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NOT ALONE: DOING FIELDWORK IN THE COMPANY OF FAMILY MEMBERS

ABSTRACT

Reflecting on three case studies, this article provides an empirically grounded discussion of the challenges and opportunities that arise from doing fieldwork in the company of one's children and spouse. The article highlights that during fieldwork, one's private and professional lives are intermingled and the knowledge that one gains is always situated in particular ways. In this article, three female anthropologists elaborate on how they juggle multiple identity positions during fieldwork and how those negotiations and the presence and actions of accompanying family members affect the research material. Children and spouses may be useful during fieldwork but they may also disturb it or take it in unexpected directions. Acknowledging that fieldwork is part of life and that our everyday lives affect the fieldwork process is not a positive or negative thing per se; it is a part of the dynamics that can produce fruitful moments of serendipity.

Keywords: accompanied fieldwork, ethnography, children, professional identity, private, collaboration, knowledge production

INTRODUCTION[1]

When one listens to colleagues' accounts of their anthropological work, and reads carefully through the prefaces of ethnographies, it becomes clear that fieldwork is often carried out in the presence of the fieldworkers' family members, especially their children and/or spouses. Usually, however, the fact that the ethnographer did not conduct the fieldwork alone but in the company of their family members is mentioned, if at all, only in passing in the acknowledgements page (Jones 2012: 113; Cornet and Blumenfield 2016a: 1). Since the reflexive turn in anthropology in the 1980s (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Marcus and Fischer 1986), it has become a norm to elaborate on who conducted the ethnographic study and under which conditions. However, spouses and children are usually missing from these accounts and it is, in fact, rather surprising that fieldworkers are often presented as sole actors while 'the others' they study are presented as social beings whose identities and practices are defined by their social relations.

The objective of this article is to challenge the image of the solitary fieldworker by examining the experience of the three female authors, who all received their education as anthropologists in Finnish universities and carried out fieldwork in the presence of their dependants. In this vein, we hope to contribute to recent efforts to conceptualise the making of ethnographies as a collaborative project (Gupta

2014). In particular, we are eager to scrutinise in this article what impact a fieldworker's spouse and/or children may have on the process of data gathering and knowledge production. This way we seek to elaborate on the situated knowledge (Haraway 1991) we gain from the field as mothers and wives.

Lisa Breglia (2009) has reflected on ethnographic labour, describing how archaeologists assumed her ethnographic work to take place at limited times and spaces, after which she could summarise her findings on that particular day. Breglia aptly illustrates how conducting ethnography is a lot 'messier' task. In this article, we demonstrate that fieldwork becomes even more complex when one is accompanied by children and/or spouse. According to Breglia, ethnography is always experimental and the acquired knowledge is subjective, contingent and situated. If we agree that data is not out there to be found but is constructed in social interactions between the ethnographer and the research subjects (see Cupples and Kindon 2003: 4), it is important to consider how those accompanying the researcher affect the data-collection process and also the data itself. Fieldwork essentially means the forming of relationships between people in a variety of settings, involving participatory experience and embodied knowledge (Okely 1992: 2–3), and is made more complex when we acknowledge the role that those who accompany us during fieldwork play in the ethnographic research process. Hence, no part of the totalised fieldwork experience that informs the analysis and the writing process can be dismissed or trivialised as unscientific; any factor that influences the fieldwork process needs to be taken into account throughout the entire research process, which usually starts with the choice of a research topic and ends in the publication of a written ethnography.

As cultural anthropologist Alma Gottlieb points out (1995: 22–23), carrying out fieldwork with a spouse has long, although 'invisible', roots in the history of anthropology. From the end of the nineteenth century anthropological couples have conducted fieldwork together (e.g., Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson; Rosemary and Raymond Firth; John and Jean Comaroff), or wife and children would accompany a male anthropologist to a fieldwork site (e.g., Edith and Victor Turner and their children in the 1950s). Many wives not only took care of domestic life, but also provided scholarly labour and contributed immensely to their husband's careers (Handler 2004: 3).

So far few scholars, and those mainly female, have seen the need to reflect in more detail on the impact that family members have on the making and shaping of ethnographies, as well as on the ways in which fieldwork influences the life of the fieldworker's family (Butler and Turner 1987; Cassell 1987; Schrijvers 1993; Flinn et al. 1998; Starrs et al. 2001; Frohlick 2002; Cupples and Kindon 2003; Levey 2009; Jones 2012; Cornet 2013; Lunn and Moscuzza 2014; Cornet and Blumenfield 2016b). In this article, we set out to contribute to this body of literature by providing an empirically grounded discussion of the challenges and opportunities that arise from doing accompanied fieldwork. 'Accompanied fieldwork' is defined in this article as the kind of data-gathering process that fieldworkers carry out while their children and/or spouses are present in what the researchers conceptualise as the field. Our aim is to explore the implications that emerge from carrying out fieldwork in the company of children aged between two and six, and in the company of a spouse. To go beyond merely listing the pros and cons of doing accompanied fieldwork, we explore our experiences in the light of current

methodological discussions on the diversity of ethnographic fieldwork procedures. In doing so, we wish to contribute to efforts that seek to produce a more nuanced understanding of the modes whereby, and the conditions in which, contemporary fieldwork can be carried out and ethnographic knowledge is produced. In this article, three anthropologists describe and analyse accompanied fieldwork in Finland, the USA, Cameroon and India, elaborating on the knowledge production in our field situations. The themes examined raise a number of issues: first of all, how one's children direct one's actions in the field; secondly, how the researcher's private and professional lives merge; and, thirdly, how one's family needs to adjust to the fieldwork situation. Finally, we elaborate on how accompanying family members do not merely follow the researcher to the field but play a significant role in the knowledge production process.

