SOME THOUGHTS ON ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK AND PHOTOGRAPHY

BARBARA TURK NISKAČ
University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts
Department of Ethnology and
Cultural Anthropology
Zavetiška 5, 1000 Ljubljana
Slovenia

Drawing on the existing documenting parallels between ethnographic fieldwork and photography, the paper discusses dilemmas connected to the relationship between the ethnographer and his research participants. The paper argues that the ideas of sensory ethnography and arts practices, as well as a reflexive approach to visual anthropology, especially collaborative and participatory methods, could prove useful in transcending boundaries between the researcher and research participants. Furthermore, the experience of taking pictures might help us towards a better understanding of ethnographic fieldwork. For this purpose, the paper offers an analysis of a number of photographs.

Key words: *photography, sensory ethnography, visual anthropology*

TO BEGIN WITH[1]

We might say that ethnographic fieldwork is one of the fundamental components of cultural anthropology. As its basis, participant observation requires not only interaction and relations with people based on mutual trust, but also an emotional and rational experience of the environment (including its sounds, smells and sights) (Eriksen 2001:24). However, although ethnographic fieldwork usually does include participant observation and interviews (Dewalt and Dewalt 2000), it is not confined merely to these. Sarah Pink (2009) suggests it may well include a range of other participatory research techniques. Indeed, no standard manner

[1] I would like to thank Sašo Niskač for his comments on this article regarding workshops in Gostivar.

of conducting ethnography that would be practiced universally presently exists. Ethnography has shifted from being a method for collecting "data" to being a process of creating and representing knowledge based on the ethnographer's own experiences (Pink 2005:18).

In the broad spectrum of approaches to ethnographic research, visual anthropology may offer new and different ways of understanding, but also new and different things to understand (MacDougall 2006:220). According to David MacDougall, visual anthropology, to a large extent, is a performative anthropology of the presentation of objects and re-enactment of experiences in the world (2006:272). In an attempt to situate the visual within social, scholarly and artistic practices, Hubbard et al. recognize the visual "as always embedded in the multisensoriality" and as a "movement that is integral to the practice and experience of everyday life" (2010:2). A great deal has already been written about the role of the senses, of which vision is only one and is in no way superior to the others (Clifford 1986; Geurts 2002; Herzfeld 2007; Hubbard et al. 2010), and a shift from the idea of privileging vision or visual knowledge has already been made, acknowledging any experience to be multisensorial (Pink 2009). Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen developed the concept of multimodality as the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event; the authors noted in 2001 that the dominance of monomodality had begun to reverse. In multimodality, "common semiotic principles operate in and across different modes" (2001:2). This concept attempts to overcome the hierarchical relationship among discourses and communicative modes from language, to image, music, sound, texture or gesture. When we think about using methods of visual anthropology during fieldwork, we might thus consider sensory ethnography (Stoller 1997; Geurts 2002; Pink 2009; Hubbard et al. 2010) a starting point of the multisensoriality of experience, perception, knowledge, and practice. When I use the term "sensory ethnography", I am using it in the sense of Pink's understanding of it as a process that acknowledges that "multisensoriality is integral both to the lives of people who participate in our research *and* to how we ethnographers practice our craft" (2009:1).

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SELF AND OTHER

Now that we have outlined the principles of sensory ethnography, let us turn our attention to ethnographic fieldwork. Alfred Gell explicitly defines his view that, insofar as anthropology has a specific subject-matter at all, this subject-matter is "social relationships" – relationships between participants in social systems of various kinds (1998:4). These social relationships also include the relationships between ethnographers and their research participants. If I momentarily focus on these relationships and interactions, sooner or later one is faced with questions as to whether our intentions in approaching people are genuine, whether we are really interested in them and enjoy their company, or spend time with them just to acquire certain information. Eriksen poses similar questions about moral obligations of the ethnographer and whether friendships and other confidential relationships developed in the field are "real" or "fake". He states that many ethnographers probably develop a profoundly ambivalent, sometimes even antagonistic attitude towards the people they study (2001:24). His answer to the question of whether it is possible to carry out good fieldwork among people one has little respect for, is "yes", as at the end of the day the value of participant observation lies in the quality of the empirical data one has collected (2001:25). However, as we shall see as we proceed through this article, I shall argue that in this respect, visual (or even better, collaborative and participatory) methods may prove to be useful (but by no means simple) to the relationship between the researcher and his research participants. If we now return to photography itself and the relationship between the photographer and the subject being photographed, we confront some similarly contradictory aspects. The relationship between Self and Other, the photographer and the photographed, is by no means egalitarian. In still photography, there is "an implicit separation between the camera and the subject, viewer and viewed" (MacDougall 2006:235). Many have pointed out parallels between Foucault's eye of surveillance in the panopticon prison and "the eye of the Western photographer" (Pinney 1996:75–76). In photography, as in "discipline", the photographer is invisible behind his camera, while what he sees is rendered completely visible (ibid.). Through the production of meaning we also produce knowledge, and knowledge, within a particular discourse, is connected to power (Sontag 1977; Hall 1997:6). The English verb itself – *taking* –

