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'ANTHROPOLOGISTS RARELY WALK ALONE'

An exchange initiated by Michaela Haug and Rosalie Stolz,
with Anna-Madeleine Ayeh, Tabea Häberlein, Julia Pauli,
Birgitt Röttger-Rössler, Thomas Stodulka and Sophia Thubauville

Anthropologists rarely walk alone. Indeed, they frequently have company: interlocutors in the field, especially when relations have grown and intensified over a longish time span, as well as research partners and assistants or accompanying family members. While the first feature prominently in anthropological writing and the second are often mentioned in acknowledgements, being the sorts of company that add to the researcher's credibility, the presences and absences of a fieldworker's family are not explicitly mentioned as often or discussed in what may be joint ethnographic texts. While various aspects of the researcher's positionality and their affects are increasingly reflected upon in theses, monographs and articles, the same does not yet hold true with regard to the kinship belonging and networks of care that researchers are part of and which are in one way or another made to resonate with fieldwork. Issues of the compatibility of (field)work with one's family, especially (infra)structural and financial challenges, have been central in current initiatives aimed at increasing the visibility of accompanied fieldwork. In fact, balancing child-care and academic work is a demanding task at institutions of higher education as well.

A particular challenge for anthropologists can be the long-term fieldwork which lies at the heart of our discipline. Encompassing the entire life and persona of the researcher, anthropological fieldwork can be expected to be influenced in various ways by the fieldworker's social embeddedness and family status. Accompanying family members add to the complex social dynamics in the field, but they also have an imprint on the research that is worth closer examination. This even holds true when, for different reasons, researchers must try and keep the field separate from their private lives. These considerations have led us to wonder how this highly valuable source of reflexive ethnographic knowledge remains largely untapped.

We therefore suggested that this topic would fit very well with the theme 'Contested knowledge' of the bi-annual meeting of the Association of the German Anthropologists that was hosted in Munich in 2023. We set

out to explore whether and to what extent the knowledge gained from accompanied fieldwork is contested. Instead of elaborating our own ideas and speculations, we invited a number of colleagues – Anna Madeleine-Ayeh, Tabea Häberlein, Julia Pauli, Birgitt Röttger-Rössler, Thomas Stodulka and Sophia Thubauville – to join in our discussion, first in-person in Munich, and now through written exchange. Based on their considerable experience with different constellations of accompanied fieldwork at different career levels, the contributors provide glimpses of their fieldwork experience and offer insights, personal reflections and criticisms. This personal style eventually is intended to instil in readers their own reflections on their experiences and their own takes on their ability to balance fieldwork with family and acquire knowledge from the fact of accompanied fieldwork itself. As with any good conversations, we sincerely hope that this will provoke many more discussions and dialogues, both backstage and 'front of curtain'.

Accordingly, the interchanges proceeded as follows:

'Could you please introduce yourself and tell us in what constellations you have conducted accompanied fieldwork (family constellation, research location, research topic)?'

> Thubauville: I have been a research associate at the Frobenius Institute in Frankfurt since 2010. I did my doctorate at the University of Mainz and then worked at the Max Planck Institute in Halle. However, I didn't have a family of my own back then. My husband comes from Ethiopia's capital Addis Ababa, and our son was born in 2014. Since then, the three of us have mostly been travelling together on research trips. In 2015, we spent three months doing research at Bahir Dar University in northern Ethiopia, in 2017 we went together to Kerala, India, for two months, and in 2018 we had just arrived at Hawassa University in southern Ethiopia when we were caught up in a change of government. During our visits between 2014 and 2018, I researched Indian lecturers at Ethiopian universities, the historical relations between India and Ethiopia that led to these exchanges and the agencies that connected Indians to Ethiopian universities. In 2021 and 2022, we spent a total of five months in Los Angeles, where I did research on the Ethiopian diaspora looking at rotating credit associations. Back in Germany, however, our son told people at school that we had researched Ethiopian food because we had been out and about a lot in the restaurants in Little Ethiopia (a neighbourhood in central Los Angeles) to meet and interview people.

Häberlein: I am a research assistant and post-doctoral researcher at the Chair of Social Anthropology in the University of Bayreuth. Together with my elder daughter, a toddler at the time, I conducted a research project in rural Togo and Benin from 2009 to 2010. We lived there for a total of six months divided into three trips. Later she accompanied me twice more to the same region, each time for four to five weeks. Once, in 2017, I went to Togo with my then two children, at the time eight and two and a half years old respectively, for about a month. On all my trips to the field, I was accompanied by the same young woman from Togo who took care of my daughter and the household while we were there. In the course of time, she also had two children, who then also accompanied us to the field sites. In this respect, we always formed a female headed household with one up to four children with us for research purposes, which we all enjoyed very much.