'WHERE IS YOUR DAUGHTER?' (LAURA HIRVI)

The fact that a fieldworker has children influences the making of an ethnography at different stages. In my case, it had already started to have an impact when it came to the choice of the research topic for my dissertation. Initially, I had been interested in conducting research in India, where I had lived for eight months during my undergraduate studies. But now I had a young child, and I did not dare take her there for a long period of time. As a mother, I was like other ethnographers who are parents (see, e.g., Butler and Turner 1987: 13; Flinn 1998: 2; Jones 2012: 119; Cornet 2013: 84), concerned about her health and well-being,[2] and thus preferred the option of studying Sikhs living in Finland and California rather than in India. In this context, one could of course ask why I wanted to carry out fieldwork in the company of my daughter. I could have just left her at home with her father, could I not? While this is not always a feasible option for fieldworkers who happen to be parents (Jones 2012: 119), in my case the answer is yes, I could have left my daughter home, but instead I decided to take her along. Two main reasons motivated this decision. First, I thought it would be hard for both of us to be separated for a long period and, secondly, I feared the loneliness I would have to face. Besides these two rather egoistic reasons, the third motive for taking her along was grounded in my thinking that exposing children from a very young age to different cultures is an enlightening experience for them and broadens their minds (see also Whiteford and Whiteford 1987: 118; Flinn 1998: 13).

In my doctoral dissertation, I set out to explore how north Indian Sikh immigrants and their descendants living in Helsinki (Finland) and Yuba City (California) negotiate their identities (see Hirvi 2013). For this purpose, I carried out ethnographic fieldwork from spring 2008 to spring 2012. In Yuba City I gathered data for three months during the autumn of 2009 by carrying out interviews and participating in, amongst other events, the annual Sikh parade. After my stay in Yuba City had ended, I continued to follow from afar what happened in the field by reading news online, and by exchanging emails with some of the people I had interviewed. In Finland, my fieldwork consisted of repeated trips from my hometown of Jyväskylä to Helsinki, the capital city, during which I visited the *gurdwara* (Sikh temple), participated in social and cultural events, and met with Sikhs in their homes, their places of work and cafés in order to conduct interviews. In Finland, online tools considerably facilitated my access to the field (Hirvi 2012). The fieldwork stints in Finland usually lasted between one

and seven days. The research project's entire data-gathering process stretched over a period of about four years. During the fieldwork, I was eager to establish a relationship of trust with the people whose lifeworlds I wanted to explore. To achieve this goal, I thought it might be helpful to highlight the fact that I had a child, because I assumed, like Aparna Rayaprol (1997: 56) in her ethnographic study of women in the Indian diaspora, that motherhood would enhance my acceptance in the community. For this purpose, I mentioned my daughter in conversations with Sikhs I met, for example at the *gurdwara*. At times I took my daughter along to the *gurdwara* or when visiting a Sikh family in their home. Soon, people who had met her would ask me, 'Where is your daughter?', and it seemed that simply by 'being there' she had helped me to establish an identity as a mother (see Levey 2009: 313). Being a mother made me fit into the cultural expectations of Sikhs concerning what a woman my age should do. The fact that I brought my daughter along to the temple was greatly welcomed, especially by the elderly Sikhs, and it seemed to turn me into a 'good mother'. I also got this kind of feedback after my daughter had learned how to perform the religious practices in the temple. I did not force her to do so, but she imitated me and thus learned how to kneel in front of the Sikhs' holy book, for example. Thus she helped me to gain respect in the Sikh community. At the same time, her presence also made me more vulnerable, such as when she threw a tantrum or got sick in the car of one of my informants. At such moments I had to carry out my maternal tasks in front my interlocutors, and I had the feeling that suddenly I was the one who was being studied. The professional 'I' had been put to rest in the moments I dealt with my screaming daughter, allowing the people whom I studied to see me in a very normal mother-child situation.

My daughter was two years old when she travelled with me in autumn 2009 across the Atlantic to Yuba City, California, where I conducted fieldwork for three months. In contrast to Finland, where I could rely on relatives' and friends' help with childcare, I felt that my daughter was much more present in my fieldwork amongst Sikhs in Yuba City. When not in the day-care centre, she spent all her time in my company and, as I initially perceived it, this often restricted my ability to collect data. For example, I had to schedule interviews on weekdays during the daytime in order to avoid my daughter's presence, which would have been distracting for me and perhaps for the interviewees as well. But when I wanted to take part in events that took place in the evenings or at weekends, I had to take my daughter along and, as a consequence, my Sunday visits to the *gurdwara* were often guided by her wishes. When we were at the temple for the first time, we ended up strolling around the whole complex, starting in the prayer hall, then going to the *langar* hall[3] and eventually stopping in the parking lot, where she started playing with the soil in a flowerbed. I remember that while I was watching her, I was pondering in despair how I could do fieldwork while taking care of an active two-year-old. But before I was able to get absorbed by my concerns, a Sikh man passed by and I took the opportunity to ask him about the Sikh pre-school next to which we were standing. Our conversation started from there, and I told him about my research. When the rest of his family came out of the *gurdwara*, he asked us to accompany them to another temple nearby. I agreed, as this offered me a unique chance to observe and take part in a Sikh family's regular Sunday *gurdwara* visit.