denotes a one-way process in which the one who makes a photograph is in a superior position to the one of whom he takes it. Thus, we may say there is an eternal dilemma as to where to draw a boundary between the intruding camera and respect for privacy or intimacy. When taking pictures of people, what drives one to approach the person whose photo is to be taken is often precisely the desire to take a picture. But again: do we approach people out of a genuine desire to make contact, to have a chat or drink a coffee together, or do we approach them because, at the end of the day, we want to take a picture of them? Taking pictures of people might be accompanied by negative emotions, as if one is taking something from the subject to which one has no right. We all know the old anecdote about the photographer robbing people of some part of their being by taking pictures. On the other hand, MacDougall acknowledges another aspect, an alternative to the draining and predatory nature of photography, which gives us a chance to add something to ourselves and review our varied appearances. It takes nothing from us; every image increases us and attests to the possibilities within us (2006:148). It is interesting to note that artists, who integrate ethnographic approaches into photography, often successfully overcome the divide between Self and Other. Wendy Ewald (1985; 2000) for example encourages children to use cameras to record their lives and challenges the concepts of "who actually makes an image, who is the photographer, who the subject, who is the observer and who the observed" (*Literacy Through Photography Blog*). In fact, many people do fancy being photographed and have very specific ideas of how and when they should be pictured (Moličnik 1998; Pink 1999). I believe it is here that the space for participatory and collaborative methods opens up, to which we shall return later.

DO WE NEED DEFINITIONS?

As has already been noted (Sontag 1977; Pinney 1996), we may draw certain parallels between conducting ethnographic fieldwork and photography (although the present article only deals with photography, similar connections could be drawn to other visual or interactive methods). According to Edwards, "there are strong visualist metaphors in anthropology – 'observing', 'seeing', 'reading' – and there is the obvious analogy

between the anthropologist and camera as external observer and recorder" (1996:14). The long-lasting debate about the scientific validity of the photographed moment has resulted in some opinions that the "photographs anthropologists and sociologists might take during fieldwork are only vacation pictures" (Becker, cited in Pink 2005:7). Not only in anthropology but in a much broader sense, images have had an uneven career throughout history, depending upon the degree to which seeing has been accorded the status of knowledge: "visual images have gone from being prized in the 19th century to being increasingly regarded as instruments rather than constituents of knowledge" (MacDougall 2006:5).

People tend to classify and categorize, and photography is by no means an exception to the rule (Harper 1987). However, I would argue that, depending on the context, photography can be seen as either artistic, touristic, documentary, or ethnographic. Unwritten rules regarding what is and what is not ethnographic are generally formed in our minds, rather than by methodologies themselves (Gačnik and Gačnik 1994:34). An ethnographer's photography may be "related equally to their professional fieldwork narratives or personal biographies" (Pink 2009:26). And for that matter, "an anthropological photograph is any photograph from which an anthropologist could gain useful, meaningful visual information" (Edwards, cited in Pink 2005:50). In various situations, images are invested with new (and perhaps conflicting) meanings by different audiences and at different stages of ethnographic research and representation. It is only in relation to the discourses that people use to define them and through representation that they gain a certain meaning (Hall 1997; Moličnik 2003; Pink 2005). In this respect, MacDougall points out the roles of seeing and meaning. Meaning guides our seeing, allowing us to categorize objects and making them familiar. However, "when we force [meaning] on things, [it] can also blind us, causing us to see only what we expect to see or distracting us from seeing very much at all" (2006:1). Meaning is also constantly being reproduced in every personal and social interaction (Hall 1997:3). Contiguous with meaning is the "expectation" which photography brings. Edwards claims that the photograph itself becomes the signifier, it is "perceived as 'real' or 'true' because that is what the viewer *expects* to see: "'this is how it should be', becomes 'this is how it is/was'" (1996:8). Similarly, the nature of the distinction between personal experience and ethnographic experience,

autobiography and anthropology, fieldwork and everyday life is just as arbitrary (Pink 2005:19). Anything may be redefined differently in different contexts and situations, by different individuals and in terms of different discourses (ibid.).

