



Introduction: Dialogues with children and youth

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Research of children / youth in the humanities



- The less children are born in Europe/Western world, the more attention they get, also from researchers.
- Folklorists – until the 1980ies the main interest was directed to adult folklore; anthropologists-ethnologists were mainly focused on children/youth in remote cultures. These trends are changing towards the critical study of a number of questions related to the everyday life of children/youth here and now (crises, happiness, leisure time, folklore, interactions with the media).
- Childhood/youth issues - "a complex social phenomenon," „multidimensional and ambiguous“
- Case studies and analyses give theoretical and methodological tools for interpreting this broad field.



Definitions of child / youth culture

- 1985 German folklorist Hermann Bausinger pointed in a conference paper to certain incongruity between **the culture for children** offered by adults (e.g. media content, toys etc. that is limited and often based on stereotypes) and the **culture of children**, i.e. the multivalent and limitless culture created by children for themselves and often containing aspects that adults don't like to accept there.



How to study the experience of children/youth?

- Many researchers – childhood is socially constructed as there are no universally applicable concepts of childhood. E.g. international childhood studies are interested in how global and international structures and processes shape children's lives and cultures of childhood.
- However, most children in their own subjective experience – just live their life.
- In what age does the youth end / the adulthood begin?

By 18 or 21 years? By the end of university studies? But what about childish adults? Science-geek children? We can't decide about this without having a **dialogue** with children and youth that we are investigating and without taking into consideration the particular time and context.



Lets start a dialogue!