Pauli: I am a professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology at Hamburg University. Since 1995, I have been conducting ethnographic research in Mexico, and since 2003 in Namibia. I have worked and lived in different constellations in those 'fields': alone, then with my husband and fellow anthropologist Michael Schnegg, later with him and our daughter Liliana, and finally also with my friend and colleague Liliana Valencía, a Mexican nutritionist from the Universidad de Morelos in Mexico. Working in each of these constellations brought their advantages and challenges (Pauli 2020). Right now, I am very much intrigued by how being perceived as a 'single' or a 'with', two concepts introduced by Erving Goffman (1971), affects fieldwork. I started my ethnographic work in rural Mexico as a 'single'. Then I evolved into a 'with', as my husband and family accompanied me to the community. Since 2022, I have again become a 'single', doing fieldwork alone. This has led to a plethora of speculations about my marriage and my general state of being. Interestingly, because of their own complex histories of migration, sometimes as a 'single', sometimes as a 'with', many of my interlocutors can relate to my new state of being in Mexico, sharing their stories and feelings with me.

Ayeh: I work as a research assistant at the Chair of Social Anthropology, University of Bayreuth. I live in a heterosexual marriage with my partner, who originates from Ghana, and we have two children. Together we spent a total of eleven months in Benin while I was researching Muslim women's religious learning and knowledge as a PhD student. Our stay was divided into two parts, a shorter phase of exploratory fieldwork, and a second, longer stay. Our older child knew Benin from the age of two to four, including during my pregnancy with my younger child, who took his first steps in Parakou, a city in Benin.

Stodulka: I am a professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Visual Anthropology, media, and documentary practice at the University of Münster. I lived and worked with street communities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, for four years between 2001 and 2015. I was a Master's student of Social and Visual Anthropology during my first fieldwork in 2001 when I took one year off from university. I wanted to make a documentary about street life, which did not work out. Instead, the six months resulted in a written Master's thesis. Since then, the camera has remained a visual method for documentation and writing (see photo). During the following multiple periods of fieldwork of more than three years altogether between 2005 and 2015, I was single at first, then fell in love with my now wife, Victoria Sakti, during one of my longer stays, and we started doing fieldwork together. She worked as an NGO activist, while I myself was an 'action researcher and collector of stories'. Later, we spent time together in Yogyakarta as a married couple with a baby boy, each involved in different fieldwork projects. In 2015, I accompanied my wife to her field site in Oecusse, Timor-Leste, where our almost two-year-old caught pneumonia in a place without a hospital. In 2019, I started my current research with permaculture practitioners in school gardens and youth movements in Timor-Leste, always together with my family. Back at school in Berlin, our son started to describe himself to others as a 'Weltforscher' (world researcher). I must have mumbled my German when I intended to describe my work to him as a 'Feldforscher' (field researcher).

Röttger-Rössler: I am emeritus professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Free University Berlin. I have been conducting ethnographic research in Sulawesi, Indonesia, with the Makassar since 1984. My research topics focused first on social stratification and gender roles and later on the cultural shaping of emotions. During the last fifteen years I mainly researched socialization and local forms of childcare. My first ethnographic research I carried out together with my husband and colleague Martin Rössler, while later we conducted research in the company of our children, first the youngsters, and later our older children. I also researched alone in Sulawesi or in the company of one of our children. In 2010 I started researching in Vietnamese Berlin as a new long-term project, but I never finished my research in Sulawesi. This primarily has to do with the fact that I have close personal relationships with many people there, which have intensified over the years, these relationships that are an important part of my life and the life of my German family. I would like to focus on these long relationships here when thinking about anthropologists who 'never walk alone'.

Milos Stodulka, Indonesia 2020 (photo: Th. St.)

'What were the epistemic effects of your accompanied fieldwork?'

Häberlein: My research topics have focused on intergenerational relationships, the life course and the social and economic embeddedness of adulthood. Such topics always have something to do with children indirectly. What does it mean to have children, or not to have them? How do we deal with intergenerational challenges in the face of economic difficulties? What educational choices do adults make for themselves and their children? How is one perceived as an adult in society as a mother or a father? As a grandmother or a grandfather? What freedoms and responsibilities arise from a change in social status over the course of a lifetime?