Each choice of representation affects the nature of meanings produced and how they are produced (Hall 1997:8). Indeed, photographs are always framed. The edges may be seen as proscriptions, prohibitions of the image – they define what is to be photographed and what is not (Faris 1996:255; see also Sontag 1977). Such rules may be apply to photography, or for that matter, any other "practice of representation" (Hall 1997).

IS IT TIME FOR COLLABORATIVE AND PARTICIPATORY METHODS?

The use of visual methods has a long history in anthropology, beginning with Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson at the beginning of the 20th century and with the work of John Collier (Collier and Collier 1986; El Guindi 2000). An important breakthrough in the 1960s was the work of Sol Worth and John Adair who offered the community of Navajo an opportunity to make their own films. What Navajo show about themselves in their films is obviously very different from what we can see in the films made by anthropologists (El Guindi 2000:479). From the 1960s to the 1980s debates focused on whether visual images and recordings could usefully support the observational project of social science (Pink 2005:7). One of the most influential publications of this era is Collier's (1967; 1986) *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*. Collier and Collier (1986) advocated a systematic method of observation in which the researcher is supported by visual technology. This approach depends on a realist interpretation of still and moving images (Pink 2005:8). However, despite constant development (for a detailed overview see Moličnik 2003), visual methods have often been marginalized as being subjective and unreliable (Gačnik and Gačnik 1994; Hudelja 1996; Križnar 1996; Pink 2005). Since Clifford's work (1986) about the interpretation of ethnography as written word, we have been aware of the importance of who is the one speaking and writing, and of where, when, with whom or to whom, under

what kind of institutional or historical constraints (Clifford 1986:13). Following on from the ideas of *Writing Culture* (1986), "new ethnography" (Harper 1987; Larson 1988; Harper 1998), which was supposed to reduce the distance between the discipline and the subject of study, also paved the way for the visual and for the recognition that "ethnographic film or photography were essentially no more subjective or objective than written texts" (Pink 2005:1). New approaches to visual material went hand in hand with changes in technology, methodology and theoretical frameworks (Križnar 1996; Moličnik 2003). Since the 1980s, images are becoming acknowledged, accepted and regarded as an equally meaningful element of ethnographic work (Pink 2009:9). As opposed to the before-mentioned scientific approach represented by Collier and Collier (1986), the reflexive approach (Moličnik 2003; Pink 2005) assumes that it is impossible to photograph or video an objective and "true" visual record, and that the analysis can therefore never be of a complete and authentic record. From a multimodal perspective (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001), meanings made with language are "interwoven with meanings made in other modes, highlighting the interdependent assemblage of different semiotic modes" (Flewitt 2006:28). A combination of various modes of knowledge i.e. photography, video and audio recordings, visual and other objects, field diaries, ethnographic writing, etc. – thus provides multiple avenues to arrive at multiple "truths", reflecting different participants' perspectives (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2001; Pink 2005; Flewitt 2006).

The reflexive approach is especially fond of collaborative and participatory methods, which assume that the researcher and the research participant are "consciously working together to produce visual images and specific types of knowledge through technological procedures and discussions" (Pink 2005:40). It is of course presupposed that these methods are used together with other methods of qualitative research for visual techniques; they "cannot be used as direct means of decoding reality, however, they can represent reality" (Moličnik 2003:7). Alongside studies of local photographic practices and images that already exist in a given community (Chalfen 1987; Tobiassen 1990; Chalfen 1991; Pink 1999; Moličnik 2001), a variety of studies exists in which research participants were given cameras and asked to take pictures (Hubbard 1994; O'Neill and Hubbard 2010; Radley et al. 2010). Photographs are only one of the