Without my daughter, I would not have been standing in that particular spot at that very moment, as there would have been no good

reason for me to linger in the parking lot all by myself. A lesser example took place a couple of weeks later when I had been invited to attend a meeting of American Sikhs as the guest of honor. It took place in a private home, and as a guest of honor I was expected to attend the whole meeting. It would have been impolite to leave before the end but my daughter was not willing to sit still with me for two hours, and neither was she willing to be taken care of by one of the ladies who offered to help out. Consequently, I had to get up and walk around with her. Thus, I ended up first in the kitchen, where the women were having a more informal meeting on their own and eventually we found ourselves in a room upstairs where the teenagers were playing computer games, and where the family of the house kept a space for their religious practices. The insights and discussions that arose during this little excursion to the house gave me a better and much wider understanding of what happens at such regular Sikh American meetings. It also gave me a chance to explore the house of the family and to talk to the teenagers without their parents being present and commenting on everything they said. Thus, my daughter enabled me to be where I was, thereby influencing the field I ultimately chose for analysis.

Whenever she was with me, she forced me, as her mother, to follow her wherever she went. In this way, my daughter often had an impact on whom I spoke to, which events I was able to attend, and how the encounter with the interlocutor took place. In this way, she made decisions that traced an invisible path for me to follow, along which I ran into people and came across places that were influential in shaping my field of focus.

While the fact that my daughter accompanied me during fieldwork introduced challenges to, and placed limits on, the way in which I was able to approach the group I was researching and to collect my data, she also helped to open some doors that otherwise would have stayed locked. In some situations, she provided me with 'permission' to walk around in temples and in the houses we were invited to. In addition, my daughter was also able to offer me new and different perspectives on the people, events and places I was studying, and thus also had an impact on the knowledge production process. It was through her, for example, that I began to realise that in contrast to Yuba City, where the Punjabi culture and Sikh traditions are much more visible and tangible due to the fact that Sikhs represent a large percentage of the town's population, in the case of Sikhs in Finland the process of transmitting religious and cultural traditions to the next generation depended much more on Sikh cultural and religious sites (see Hirvi 2013: 137). My daughter made me sensitive to this through the ways in which she reacted to her environment. While moving with me through Yuba City, she would exclaim every time she saw a *Khanda*[4] sign in a car's back window, or a person wearing a turban[5] or *Salwar Kamiz*:[6] 'Mum, temple, temple!' In Helsinki, she made no such remarks, because the chances of running by coincidence into 'something Punjabi / Sikh' are rather slim, due to the small number of Sikhs in town and their wider geographical dispersion.

Looking back, I feel I could have been much more sensitive to the role that my daughter played in the making of the ethnography and to the insights she had to offer. I was not fully willing to embrace the possibilities and opportunities that arose out of her presence in the field. I now realise that I did not grant her the role of an active agent in helping to form the field of which she was

inevitably a part. Was I afraid that by paying too much attention to the impact that my daughter had on the shaping of the ethnography I would run the risk of undermining my credibility and authority as an ethnographer? If so, what does this reveal about my perceptions of the role and identity of a fieldworker? Carrying out fieldwork in the company of a child obviously did not fit the image of the professional fieldworker that I cherished in my thoughts. This also means that in the ethnography I finally wrote, my daughter does not feature—as if she were not part of the field—and one may justifiably ask when reading the text: 'Where is your daughter? Did she not accompany you on many of your fieldwork trips?' In hindsight, I think that because I swept the presence of my daughter under the carpet in order to lay claim to a professional identity, I missed the chance to explore more fully some valuable alternative paths in both my fieldwork and the ethnographic analysis of my collected data. In my moments of frustration, I should have understood that letting go and simply following my daughter's stream of action would eventually result in valuable moments of serendipity and the chance to encounter the unexpected and unplanned. Thus, I suggest that instead of boycotting the impact that accompanying children may have on the fieldwork process, one should embrace the opportunities and insights that can emerge from collaborating with them. Further, it can be concluded that children are not merely accompanying their researcher parents but play a crucial role in the process of knowledge production which is based on interactions in the field.

THE MERGING OF PROFESSIONAL AND PRIVATE LIVES (SANNA TAWAH)

It is 2012 and I and my four-year-old son are traveling in a local yellow taxi, squeezed with four other people into the backseat of the vehicle. The taxi gets stuck in the traffic; it is hot and the air is filled with car fumes and we are inconveniently jammed on a road close-by to a very busy open-air market. It seems we have a long wait before the traffic clears away. My son recognises the familiar features of a market: people carrying food products in big baskets or pushing around carts loaded with agricultural products; traders, buyers and sellers crammed along the narrow lines between selling tables and small market sheds. Although my son is only four years old, he has already witnessed many different types of Cameroonian market place and his initial reaction in the taxi is to yell: 'No, no to the market! No market again! I don't want to go to the market! Mom, don't take me there!'