I was able to experience all these questions first-hand, so to speak, by travelling with my children and being perceived as a mother on the ground. My foster daughter in Togo, who I had before my biological children, has made me a mother since 2007. In a way, my ethnographic field transformed me into a mother before I had biological children of my own. It is similar with grandmotherhood, as my foster daughter has since given birth to two children herself. The direct experience and social localisation in the research field, which I got into through participant observation (or close participation), have led me to deeper and more specific research findings in the field of close social relationships. And yes, this is also exhausting, because as a researcher

you are then also introduced to family conflicts. I have already published on both, on the thesis of dense participation (Häberlein 2014) as well as on the implication of motherhood in the research field of close social relationships (Häberlein 2020).

Thubauville: When working with Indian lecturers in Ethiopia, one would initially think that a child who is present during the interviews plays no role or is only a nuisance. But family and children are always an important topic and a point of reference when it comes to migration as a topic. The lecturers all had children themselves and the presence of my son meant that we quickly got talking about it. If the children were still in India, the lecturers either had reasons to leave their family behind (easier childcare in the extended family, fears about local healthcare or a lack of schools for international students on site). However, many were thinking of bringing their families to Ethiopia and saw me as a possible source of information regarding childcare, healthcare and schools. We were, so to speak, in the same situation as foreigners with families in Ethiopia. This definitely created a bridge and trust between us and made the interview situations easier. At the same time, it gave me insights into the lecturers' thoughts and plans regarding family reunification that I might not otherwise have had.

In Kerala, India, I looked for interlocutors who had worked as teachers in Ethiopia. The presence of my family was a clear advantage here. In the first Christian Orthodox church we visited, my husband was approached directly by a man who had grown up in Ethiopia as the son of Indian teachers. This gave me an easy introduction to my research. While the presence of my family in India only brought advantages, the situation in the Ethiopian diaspora in the USA was more difficult. The diaspora there is a reflection of the political events and political atmosphere in Ethiopia itself. The community is primarily divided along ethnic lines, which for me as a spouse of an Ethiopian meant that I had easier access to certain groups, while I was denied access to others.

Pauli: Many anthropologists doing 'fieldwork' are probably in one way or another a disturbance to the everyday course of things. Even in settings that are very familiar to ethnographers, the double role of participant and observer is often an irritation. At first sight, this seems a disadvantage. However, following phenomenological theorizing (Schnegg 2024), our awareness, reflections and knowledge about our being-in-the-world often emerge out of disturbances and irritations. This is also the lesson I have learned through my own aging and the different ways I have existed socially in my different periods of fieldwork. My new status as 'single' (in Mexico) in Goffman's (1971) sense has been epistemically so productive (and personally sometimes so challenging) because I had previously been different, a 'with'. Seeing myself and my life transformed, just like other lives, stimulated reflections and narratives from

my interlocutors that would otherwise not have emerged. Kirin Narayan has beautifully captured this entangled knowledge production between anthropologists and interlocutors over a lifetime of repeated exchanges:

> Returns to the field allow a better understanding of how individuals creatively shape themselves and their societies through time. Finally, repeated returns to the field force an anthropologist to reconsider herself and her work not just from the perspective of the academy but also from that of the people she purports to represent (Narayan 1993: 677).

Thus, it is not only accompanied fieldwork that leads to new and exciting ethnographic encounters and forms of collaborative thinking and narrating of our being-in-the-world. It is also our shared experience, understanding and embodying – with our friends and interlocutors in 'the field', our academic companions or our families – of our constant movements between attachment and de-attachment, between being alone and being in company, between being a 'single' and being a 'with'.

Ayeh: I found it very enriching to interact with my research participants as a person *in a relationship*. As anthropologists, we pay attention to the multiple entanglements of our research participants, while our discipline's classical model of research is that of a single-travelling individual (at least temporarily) stripped of all the relationships that matter to them. So, being in the field not just forming professional research relationships, but travelling with those personal relationships on board, made research encounters feel more symmetrical. I experienced my research participants revealing themselves in their intimate relationships, and they too got to know me as a social being, interacting with my kids and partner. Questions would go back and forth and be less unidirectional – my gaze would be reciprocated.