means of collaborative methodology and as such "combine the intentions of both ethnographer/photographer and informant and should represent the outcome of their negotiations" (Pink 2005:58). Furthermore, when we view images that "represent other people's sensory experiences, […] we are better placed to imagine what these might be like" (Pink 2009:110). In an ethnographic interview that would ideally follow the act of taking pictures, the researcher and the research participant are able to discuss their different understandings of images, to collaborate in determining each other's views and to create a bridge between their different experiences of reality (Pink 2005:68–69; see also Moličnik 2003:7). Interviewing using images may provide an insight into audiovisual representations of research participants or into their perspectives (Chalfen 1991; MacDougall 2006). MacDougall notes that "photographic images are inherently reflective, in that they refer back to the photographer at the moment of their creation, at the moment of an encounter" (2006:3). Techniques of image use in interviewing may involve showing research participants images of other people or objects and asking them to discuss their various aspects. It may also involve "showing research participants images of themselves engaged in particular activities and then exploring how they experienced these activities verbally in interviews" (Pink 2009:110). Since collaborative and participatory methods go hand in hand with contemporary paradigms about children and childhood, which emphasize the role of children as active agents and the notion of research *with* children rather than only *about* children (James 2007; Dell Clark 2004), they seem to be particularly appropriate in research involving children and youth in various disciplines (Hubbard 1994; Orellana 1999; Morrow 2001; Mitchell and Reid-Walsh 2002; Pahl 2006). Not only do such methods offer an insight into research participants' views, they also present an opportunity to overcome the ethnographer's dominant and objectifying voice. "By focusing on collaboration and the idea of 'creating something together', agency becomes shared between the researcher and informant" (Pink 2005:44). However, we should be aware that giving a voice to research participants is by no means unproblematic (James 2007). It may constitute "only a new textual construction in which the narrative of the ethnographer is just as dominant as those of the subjects subordinate" (Pink 2005:118).

AN ATTEMPT TO ANALYSE PICTURES AND VARIOUS PHOTOGRAPHING EXPERIENCES

So far, we have discussed the contemporary uses of photography in ethnographic research and some parallels between taking pictures and conducting ethnographic fieldwork, especially in terms of the relationship between Self and Others.

Last but not least, I would like to present my own experience of taking pictures during ethnographic fieldwork. By analyzing the pictures and their contexts, I believe we can better understand the embodied experience of conducting fieldwork. The following analysis of the process of taking pictures might thus serve as an accompanying element that helps us towards an increased understanding of the context of the research itself. Furthermore, the various pictures reflect different modes of relationship between Self and Other, which have been mentioned above. The photos were taken during my nine months' stay in FYROM in 2006/2007. I shall attempt to analyse selected pictures by using a reflexive approach, which argues that it is "impossible to record 'complete' processes, activities or sets of relationships visually, and demands that attention be paid to the contexts in which images are produced" (Pink 2005:97; see also Moličnik 2003); Or, as Hubbard et al. point out, photographs "invite viewers to empathetically imagine how and where that photograph was taken in a sensory moment of movement, through a material, sensory, social and emotional environment" (2010:5).

During my stay in FYROM, I was doing European Voluntary Service, organizing creative workshops for primary school children. I also used this opportunity to carry out fieldwork for my BA thesis about the division of public spaces (coffee places, streets, taxis and shops) among Albanian and Macedonian youth in Gostivar (see Turk 2008; 2009). At the same time, my husband Sašo Niskač held video and photo workshops for local youth.[2] At the weekends, we spent our time travelling the country largely on foot and spontaneously taking numerous pictures, primarily out of a sense of their

---

[2] The project was supported by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was carried out at the local NGO ADI.

potential artistic or aesthetic value, or as a way of communicating with people. As we knew the local language, this proved to be rather easy, and we were often invited for a cup of coffee to people's homes, at cafés, shops or open air markets. From all these photographs, I chose portraits for the first part of my analysis. For that purpose, I classified them into three groups[3] – photographs in the first category were taken with no interaction with the people photographed, those in the second category were taken only after some interaction had been established, and those in the third were taken with no interaction, but the act of photographing itself led to further interaction. Regarding the photographs in the first category, we may generally say that 1. people usually didn't notice that the pictures were being taken; 2. the pictures were taken from a distance; 3. people usually didn't look at the camera; 4. the photos may have been taken at public events, celebrations, markets, etc., where a crowd of people gave the photographer a sense of anonymity (Figures 1 and 2)

On the other hand, pictures of the second group can be said to have been taken after some sort of interaction with people had been established. It might have only been a few minutes' chat, or sometimes an invitation for a coffee or to visit the person's home. In any case, more time was spent together. The people photographed in this category also include acquaintances and friends. Regarding these pictures, we can say the following: 1. we usually asked for permission to take a picture, so the person knew that the picture would be taken and posed for the camera; 2. people usually looked at the camera; 3. the picture was delivered to the person photographed by post or personally; 4. in the case of acquaintances, the pictures were taken in private places (e.g. at a wedding or at home) which we would not have been able to enter had we been strangers; 5. there is a story behind each photograph (Figures 3 and 4).

Since people usually enjoyed being photographed and having a chat, taking pictures often led to conversation, an invitation for a coffee and requests that we take more pictures. Furthermore, the subjects often took

_____

[3] Due to restricted space, I have randomly chosen only a couple of pictures, which I cannot claim to be representative; however, they do give a sense of various modes of pictures and interactions.