My ongoing PhD research seeks to examine in an ethnographic manner the informal market trade, market traders' livelihoods and how the traders use mobile phones in their market trade activities. Most of the fieldwork material comes from Bamenda town, which is located in the Northwest region of Cameroon, and from bushmarkets (various village markets) around Bamenda. During 2011 and 2012, I spent six months (two separate three-month periods) conducting fieldwork in Cameroon. In 2013, I returned to Bamenda for another month. Cameroon was a somewhat familiar place to me prior to starting fieldwork there, because my spouse is Cameroonian and we had visited the country earlier.

During the fieldwork periods in 2011 and 2012, I was accompanied and assisted by a female research assistant, whom I refer to here as 'Bih'. She was a university graduate in English philology and literature, and was originally from Bamenda, where she had engaged in part-time *buyam-sellam*[7] trade in her youth. Since she was a member of my extended Cameroonian family, I initially gained access to the market traders' daily lives through her, and through the networks and contacts of my mother-in-law, an older woman who at the time of my research was a practising *buyam-sellam* in Bamenda. My son, who was three years old during my 2011 fieldwork trip and four years in 2012, accompanied me to Cameroon while his father stayed in Finland.

Despite having family ties in Cameroon, I encountered the many challenges that any researcher 'with white skin' might face there. My spouse visited us only a few times during our stay. Consequently, I conducted my fieldwork as a 'single parent', albeit surrounded by my husband's extended family and numerous other relatives. My family ties in Cameroon and my position in the family (being married to the family's only son, and therefore 'heir') gave me remarkable insights into Cameroonian family life and values, but they also presented a number of challenges which I will address in this section.

The presence of one's family and children in a fieldwork site has an impact on how the researcher and her status are perceived. Anthropologist Carol Stack (1997) was a single mother who conducted fieldwork in an urban setting in the US, working and living mainly with black mothers. She was able to describe the systems of fictive kinships and child-exchange in her research mainly because of the presence of her son and her status as single mother. She writes about how the presence of her one-year-old son, whom she allowed to be housed by other mothers, helped her to transcend racial and class boundaries. My experience in Cameroon was somewhat similar. The presence of my son helped me to create closer connection with other mothers and share our experiences of parenting. In addition, the fact that my son's father is Cameroonian made other mothers call him 'our child'.

Because of my research, we spent a considerable amount of time at a number of different markets, and my son often accompanied me. Female market traders were always keen to approach my son, wanting to greet him and calling him a '*whiteman pikin*' (a 'whiteman child' or a 'whiteman baby'). Although my son was familiar and relaxed with family members from my husband's side that he had come to know more closely, he became clearly irritated when other people forcefully wanted to hold him and talk to him, and when strangers invaded his personal space without permission. He created a lot of curiosity in the market places where we went. After some initial experiences in the marketplaces (with some market traders wanting to pinch his cheeks, hold him or carry him), my son completely 'shut down' and even more stubbornly refused to greet people, even some elderly members of the extended family. The situation got worse when they in turn got more agitated and wanted to force him to greet them. Thus the child's totally normal reaction to a new situation and strange people was perceived as 'bad manners' and it sometimes caused strife between me and my extended family: the child was considered to be part of the family and should not have displayed tantrums and stubborn behaviour in public places. Elderly people are highly respected in Cameroonian society and children are brought up to behave respectfully and not to cause disturbance in front of their elders. Rather, it is generally expected that children should remain

quiet until something is asked from them. My parenting skills were criticised because of my son's unwillingness to follow these unspoken rules and I was blamed for not having brought the child up according to expectation. Some extended family members considered that the child's refusal to be greeted and carried by elderly relatives, some of whom he had just met for the first time, displayed a lack of respect.

My research assistant Bih, with whom I developed a close working relationship despite some of our personal differences, had the time and energy to educate me on Cameroonian *kontrifashion* (the culturally accepted way of doing things in Cameroon). I was criticised for going to town or to the markets during the daytime with a 'dirty child' (because I bathed him only in the evenings). I was criticised for dressing him in the wrong type of clothes when we went to town (smart dress in public places was a necessity). I was also criticised for not raising him in 'a correct Christian way', as we did not go to church every Sunday. Bih often felt very embarrassed by the child's refusal to greet elderly relatives and random people in the markets. She advised me to do something, explaining: 'It's not good, the way he can embarrass people [by rejecting them], it is not right.' Other researchers have reported similar experiences (e.g. Jones 2012: 127). For example Julie Cupples (2003: 214) mentions that during her fieldwork with her children in Nicaragua, people commented on her mothering practices and criticised her for allowing her children to have messy hair or to walk barefoot indoors, or for allowing children to bathe in cold water as Blumenfield (2016) mentions.