Also, parenting was often mobilized by research participants to glance over the many differences that separate us – a lot of them being structural inequalities. This was catalysed by our specific family constellation, with my partner being Ghanaian. He and the children were framed as 'one of us' in Benin. Especially in the Muslim north, historical ties to Ghana at the intersection of economics and religious education are routinely expressed and affirmed. In everyday interactions, a shared identity as West Africans was often highlighted. I was thereby read as a semi-insider by affiliation.

While in Benin, my partner and I discussed experiences daily. Our discussions around irritations, lessons and interpretations are reflected frequently in my field notes. These parts of data are characterized by an underlying multiperspectivity, consisting of insights by two strangers who were 'differently strange' to the research field.

Lastly, travelling as a family offers insights into the underlying norms and morals of the communities we stay in. Julia Pauli coined the term 'family normativities' to talk about a society's dominant norms regarding 'proper' families that are acted upon every day. When the family normativity of home and field corresponds, being perceived as a 'family (wo)man' fosters trust and respect. Whenever they don't fully correspond, this may yield insightful irritations. However, when these irritations are greater, they are sources of potential danger for the researcher, e.g. as a queer researcher in homophobic environments. Consequently, corresponding to the research location's family normativity is a form of privilege, while diverging from it can be a potential risk and can even mean existential danger.

Stodulka: In 2001, as a student in my mid-twenties, I engaged in my first fieldwork with children and young people between ten and twenty years of age. Being addressed as an older brother sympathetic to many of their 'deviant' practices as 'social pariahs', I learned about streetwise behaviour towards the authorities, and how to 'play' them to one's benefit. Four years later, many of my friends and interlocutors had become fathers, mothers, husbands and wives a few years ahead of me. I realized only later, luckily before writing up a monograph, how *I* remained stuck in 'deviant' youth behaviour, and *they* had come of age as responsible parents. Whereas I took many things for granted while in the field, like making time for myself and our joint endeavours to set up a shelter for chronically ill street youth, I realized after the birth of my son how busy life can get in the early years of parenthood, and how little time there is for anything else. Especially when we were back in Yogyakarta as a young family, I realized how challenging it was to combine my previous life on the streets with my new life as a father and husband. I learned how exceptional my friends and interlocutors were in coming to terms with stigmatization, marginalization and illnesses when caring not only for themselves but being there for their children, wives or husbands, and whole extended families. Even after he passed on in 2013, the same year my son was born, I continued learning from my late friend Jabrikx what humans are capable of in the bleakest of times. I am eternally thankful to him for sharing so much time of his short life with me, and for showing me every day again and again what it means to care, respect and support family, friends and strangers. Juxtaposing my new life as a father with the challenges of coming of age on the streets, my son and Jabrikx remain vital companions that help me better understand and theorize on the agency, imagination and power of marginalized actors and communities.

Although I have engaged in playful methods with children for over twenty years, my son shows me every day, yet again, the beauty and limits of language in conveying experience and expressing one's thoughts and emotions. I remember this dawning on me in 2019, when our son and I accompanied

my wife Victoria during her fieldwork in Kupang, West Timor. Venturing out from our host family's guesthouse into the city on foot, we aimed to make a film about the city. We both ventured out with smartphone cameras and microphones. When I looked at his footage in the evenings, I realized that he was almost exclusively interested in ants, cockroaches, leaves floating across the busy market, sizzling firewood, birds floating across the urban beaches, chicken foraging in 'wastelands', and monkeys playing in the trees. It is therefore hardly surprising in hindsight that my new passion for fieldwork in Timor-Leste lies in more-than-human epistemologies: tasting soils, and learning from water, animals and plants.

Röttger-Rössler: Even when I travel to Sulawesi alone, i.e. without the company of my husband or one of our children, I never walk alone: I'm always integrated into the network of my local friends and relatives. These relationships are shaped by our shared ageing. When I sit together now with my age mates and chat, we all have grandchildren around. All the little children who accompanied me during my first period of fieldwork have since had children of their own who are now sitting on my lap. This lifelong bond, which now makes me the grandmother of my local friends' children's children, is epistemically significant. On the one hand it familiarizes me with the local role of the grandmother, and on the other hand it gives me good access to the children. They don't perceive me as a stranger, even if they have never seen me before, but as a family member, which is probably a result of my close relations with their parents, grandparents and other caregivers. Since I have been dealing with questions of socialization, education and learning for several years, this access to children is highly valuable. I can easily move around with them, and they show me their places and games and give me insights into their joys as well as their worries. Grandparents are always close to children in Makassar society; caring for the youngest is one of their main tasks, and they are expected to do so in a permissive manner. Becoming a grandmother in the local society also offers me new insights into the position of elderly women and, as another result of my long-term relations, into peoples' ways of dealing with the complex challenges of ageing on a bodily as well as a social level. However, ageing is also associated with the experience of loss. Each time I revisit Sulawesi some of my closest companions have passed away. Demographic differences in life expectancy thus become immediately tangible. But all these losses also show me how Makassar mourn their loved ones, how they share and express their grief and how they keep the deceased 'alive' in their daily lives. These experiences teach me a lot about transience and about the *conditio humana* in general.