Figure 1: On the day of Ilinden Celebration in Kruševo
(photo by Barbara Turk Niskač, August 2006)

Figure 2: Picture taken at an old "čaršija" in Skopje
(photo by Barbara Turk Niskač, September 2006)

Figure 3: The elderly woman was sitting in front of her house in Berovo and invited us in for a cup of coffee (photo by Barbara Turk Niskač, June 2006)

Figure 4: Barely visible from the street, the shop where "kora"[4] is made and sold, Gostivar (photo by Barbara Turk Niskač, November 2006)

---

[4] Phyllo dough used for local foods such as *burek* and *baklava*.

Figure 5: Roma community in Strumica before elections – a photo taken "anonymously" prior to conversation (photo by Barbara Turk Niskač, July 2006)

Figure 6: Roma community in Strumica before elections – photo taken after conversation, which led to more pictures being taken (photo by Barbara Turk Niskač, July 2006)

initiative as to what, who and/or how to photograph. The pictures in the third group acted as icebreakers, making it easier to approach people, and led to further interaction (Figures 5 and 6).

So far, I have analysed the pictures based on the relationships established between the photographer and the photographed. However, there is another option: giving the camera to the subjects themselves and letting them take pictures of whatever they like. Sarah Pink argues that it is important to learn "how local people use photography, art, drawing, video and other (audio)visual media to represent the private and public narratives and contexts of their lives" (2009:114). I would thus like to continue by presenting the photos taken by local youth, which were taken at the workshops mentioned above. Several groups of primary school children, secondary school students and university students were formed. After a short introduction to photography, they met at several unstructured workshops, walking around town and taking pictures. Trips to the nearby villages, as well as to Tetovo and Skopje were also organized. The workshops' aim was to provide the young Macedonians, Albanians, Turks and Roma of Gostivar with an alternative way of spending their free time, and to give them a chance to interact. At the workshops' conclusion, a photo exhibition was organized at the local cultural centre, an occasion that was attended by inhabitants of all ethnic origins.

The young people of Gostivar took many pictures, covering a broad spectrum of subjects. However, for this presentation I have only selected two photographs that feature people. The pictures could be interpreted as an insider's view. At this point, I would only like to emphasize the value of these pictures as an alternative view to my own, since unfortunately I did not discuss them with their authors at the time they were taken (Figures 7 and 8)[5]:

---

[5] Both authors were asked by email for permission to publish their photos – a gesture they found unusual and even amusing. They were also asked to provide titles for their photographs, but none of them did.

Figure 7: Photo taken during workshops (photo by Bobi Poposki, November 2006)

Figure 8: Photo taken during workshops (photo by Dejan Krsteski, October 2006)

Every person of course has her/his own view of the world, and even if everyone took pictures of the same object, the pictures would differ. What attracts our attention and makes us want to take a picture, what we find interesting, what we find deserving of being photographed, what we actually see – these aspects are all very subjective and personal. As Sontag points out, photographs are evidence not only of what there is but of what an individual sees, not just a record but an evaluation of the world (1977:88). Regarding the decision as to what to photograph, we may also call attention to Bourdieu's definition of taste: taste is an acquired disposition to differentiate and appreciate. It functions as a sort of social orientation, a sense of one's place, guiding the occupants of a given place in social space (1994:466–467). Furthermore, we may also presuppose interdependency between perception and meaning (MacDougall 2006).

In the following section, I would like to relate the experience of taking pictures described above to the ethnographic fieldwork I did in Gostivar. Pink points out that a definition of a researcher's intentions as purely ethnographic is problematic (2005:55) and that it is difficult to draw a line between research and personal photographs. In our case, however, we find a sharp distinction between pictures taken for the purpose of research and pictures taken for their artistic or personal value. The latter were taken with the intention of using it as a subject of research, and the former were taken with an artistic intention combined with a tourist's need to take some of the memories back home.[6] The former showed mostly empty or scarcely occupied public spaces, while the most common subjects of the latter were people and details of architecture (Figure 9 and 10).

In the context of conducting ethnographic fieldwork for a longer period of time, the experience might lead to processes of embodiment, which contribute to the understanding of local values, patterns of behaviour, movement and feeling (Dewalt and Dewalt 2000:265). Through embodiment, the researcher learns and knows through her or his whole experiencing body (Pink 2009:25). Pink however suggests that the emergent paradigm of emplacement as the sensory interrelationship of body, mind and environment supersedes that of embodiment (ibid.),

---

[6] Upon our return to Ljubljana, the former were presented in my BA thesis, as part of a university lecture, at a conference, and in a couple of articles. The latter were presented in a number of photo exhibitions in Ljubljana, Vienna and Oslo.