Gender roles have implications for a researcher's position, but one's cultural background and 'colour' also create assumptions and expectations about who you are and affect how others perceive you. As a 'whitemanwoman' I was an object of general curiosity wherever we went, but the presence of the child made us an object of even more interest. I believe that as a white mother and wife my experience was totally different from that which a white male researcher might have encountered. As a woman, I was expected to be nurturing and caring and less professional (as a researcher), especially among my extended family. Taking my son along to the marketplaces (which were also my workplace) was, however, seen as natural, because many female market sellers had babies and small children with them who were not old enough to be in school. As I interviewed some family friends and acquaintances, I felt that they saw me first and foremost as a 'wife' connected to a certain family, and not as a researcher. I realised how my professional and private identities would get mixed together, due to the fact that I was married to a Cameroonian man. When I met with and interviewed people outside my family network, I claimed the position of a researcher, but many of the people I talked to considered me as 'being their wife' (being married to a Cameroonian), when they found out about my family context in Cameroon. My role as a wife, my position as a family member and as a mother of 'their child' had both advantages and disadvantages. Often the interview atmosphere became more relaxed when my connection to Cameroon was revealed, but it also created curiosity about whose family and lineage my son and I belonged to. Who were my in-laws? In which area were they living and what was their ethnic group? I felt that being entangled in such a web of social relationships and the clash of expectations regarding my son's upbringing made it harder for me to claim the role of a 'professional fieldworker'. Although I was a family member through marriage, I was still a foreigner and an outsider, and therefore an easy target for criticism. Inside the family

my role as a researcher diminished, and I was expected to take on the role of the 'wife'. Extended family members did not like my asking many questions; I was supposed to pay attention to how Cameroonian women, wives and mothers behaved and to act accordingly. Outside the family, I tried to claim the identity of a researcher, but due to the presence of my son, my family connection to Cameroon usually came to the fore. Yet the child's presence helped me to create a closer understanding with other women and other mothers outside my family circles; the female market traders related to me in a friendlier manner when I claimed the status of a mother and not just a researcher. On the other hand, it was more difficult to maintain my researcher position or professional status in the family setting. I was first and foremost a wife and a mother to my child in that context and, in addition to parenting, my everyday activities involved household-related tasks. These are not identities that can be kept separate from my researcher status, however. I openly spoke about my research to family members, at least to those who were interested in knowing about it. I grew close to the extended family, albeit closer to some members than others; some did not see any importance in my research, while others gave it much greater weight. In the process of being 'their wife' and also a researcher, I came to witness many family-related feuds, disagreements and reconciliations. I also came to understand more deeply the challenges related to market trade with which women and men struggle in their everyday lives.

So how are professional and private identities kept apart in this kind of fieldwork situation? Is this a possible or even desirable aim? Might we rather ask how the various roles can be utilised in different situations? Anthropologist David Zeitlyn (2005: 105) approached the pursuit of anthropology by describing it as a product of social interaction. According to Zeitlyn, anthropology lies at the heart of a social philosophy that highlights understanding and meaning as 'a collaborative product of social interaction'. Thus, the researcher needs to be 'socially understandable to others' in any social context. As Zeitlyn (ibid.) highlights, anthropology has conventionally concentrated on the pursuit of understanding others, but has often failed to analyse (or perhaps avoided analysing) how others see 'us'—in the present case, educated 'Western' researchers. To be accepted in a particular social setting, understanding needs to go both ways; there is no such a thing as a detached researcher investigating the cultural lives of others (Moore 1994: 114–115). We need to acknowledge the interpersonal, communicative nature of anthropological research—which often incorporates many different roles, such as mother, wife, family member and researcher—noting that perhaps the role we ourselves elevate to the highest level is not what the people in the fieldwork situation appreciate the most. Acknowledging the influence of our accompanying family members on the research process and our multiple roles in a fieldwork setting helps us to recognise the collaborative nature of cultural understanding.

GOING NATIVE... OR NOT? (MARI KORPELA)

> A child: My mother wants to know what your job is.
> Mari: Em… I am working in the university….
> Mari's daughter: Mom is studying children in Goa. The children tell her stories and then she writes books and sells them.

The above dialogue took place in the yard of my daughter's pre-school a few weeks after our family had returned to Finland from India, where we had been living for several months because of my fieldwork. It is a good illustration of how one's fieldwork has consequences outside of what we perceive as the field context and can affect the ethnographer's family members as well. My postdoctoral research focused on the three to twelve-year-old children of 'Western lifestyle migrants'[8] who repeatedly spend winters in the state of Goa on the western coast of India. I investigated how the children experience their transnationally mobile lives and the kind of cultural and social environment in which they grow up in Goa (see Korpela 2014; 2016). To this end, I carried out ten months of ethnographic fieldwork in three parts, during the winters of 2011, 2012 and 2013, accompanied by my spouse and our two children, who were 3–4 and 5–6 years old at the time.

Once we arrived in Goa, we easily became involved with the activities of lifestyle migrant families, as families with children tend to spend time together in Goa while childless adults are involved in other social circles. Having children definitely enabled me to participate easily in a variety of situations in which my presence as a childless woman might have looked awkward or to which I would not have been invited at all (for example when children visited each other's homes). The presence of my own children was obviously also a good excuse for me to watch children playing. At the same time, having children limited my fieldwork; there were times when I had to stay at home because they were sick or tired or simply wanted to do something different to what I wanted.

