16 October 2014

Researching and reporting on human trafficking with a particular focus on the trafficking of minors

Ieke de Vries, researcher at the office of the Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children

There is increasing awareness of human trafficking in the Netherlands and at the international level. To tackle a hidden problem such as human trafficking, it must be made visible. A complicating matter is that human trafficking can take different forms, it can occur for different reasons, and individual trackers as well as criminal organization may be involved. The way governments or non-governmental organizations assess the criminal component also

determines what measures will be taken to combat it. And even though there is more awareness, questions remain like: What is the role of researchers (both quantitative and qualitative) studying human trafficking and how do they contribute to the question of visibility? By means of concrete examples on human trafficking - with a focus on the trafficking of minors, the seminar will look into the various ways for researching the phenomenon.

15 September 2014

'M-Nationalism? Mobile phones, youth, digital capitalism and belonging in rural Southeast Asia'

Roy Huijsmans, senior lecturer Children & Youth Studies, ISS, The Hague, The Netherlands

Mobile phone use has become a defining feature of what it means to be young. This is no less true in the relatively remote, ethnic minority spaces of the Lao-Vietnamese borderland area that is the focus of this study. Drawing on Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, I investigate the interplay between mobile phones, being young and digital capitalism and how this reconfigures belonging. In doing so, I focus on ethnic minority youth's appropriation of the mobile services provided by Viettel, the most popular mobile service provider in the study area and owned by the Vietnamese Ministry of Defence. I argue that the nationalism embedded in the digital capitalism of the corporate dimension of the post-socialist state (i.e. Viettel) enters young people's lives and transforms ethnic minority spaces in profound ways and that a re-reading of Anderson's work in the digital age offers new ground for understanding the formation of nationalism in a distinct generational fashion.

16 June 2014

'Generationing' development: Furthering the conversation'

Lidewyde Berckmoes, Sandra Evers, Shanti George, Roy Huijsmans, Sharada Srinivasan, Ben White

This seminar will take the form of a roundtable discussion about a recent Special Issue (2014; 26(2)) publication of the *European Journal of Development Studies* entitled 'Generationing Development: Situating children and youth in development processes'. The publication takes issue with the categorising approach towards children and youth that predominates in development studies, policy and practice. Instead, the contributing papers employ a relational understanding of children and youth in development and tease out how processes of development are oftentimes distinctly generationed dynamics. In this seminar, the guest-editors will briefly introduce the central premises of the publication, and some contributing authors will critically reflect on how these ideas have informed their article as well as the scope and limitations of the idea of 'generationing' development.

19 May 2014

Human trafficking is happening here in the Netherlands

Corinne Dettmeijer-Vermeulen, Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence against Children

Recent years have made clear that people can be exploited in many ways and in many places. In prostitution, but elsewhere as well, such as the agricultural and horticultural sectors, and the catering industry. Not long ago a conviction was handed down for the exploitation of street newspaper vendors.

Human traffickers take advantage of people who are often in a weak position or they use violence to coerce others to work for them. Crimes like these demand vigorous response. Human trafficking is a complex phenomenon. We can only succeed in tackling the problem if society at large and government agencies are aware of this and together take a firm stance. A robust response has been mobilised in the past few years. However, the battle against human trafficking is never won. The effort to fight it remains our challenge for the years ahead.

17 April 2014

Child circulation *in and from* China: An ethnographic account on the unpredicted consequences of the introduction of the Transnational Adoptive Program

Dr. Júlia Vich Bertran, MACIMIDE postdoctoral fellow, Maastricht University

This presentation unveils the ways in which macro-level factors such as national and transnational political and economic regimes, and global cultural discourses on child protection brought by the introduction of a Transnational Adoptive Program (CTAP) transform, redescribe and reproduce traditional practices of child circulation, altering the lives of certain types of children and generating stratified unequal paths to provide children for adoption to locals and foreigners. This Chinese case is based on two uninterrupted years of fieldwork in a Chinese central province.

14 March 2014

A review of early-years childcare services aiming to explore the state of Children's Rights in the Netherlands

Olga Middendorp, alumna Institute of Education, University of London

This seminar explores how decisions about childcare are made at different levels in the Netherlands. The focus is on how this influenced and impacts family lives and especially the rights of babies of approximately three months old (when the maternity leave ends). The ongoing debate about how the care of young children should be arranged is explored in this research. From an Euro-American viewpoint a substantial body of literature in the field of development psychology is anchored in the presumption that throughout hominid evolution mothers were exclusively responsible for nurturing offspring. This viewpoint underestimates the substantial joint effort it requires to rear healthy human children. Cross-cultural studies underscore the fact that multiple carers (next to parents and family) are a common feature in many societies and that this pattern of childcare appears to work. But nowadays, the benefits of this pattern is questioned in many Western societies and institutionalized childcare services do not facilitate it.

14 February 2014

Elusive tactics: Urban youth navigating the aftermath of war in Burundi

PhD defense of Lidewyde H. Berckmoes, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, VU University Amsterdam

The dissertation, based on fourteen months of ethnographic fieldwork research, explores the social genesis of war and peace in Burundi. The topic is approached through a focus on everyday practices of classification and identification among youths (16-30 years) on the northern periphery of Bujumbura. It reveals the ways in which male and female youths in marginalized circumstances grapple with insecurities and uncertain prospects concerning violence and exclusion, which characterize Burundi in the aftermath of the civil war. Therewith, the study gives insight into purposive action in indeterminate contexts and illuminates the agency of 'ordinary people' – here, youths – in reinventing peace. Among others, it argues that some of the prevalent practices in Burundi can be termed 'elusive tactics'. Elusive tactics refer to practices that allow people to remain or become more versatile, flexible and, quite literally, difficult to pin down. They foster the desire for or belief in openness and alternatives, beyond the knowledge and power that constrain everyday life. Yet, they also perpetuate and foster mistrustful social relations: extraordinary circumstances and betrayal remain a looming possibility.

17 January 2014

Child-focused corporate social responsibility: built-in or bolted-on?

Implementing the Children's Rights and Business Principles in Nairobi, Kenya

Lauren Schuivens, Research Master student in International Development Studies, University of Amsterdam

Many studies on children's rights emphasise the need to see children as stakeholders. In a comprehensive approach to children's rights studies, however, both the rights-holders and the duty-bearers should be included. Given the under-researched area of business people as duty-bearers to respect and support children's rights, UNICEF, UN Global Compact and Save the Children created the Children's Rights and Business Principles (CRBP) initiative. Launched in March 2012, this initiative is meant to serve as inspiration and guidance for all types of businesses in their interactions with children. This research focuses on Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya, and aims at understanding how business people's perceptions and motivations regarding child-focused Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) relate to their child-focused CSR practices and to the CRBP. Since NGOs are currently pushing businesses to implement these Principles in their policies and operations, this research also aims to explore what role NGOs can play in facilitating the implementation of child-focused CSR and the CRBP.