Figure 9: Popular Macedonian coffee place – taken for research purposes
(photo by Barbara Turk Niskač, January 2007)

Figure 10: Albanian streets – taken for research purposes
(photo by Barbara Turk Niskač, January 2007)

and furthermore that sensory ethnography itself entails a form of learning about other people's emplacement and experiences through participation in specific practices and environments (2009:85). To return to the experience of research in Gostivar – even though it was focused on youth, young people rarely appear in the photographs taken for research purposes. Furthermore, I took pictures of public spaces such as coffee places and streets, which were usually very vivid and full of people – but look empty and deserted at my pictures. Perhaps because the pictures were taken in the winter, while public spaces are obviously more vivid in summertime. However, I have come to realise that most of the pictures I took for my research were shot early in the morning, when I knew there would be very few people out in the streets or in coffee places. During my research, I had become acquainted with the division of public spaces between Macedonian and Albanian youth, and with the fact that you could not escape public scrutiny no matter where you went. Relationships between men and women, as well as between Albanians and Macedonians, were constantly under the surveillance of social control and subject to gossip. Being a young woman and having become acquainted with the rules of behaviour of the local youngsters, I started to behave in accordance with my understanding of these local codes of behaviour. Considering sensory experience from the starting point of the self-reflexive and experiencing body from an ethnographical perspective, the priority is "the use of the ethnographer's own sensorial experiences as a means of apprehending and comprehending other people's experiences, ways of knowing and sensory categories, meanings and practices" (Pink 2009:46). Kathryn Linn Geurts argues that "sensing as 'bodily ways of gathering information' is profoundly involved with a society's epistemology, the development of its cultural identity and its forms of being-in-the-world" (2002:3). Furthermore, in Gostivar I felt uncomfortable with sitting with our neighbour's barber for a cup of tea when I was alone (while on the other hand, I frequently enjoyed tea at the barber together with my husband),[7]

---

[7] I believe this to had been connected to the respect for and obligation to the barber and two of his sons who worked there. I would not have wanted to be the cause of any gossip involving them. On the other hand, and interestingly enough, at the age of 19, I had no problem sitting surrounded by local men drinking tea during my visit to Eastern Turkey, without even a passing thought as to what it would mean in the context of local patterns and rules of behaviour.

as well as with entering a coffee place and starting to take pictures. It was simply something no one did. Before I realised, I had started to behave according to the local unspoken code of what was appropriate and expected of a young woman and what not, as well as of what/whom to take pictures of and of what/whom not to. I find this particularly interesting compared to the experience of taking pictures for purposes other than research – as we have seen above, people were generally eager to chat and be photographed, and the camera itself often served to initiate a conversation. It is here, however, that the above mentioned photographs taken by the local youth (most of my interlocutors also participated in the photo workshops) accrue their added value as an "insider's" or alternative point of view, although I did not realize the option and potential of collaborative techniques at that time. The workshops were organized in small groups, and, as it turned out, there was a clear difference between the acts of photography of an individual and those of a group in Gostivar – with the group representing a "safeguard". During my above mentioned research and the writing of my thesis, I did not seriously integrate the visual methods. It is only since then that the pictures have led me to reflect more closely on and understand my own experience of fieldwork. To sum up, it seems that the act of taking pictures itself and the decisions as to when to take them or not are deeply intertwined with processes of embodiment and sensing as "bodily ways of gathering information" (Geurts 2002:3). In this respect, I find it useful to think of the experiences of taking pictures mentioned above with the ideas of cultural phenomenology which "focuses on how embodied experience, thought, feeling, and psychological orientations all interrelate" (Geurts 2002:15).

INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

The world is becoming more and more interdisciplinary, making it increasingly difficult to draw boundaries between approaches and the use of techniques and methods across disciplines. In both anthropology as a field and in photography as an artistic practice, the meaning is never fixed, but shifts with "context, usage and historical circumstances" (Hall 1997:9). We should not be afraid of using visual or any other alternative methods in our research, or of blurring boundaries between academic disciplines and art. Just as a work of art has meaning and interest only