My family fitted into the lifestyle migrants' scene in Goa very well. My spouse is an Israeli, and since many families in Goa have multinational and multilingual backgrounds, we were the same in this regard. In addition, we had lived in India previously for long periods and eventually my spouse, who is an Indologist, began giving Hindi, history and Hebrew lessons to some lifestyle migrant children in Goa. It was an advantage that we fitted so well into the social circles of the lifestyle migrants in Goa—the entry to the field was easy—but, at the same time, my role as a researcher was not necessarily clear to those I was studying, as I appeared to be the same as everyone else there. I openly told everyone I met that I had come to Goa to do research but, in spite of that, I was usually considered a mother rather than a researcher. I kept thinking of all the texts I had read on research ethics, of how a key principle is that those being studied are fully aware of it (see for example Morrow and Richards 1996). I started to wonder whether I was a particularly bad and unethical researcher or whether the texts I had read had painted an unrealistic picture of ethnographic fieldwork. After all, in social interactions one can never be sure that everyone one encounters is aware of one's research work at all times.

When our departure was approaching, our friends in Goa found it impossible to understand and to accept that we would not be coming back. In their eyes, we had truly gone native—or, more precisely, we had always been native. This is, however, their interpretation; my spouse and I did not feel particularly native in the scene there. We had constant moral dilemmas about the lifestyle in which we were participating. For example, several people complained to us that we were paying too much for our cleaner 'because others cannot afford such a salary'; whereas we felt that the exploitation of local labour was something we did not want to endorse. Such moral dilemmas were indicative of the difficult position we were in. Because of my fieldwork, we felt that we

had to be on good terms with everyone, and in some instances we had to consciously restrain ourselves from expressing our opinions when they were different from those of the majority. This is one of the challenges of accompanied fieldwork: as an anthropologist, I may feel the need to put on a certain 'face' among my research subjects, but how much is this required of the rest of the family? Guidebooks for ethnographic fieldwork emphasise the honesty and personal involvement of the researcher. At the same time, the researcher is interacting with people in the field for her / his research purposes and thus needs to be somewhat selective in terms of such interactions. Elaborating on how 'genuine' an anthropologist is in the field is a tricky issue; why did I feel I needed to put on a certain face? Fieldwork is not a matter of acting but a matter of personal involvement. Yet an anthropologist also wants to make sure that fieldwork is not jeopardised by upsetting people s/he is interested in. To what extent, however, should, or can, research goals guide the interactions of accompanying family members? So far, there have been surprisingly few reflections published by accompanying spouses (see Lunn and Moscuzza 2014) or children (see Lozada and Lozada 2016; Swain and Swain 2016).

Having my children as part of the field also created an ethical dilemma. When I was working with the lifestyle migrant children in Goa—either interviewing them or organising drawing projects with them—I always carefully emphasised that participation was voluntary. Very few children refused to take part, but my own children were not really given the option. They could refuse on an individual occasion but could not opt out of the fact that our whole life in Goa was research material for me.

Because of my research, I wanted to participate in as many social activities as possible. All of this eventually exhausted our children; we were seldom at home and their tantrums became common occurrences. My children would most likely have had tantrums in Finland also, but in Goa I tended to blame my fieldwork for such incidents, which indicates that combining fieldwork and private life can be tricky, and difficult to come to terms with. One can obviously ask whether it is ethically correct to use one's own children as research tools and as tools that facilitate one's entry into the field. I will have to wait a few years until my children are older and can reflect on this (on children's accounts see Starrs 2001 et al.; Zulaika and Zulaika 1998; Lozada and Lozada 2016; Swain and Swain 2016). Scheper-Hughes (1987) and Fernandez (1987) have in fact elaborated on the fact that their children disliked the fieldwork so much that they had to postpone or adjust future fieldwork plans. In my case, the other side of the coin, however, is that I was able to spend much more time with them in Goa than in Finland. In Finland, my children spend their days in the day-care centre and at school and I spend my days in the office. In Goa, my office was at home and my children spent only six hours a day in day-care or at school, and afterwards, when I was doing participant observation, the whole family accompanied me. The lifestyle migrant families whom I was studying followed the same routine. It was the norm that people would gather, as families, at the beach or the pool in the afternoons and both the children and the parents would then socialise together. The social scene among the lifestyle migrant families was indeed intense and, consequently, it provided both rich research material for me and an easy channel for my family to 'go native'.

Towards the end of my fieldwork, my then six-year-old daughter started asking why we could not go to Goa 'normally like everyone else', without my work. This was a tough question; my children obviously enjoyed

life in Goa and I and my spouse liked many (albeit not all) aspects of it too: why wouldn't we return to the relaxed lifestyle there? Even if the decision to travel to Goa was dictated by my work, it had wide-reaching consequences for all the family members; it was not just a stint of work abroad but an important part of our lives. My children made some very good friends in Goa; for them it was not a matter of being social in order to gather research material. Leaving the field, then, was a serious rupture in their lives. When fieldwork lasts for several months, the anthropologist—and the accompanying family members—make their home in the field. Work finishes at some point, but private life—especially social relations—do not one day simply end. Private and professional lives are thus very much entangled and this has significant consequences, not only for the ethnographer but for accompanying family members, which extend beyond the end of the research project itself.