'To what extent do you see or did you experience the knowledge derived from accompanied fieldwork as being contested? What impulses can be gained from it? What possibilities arise from it?'

Häberlein: The knowledge thus derived is contested for several reasons. Here I name two of them. Firstly, such knowledge is strongly personal to both the research participants and the researcher. Thus, it must be contested as it is. True though the depth of the knowledge may be, it must be reflected on very carefully, not only ethically, but also in terms of a more general significance. In this respect I would like to see more courage for openness from many researchers who have entered personal relationships in the field (with or without family ties in the field). We could all learn from the contexts of our data collection, but this also requires a more trusting atmosphere among ourselves in our academic field or in the area studies in which we operate.

Secondly, I see that the demand to take one's children into the field affects a very specific group of people: to a certain extent, it reflects the inadequacies of our own family contexts in the Global North. Who is forced to take their children into the field, to expose them to other sometimes dangerous situations, health problems or psychologically stressful experiences? Who risks conflicts in the family of origin (or family-in-law), as they 'remove' their children from the kinship group and 'alienate' them through long absences, according to one potential accusation? Who may be more financially burdened if the accompanying family have to finance themselves, but the doctoral student only has a part-time job? How happy can a travelling partner be who has no academic interest in taking on a certain culturally ascribed social role in the field? And which partner can afford, both professionally and financially, to take time out for a longer field trip? The answer is simple: these are mainly young women who have a problem with childcare while they want to do their research. Those who don't want to or can't take their children with them are out. Those who don't have people 'at home' to look after their children while they are away have a problem doing anthropological research. And (un)surprisingly, this all affects far fewer men, but especially white women. The problem becomes less serious when the children get older and no longer need such intensive care. But how many mothers are still working in academia by that point? Only a few – too few in my opinion. And that is both a private and a political problem.

Thubauville: Overall, the topic of accompanied fieldwork is not sufficiently addressed, nor supported in German anthropology. We would now like to change this through our German Anthropological Association working group on 'Family in the field'. The topic should actually be part of the compulsory literature in methodology seminars in order to educate students about the

challenges, but also the advantages of doing research with a partner or children. If students themselves have families and want to go into the field together, they are faced with a lack of guidance as well as funding. In the workshops that took place in Cologne and Frankfurt on this topic,[1] it became clear once again that the situation is very unfavourable, especially for doctoral students, and that often funds that should be used for gender-equality purposes cannot be spent on accompanied field research for bureaucratic reasons.[2] There is still a lot to do here. On the website of our working group, we are therefore collecting current information on the financing of accompanied research to inform fellow researchers.[3]

One topic related to accompanied field research that should definitely receive more attention is shared authorship.[4] While the role of research assistants and other research partners is increasingly being addressed (Middleton and Cons 2014), research partners who are part of the family remain mostly unmentioned or are only dealt with in the acknowledgements or footnotes, although they sometimes play an important role in data collection and interpretation.

Pauli: Have I experienced the knowledge I gained through accompanied fieldwork as contested? I don't think so – more to the contrary. It is a privilege to have a partner who is also an anthropologist. I am deeply in debt to Michael Schnegg's long-term involvement in my research, thinking and writing. Similarly, my friend and colleague Liliana and our daughter Liliana, who is named after our Mexican friend, have shaped me and the way I do fieldwork and then write about it. In my ethnographic writing, I try to make these influences visible. My experience with writing like this has been positive. Peer reviewers acknowledge my attempt to show the multiple personal entanglements while being 'in the field' and then later 'producing' knowledge by writing about the experiences.