for someone who possesses the cultural competence, i.e. the code with which it is encoded (Bourdieu 1994), academic conclusions are often only disclosed and available to a certain elite. Both art and science are supposed to help us understand the being of others in the world and thus contribute to knowledge and understanding (MacDougall 2006:1; O'Neill 2008). As we have seen, photography - not necessarily as an ethnographic practice, but one which can be understood as ethnographic or artistic in various contexts - may help us towards a better understanding of the contexts of ethnographic embodied experience. Speaking of the convergence of arts practices and academic disciplines, I recall a story written by Hermann Hesse in 1918 (2003) about the European who did not possess any practical knowledge or have any gift to share except his intellect. He was full of suggestions for others and theories of how things could be done better, but when asked to show some of his skills or knowledge, he always talked his way out of his predicament by saying that the work of the intellect cannot be demonstrated like an art or craft. Out of a belief that it is right to give something back to research participants, I would argue that visual material offers a much wider set of options of presentation of our work and may be of better interest to participants than scientific articles and books. All in all, the flow between the researcher and research participant may include "the exchange of images, of ideas, emotional and practical exchanges and support, each of which are valued in different ways" (Pink 2005:45). Thus by introducing visual, collaborative and participatory approaches into anthropological research or interdisciplinary approaches, the results of our work might become more approachable to a wider audience and to the research participants themselves.

REFERENCES

BOURDIEU, Pierre. 1994. *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste*. Oxford: Polity Press.

CHALFEN, Richard M. 1987. *Snapshot versions of life*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press.

CHALFEN, Richard M. 1991. *Turning Leaves: The Photograph Collections of Two Japanese American Families*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

CLIFFORD, James. 1986. "Introduction: Partial Truths". In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography,* eds. James Clifford and George E. Marcus. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1–26.

COLLIER, John and Malcolm COLLIER. 1986. *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

DELL CLARK, Cindy. 2004. "Visual Metaphor as Method in Interviews with Children". *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, vol. 14 (2):171–185.

DEWALT, Kathleen M. and Billie R. DEWALT. 2000. "Participant Observation". In *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology,* ed. Russell Bernard. Lanham: Altamira Press, 259–300.

EDWARDS, Elizabeth. 1996. "Introduction". In *Anthropology and Photography 1860 – 1920*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards. New Haven – London: Yale University Press, 3–17.

EL GUINDI, Fadwa. 2000. "From Pictorializing to Visual Anthropology". In *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology,* ed. Russell Bernard. Lanham: Altamira Press, 459–512.

ERIKSEN, Thomas Hylland. 2001. *Small places, large issues: An introduction to social and cultural anthropology.* London – Chicago: Pluto Press.

EWALD, Wendy. 1985. *Portraits and Dreams: Photographs and Stories by Children of the Appalachia.* London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative Society.

EWALD, Wendy. 2000. *Secret Games: Collaborative Works With Children, 1969-99.* Zurich: Scalo.

FARIS, James C. 1996. "A Political Primer on Anthropology/Photography". In *Anthropology and Photography 1860 – 1920*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards. New Haven – London: Yale University Press, 253–263.

FLEWITT, Rosie. 2006. "Using video to investigate preschool classroom interaction: education research assumptions and methodological practices". *Visual Communication*, vol. 5 (1):25–50.

GAČNIK, Aleš and Stanka GAČNIK. 1994. "Fotografija kot totalna informacija in vir znanja". *Glasnik slovenskega etnološkega društva,* vol. 3:34–35.

GELL, Alfred. 1998. *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

GEURTS, Kathryn Linn. 2002. *Culture and the Senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

HALL, Stuart, ed. 1997. "Introduction". In *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* London: Sage, 1–11.

HARPER, Douglas. 1987. "The Visual Ethnographic Narrative". *Visual Anthropology*, vol. 1(1):1–19.

HARPER, Douglas. 1998. "On the authority of the image: visual methods at the crossroads". In *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials,* eds. Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln. London: SAGE, 185–204.

HERZFELD, Michael. 2007. "Senses". In *Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader*, eds. Jeffrey A. Sluka and Antonius C. G. M. Robben. Malden – Oxford – Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 431–441.

HESSE, Hermann. 2003. *Rozprávky*. Bratislava: Svornost.

HUBBARD, Jim. 1994. *Shooting Back from the Reservation: A Photographic View of Life by Native American Youth.* New York: The New Press.

HUBBARD, Phil, Sarah PINK, Maggie O'NEILL and Alan RADLEY. 2010. "Walking across disciplines; from ethnography to arts practice". *Visual Studies,* vol. 25(1):1–7.

HUDELJA, Mihaela. 1996. "Teoretične (pred)postavke o fotografiji in njena aplikativnost v etnološki vedi". *Glasnik Slovenskega etnološkega društva,* vol. 36(2-3):14–16.