In the fieldwork context, the famous feminist slogan 'the personal is political' can be turned into 'the personal is data'. My fieldwork experiences show that this has particular consequences when one's 'personal' includes a spouse and children. This section is further proof of the commonly known fact that fieldwork is not only work but life, and even more so for accompanying family members. During my fieldwork, it was impossible for me to make a distinction between my personal and professional lives. My fieldwork was everyday life for my family members; it had nothing to do with work and a lot to do with friendships, social life, experiences and so on. If my family members were to enjoy life in Goa, they had to be integrated into the lifestyle migrant community there—in other words, their only option was to go native. Even when my goal might have been to keep professional distance, close engagement was necessary not only because of my research but also to secure enjoyable everyday life for the whole family. Distinguishing therefore between my private and professional lives seems rather meaningless. In short, my fieldwork was a joint family effort, which produced a particular kind of situated knowledge with far-reaching personal consequences.

LEARNING OF, WITH AND ABOUT EACH OTHER

These three case studies illustrate how taking into consideration one's family members and their concerns may affect the process of defining the field that an ethnographer eventually studies. Furthermore, in this article we have highlighted how conducting fieldwork in the company of children and spouses affects the data-gathering process and consequently also the research results. Children and spouses may become research assistants who open doors and draw the researcher's attention to places, things, events and perspectives s/he might otherwise miss. Therefore, we suggest adding family members to the list of possible collaborators who, along with research participants, research assistants, supervisors, editors and reviewers, play a role in shaping the final outcome of the ethnography (see Gupta 2014). Private is research: fieldwork guidebooks discuss how one's personality, gender and nationality affect the fieldwork. Marital status and parenthood are also mentioned but, while the researcher is seen as a single person who has particular characteristics partly defined by the presence of the accompanying family members, it is usually not acknowledged that the latter also affect the actual knowledge that the ethnographer gains. Although some anthropologists have addressed the issue, (see, e.g., Blumenfield 2016), such texts tend to be in separate volumes rather than comprising

a theme that is systematically reflected throughout all ethnographic studies. Interestingly, although childhood studies (including the anthropology of childhood) emphasise that children are active social agents (Hardman 2001, 503–4), the role of accompanying children during ethnographic fieldwork is often seen in passive terms; they accompany the active researcher, affecting her characteristics, but they are not seen as active contributors to knowledge production.

Fieldwork always involves an aspect of improvisation (Cerwonka and Malkki 2007). The ways in which accompanying family members (who are of particular age, gender etc.) react and improvise in the socio-cultural environment they encounter in the field context can produce new perspectives for the researcher if s/he is willing to look at these opportunities carefully. For fieldworkers, the research topic might be omnipresent as they are thinking about it all the time. For this reason they might not be able to see the wood for the trees, metaphorically speaking. A spouse or a child might find it easier to keep their distance from such bias, thereby noticing things that the researcher might have missed. For the researcher, such insights can offer a new line of interpretating gathered data. This is one way in which accompanying dependants can be seen to participate in the dialogic process of knowledge production.

The fact that accompanying dependants do not necessarily enter the fieldwork setting with the same objectives as the fieldworker can also pose challenges to the fieldwork endeavour, when they refuse to collaborate, for example. Furthermore, the presence of dependents in the field can provoke problems when their behaviour is perceived to be at odds with the normative expectations of how a child or a spouse, or the fieldworker as a parent, should behave in the context in which the fieldwork is being carried out. In spite of being troublesome on the personal level, such moments might nevertheless provide interesting insights onto the research topic, as they help to reveal normative expectations of the behaviour of a society's members in the context of the research setting.

At the same time, the presence of dependants in the field is not only a means by which fieldworkers can elicit insights concerning the subject of their studies, but also a way whereby research participants can become more familiar with the fieldworker. Thanks to accompanying family members, research participants might observe how fieldworkers interact with a person they love. They might see them struggle in their role as parents or they might witness moments when the fieldworker is highly vulnerable. In many fieldwork accounts, including the ones presented here, there is a tendency to claim that being a mother helps to ease access to the studied group. But perhaps it is not only the identity of mother and the presence of a child that help fieldworkers to establish close relationships with those they wish to study. Perhaps it is more the genuine exposure of a fieldworker's vulnerability that helps to pave the way for the trust-based and honest encounter between human beings that is at the heart of ethnography. At the same time, there is a danger of becoming defined solely as a parent or a spouse instead of as a researcher. This, in turn, can pose ethical challenges for the ethnographer who wants the research subjects to be aware of his / her work of participant observation. All in all, the process of interactive knowledge production during fieldwork becomes particularly visible with accompanying family members; gaining situated knowledge is a collaborative effort.