I think that this is also a sign of how ethnographic writing has been changing, becoming more diverse and more creative. Forerunners of this important change, like Ruth Behar or Alma Gottlieb, have written themselves and their significant others into ethnographic texts with courage and style, describing the difficulties they experienced at the beginning of their careers. I am certain that the emerging academic openness to reading ethnographic narratives not produced by the single researcher alone will further create exciting possibilities for writing joint and entangled ethnographic worlds.

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1 See the Introduction to this collection.
2 See Stolz *et al.* (2020: 14–17).
3 URL: https: //familieimfeld.org/foerdermoeglichkeiten/.
4 See the contribution by Kuiper and Schönebeck in this collection.

Ayeh: My most profound experiences of contestation do not come directly from within the anthropological community, but from the funding structures of academia more broadly. Getting expenses covered for travelling with children was a fight lasting months, where very different disappointments happened, e.g. having accompanied research labelled a 'private pleasure' by the university's administration. Even later on, when we as a group of young scholars (all women) volunteered to collect and share experiences of accompanied researchers and to feed these experiences into a different funding scheme at our university, the topic was met with a whole lot of reluctance and suspicion, even from within structures that exist in order to promote gender equality and diversity.

Broadly speaking, existing funding measures are often, firstly, not applicable to long-term research like anthropological fieldwork and secondly, are too inflexible to account for very different research constellations that require individual solutions which respond to questions like: How old are the children? Is the research in an urban or rural setting? What is the pedagogical infrastructure like in the research location? Do the children speak the language of the place? Is someone accompanying you from home who is ready and willing to travel in order to provide childcare, etc.? Considering all these factors, it seems to be less productive to give everyone the same uniform support, and more important to respond to the needs of particular constellations in particular research contexts. Structures that fund accompanied research should reflect that, especially through a high level of flexibility and of trust in the researcher. Besides looking at the epistemic gains of accompanied research, which is an important conversation to have, conducting in-depth anthropological research alongside people one cares for is at the heart of the politics of equal opportunity. It is existential especially for women in academia, and for young researchers in precarious positions.

Stodulka: In terms of knowledge construction and learning from the field, I think that accompanied fieldwork will be contested if we buy into lingering hegemonic narratives of lone ethnographers and continue valuing single-authored papers as an aspired genre of scientific writing. From my understanding as an anthropologist whose ethnographic modalities and practice have always relied on others' generosity and talent ways more than on one person's brilliance, contestation strikes hard at the late stages of knowledge construction. It is mostly related to questions of accountability, acknowledgment and recognition when making collective efforts public in journals, books, exhibitions, or screening rooms. Who gets the credit for all the hard work of co-theorizing, co-reflecting and co-caring during fieldwork? If it is true that it takes a village to raise a child, then it takes at least a middle-sized town to raise an anthropologist and shape them for an academic career. Just imagine all the families involved, the interlocutors and their families, the assistants and

their families, the research partners and their families, students, colleagues, administrators, mentors, reviewers, and publishers, a list that is not exhaustive. But until the dominant model of making a career in anthropology remains relegated to single professorships, there can hardly be any change. If we acknowledge companions and their work in the field, we might also want to share the harvest at later stages of the knowledge production chain. By the way, I do not think many professors would mind sharing their pay checks if only that meant that they could work less and in teams or share time and tasks. But until there is change at the end of the food chain, accompanied fieldwork will always remain contested, if 'only' structurally. And quite frankly, it will take some utopian thought and courageous practice to change this occupational structure. But if the academe is willing to learn from the good bits of platform economies and 'new work' models, and if more are willing to share their privileges with others, there remains hope.

Röttger-Rössler: Like Julia, I never perceived the knowledge I gained through accompanied fieldwork as contested – the different perspectives of my husband and our children represent enrichments and expansions of my own limited view. My husband, for example, with his anthropological foci on religion and (subsistence) economics, added much to my knowledge of the religious life and my understanding of the problems the local peasants have to face. When small, our children added to our insights into the local forms of parenting and caregiving, while our daughter, who accompanied me as young adult on a field trip, gave me insights into the world of the young people, their interests, hopes, plans, worries and their perspectives on the lives of their parents. In observing her interacting with her local friends I realized the existence of a globalized 'youth culture' in which they all obviously participated.

However, I experienced contestations like Anna in dealing with funding bodies and university administration. The latter in particular often proved reluctant to view the company of children as a necessity and as academically enriching, and not as a limitation. I was confronted with doubts over whether I would be able to do proper research when accompanied by my children. Here traditions of thought become evident that regard childcare and work as incompatible and therefore put an extra-burden on the parents.

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