JAMES, Allison. 2007. "Giving Voice to Children's Voices: Practices and Problems, Pitfalls and Potentials". *American Anthropologist*, vol. 109(2):261–272.

KRESS, Gunther and Theo VAN LEEUWEN. 2001. *Multimodal discourse: the modes and media.* London: Arnold.

KRIŽNAR, Naško. 1996. *Vizualne raziskave v etnologiji*. Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU.

LITERACY THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY BLOG. http://literacythroughphotography.wordpress.com/wendy-ewald/ (Accessed February 5, 2011).

LARSON, Heidi. 1988. "Photography that listens". *Visual Anthropology*, vol. 1(4):415–432.

MACDOUGALL, David. 2006. *The Corporeal Image: Film, Ethnography, and the Senses.* Princeton – Oxford: Princeton University Press.

MITCHELL, Claudia and Jacqueline REID-WALSH. 2002. *Researching Children's Popular Culture: The Cultural Spaces of Childhood*. London – New York: Routledge.

MOLIČNIK, Vesna. 1998. *Analiza konstrukcije realnosti s pomočjo vizualne produkcije.* Neobjavljeno diplomsko delo. Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta. Oddelek za etnologijo in kulturno antropologijo.

MOLIČNIK, Vesna. 2001. "Fotografije na osebnih straneh kot možen vir antropološkega raziskovanja". *Traditiones*, vol. 30(1):313–324.

MOLIČNIK, Vesna. 2003. "Antropologija in vizualno – simbolni prostor kulture". *Glasnik slovenskega etnološkega društva,* vol. 43(3-4):6–11.

MORROW, Virginia. 2001. "Using qualitative methods to elicit young people's perspectives on their environments: Some ideas for community health initiatives". *Health Education Research: Theory & Practice*, vol. 16(3):255–268.

ORELLANA, Marjorie. 1999. "Space and place in an urban landscape: Learning from children's views of their social worlds". *Visual Sociology*, vol. 14:73–89.

O'NEILL, Maggie and Phil HUBBARD. 2010. "Walking, sensing, belonging: ethno-mimesis as performative praxis". *Visual Studies,* vol. 25(1):46–58.

PAHL, Kate. 2006. "An inventory of traces: children's photographs of their toys in three London homes". *Visual Communication*, vol. 5(95):95–114.

PINK, Sarah. 1999. "A woman, a camera and the world of bullfighting: visual culture, experience and the production of anthropological knowledge". *Visual Anthropology,* vol. 13(1):71–86.

PINK, Sarah. 2005. *Doing Visual Ethnography.* London: Sage.

PINK, Sarah. 2009. *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. London: Sage.

PINNEY, Christopher. 1996. "The Parallel Histories of Anthropology and Photography". In *Anthropology and Photography 1860 – 1920*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards. New Haven – London: Yale University Press, 74–95.

RADLEY, Alan, et al. 2010. "From means to occasion: walking in the life of homeless people". *Visual Studies,* vol. 25(1):36–45.

SONTAG, Susan. 1977. *On Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

STOLLER, Paul. 1997. *Sensuous Scholarship (Contemporary Ethnography).* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

TOBIASSEN, Anna Helene. 1990 "Private photographic collections as an ethnological source". *Ethnologia Europea*, vol. 20(1):81–94.

TURK, Barbara. 2008. "Kaos in kozmos na ulicah Gostivarja, v Makedoniji". *Glasnik slovenskega etnološkega društva*, vol. 48(1-2):13–23.

TURK, Barbara. 2009. "Chaos and cosmos on the streets of Gostivar". *Nota Bene: Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, vol. 2:4–15. http://kulup.sabanciuniv. edu/~notabene/pdf/pdf_1257029662.pdf (Accessed January 5, 2011).

Barbara Turk Niskač

NEKA RAZMIŠLJANJA O ETNOGRAFSKOM TERENU I FOTOGRAFIJI

Polazeći od postojećih dokumentiranih paralela između etnografskog terena i fotografije, u članku se raspravlja o dilemama povezanim s odnosom između etnografa i sudionika istraživanja. Članak propituje kako se ideje osjetilne etnografije i umjetničkih praksi, kao i refleksivni pristup vizualnoj antropologiji, posebice kolaborativne i sudjelujuće metode, mogu pokazati korisnima u nadilaženju granica između istraživača i sudionika istraživanja. Nadalje, iskustvo snimanja fotografija može nam pomoći u boljem razumijevanju etnografskog terena. U tu svrhu članak nudi analizu određenog broja fotografija.

Ključne riječi: fotografija, osjetilna etnografija, vizualna antropologija