FIELD(WORK) AND LIFE

The question of how to juggle multiple identity positions while doing fieldwork is a recurring theme with which all three female researchers in this article seem to struggle. As has been made clear, the presence and practices of accompanying family members, whom researchers may at times use in a strategic manner for the purposes of their research, make it impossible to draw a clear-cut (or any) distinction between work and private life. Each has an impact on the other. But why are we, as three female researchers from Finland, so keen on keeping the identities of professional researcher and mother / spouse apart? Is this concern a response to our understanding of what makes a 'professional fieldworker', or does it reflect our perception of how one should go about carrying out *work* outside the home sphere, or at least without one's children, more generally? What are the ethical implications of this?

In this article, we have drawn attention to the fact that during fieldwork one's private and professional lives are intermingled. Acknowledging that fieldwork is part of life and that our everyday lives leave their mark on (or affect) the fieldwork process is not a bad or a good thing *per se;* it is part of the forces and dynamics that can produce fruitful moments of serendipity and that determine the field we end up studying. The presence of the family members while doing research also brings to the fore that the ethnographic field does not exist *a priori* but is constructed through decisions which a fieldworker makes in the course of the research process (Amit 2000: 6; Hirvi 2012: 25). Those decisions are made with regards to the research topic, but also with regards to what kind of field is being evoked in the written ethnography.

Our keen efforts to keep professional and personal lives separate may also indicate that in spite of the widely accepted emphasis on reflexivity in ethnographic research, it is usually confined to a separate section where one elaborates on the conditions under which the research was conducted; the situated knowledge is nevertheless understood to be collected by the lone researcher (who has particular characteristics) rather than research being viewed as a truly collaborative effort where accompanying family members play an active part. Further, it can be argued that having a sense that the lines between private and professional lives are being blurred can be a useful experience as it reminds researchers that the people they set out to study ultimately share the same, common world as the fieldworkers and their families (see Ferguson 1997: 137). After all, it is mostly for analytical reasons, as well as perhaps also because of a desire to demarcate 'work' and 'private' life (see Hirvi 2012: 35ff.), that ethnographers delineate their field site from what they perceive to constitute their home sphere. Obviously, the field often becomes a (temporary) home for the lone ethnographers as well, but when one is accompanied by family members, one's home actually comes to the field in addition to the field becoming a home.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

One intention of this article has been to raise awareness of the kinds of issues that might arise when doing accompanied fieldwork and how they affect the knowledge that is produced in the field. Spouses and children do not only accompany the research(ers) but also play a significant role in the actual knowledge production process.

If we are to widen our discussion of the topic in the future, we need to incorporate a gender perspective. It is noteworthy that, so far, female researchers seem to have reflected on the issue much more than male researchers. But how do male ethnographers who have conducted fieldwork in the company of their children and / or spouses reflect on their experiences? Anthropologist Roger Goodman (2012) has already taken a step in this direction by highlighting in a recent publication how seeing Japan's educational and child welfare system through the eyes of a parent has significantly changed his perception of it. But there is a need to hear of much more men: it is not only female ethnographers who produce knowledge as parents and spouses and with children and spouses. Moreover, it is definitely a shortcoming that most of the texts addressing accompanied fieldwork seem to be written by heterosexuals.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the reflections presented in this article draw attention to the fact that the *shared* (!) experience of fieldwork not only has an impact on the ethnographic project and the studied people, but has consequences for both the fieldworkers' private lives and those of accompanying family members, who do not consider the field to be a workplace but conceptualise it as a part of their lives. All three accounts presented here make it clear that conducting accompanied fieldwork challenges ethnographers to reflect critically on who they are and what kinds of decisions they make—as researchers, and as parents and spouses. In that sense, we agree with Amanda Coffey (1999: 1) when she argues that fieldwork is also personal and identity work. This applies not only to the researcher but also to those accompanying him / her to the field. The role of accompanying family members during fieldwork is much more significant than is admitted if they are mentioned in the acknowledgements or in separate articles. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that as professional researchers we are not simply studying 'others' but are engaging in a dialogue through personal encounters, and the knowledge we gain is thus always situated and embodied and the product of collaboration.

NOTES

1 Acknowledgments: This work was supported by the Academy of Finland under Grant number 2501138405; by the Department of History and Ethnology, University of Jyväskylä; and NOS-HS under Grant number 212061.

2 My perception of 'India' as a more risky place for a child than the United States or Finland is my subjective opinion, which does not necessarily have a rational basis.

3 In the *langar* hall food is served equally to all from a common kitchen in the *gurdwara*.

4 The *khanda* sign is an important Sikh symbol.

5 The turban is an important identity marker of Sikhs, and has manifold meanings that are negotiated amongst Sikhs, as well as between Sikhs and non-Sikhs (see Hirvi 2013: 83ff.)

6 *Salwar kamiz* is a female dress consisting of long shirt and trousers.

7 *Buyam-sellam* traders are small-scale producers and 'buyers-sellers' who sell agricultural produce, food stuffs and consumer goods in village and town markets.

8 Lifestyle migration refers to a phenomenon whereby citizens of affluent industrialized countries move abroad in order to find a more relaxed and meaningful life (see Benson and O'Reilly 2009). Lifestyle migrants in Goa come from a variety of European countries, as well as Israel, Russia, the USA and Australia (and many of the children have parents who are from different countries) but in the Goan context, when opposed to the Indian other, the 'West' often seems to become one, in the discourse of both the lifestyle migrants and the local populations.

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