

Chapter Three

From the Countryside to the City *a Boy's Journey and the World to Know*

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The animated film *The Boy and the World* (*O Menino e o Mundo*, 2013, Brazil), directed by Alê Abreu, stands out in the set of current children's films, as a work of strong and clear social nature. It bets on the sensitivity of the spectator, children or adults, and above all, we argue, takes a radically provocative and reflective look at childhood in the globalized world.

The theme music of the film, *Aos Olhos de Uma Criança* (*In the Eyes of a Child*), written by the Brazilian rapper Emicida, already announces the social issues of the peripheral societies of the global world that the film shows. Its main character is a young boy whose vicissitudes of life are surrounded by poverty, inequality, unfulfilled opportunities, and shattered cultures.

The language of the film's animation impresses by its simplicity, and it is a true counterbalance of softness and a refusal of the technological paraphernalia of current children's films. Through the use of handmade colored drawings and watercolors, manual collages, as well as digital tools of less complexity, the images and the sceneries of *The Boy and the World* possess an organic appearance that remind us of spontaneous children's drawings. This handmade style produces an esthetically pleasant effect that indicates the director's option for an animation that rescues and values craftsmanship and authorial design. The yellowish tones (olive, oranges, browns, etc.) give a dreamlike climate to the world of the boy, in a surrealistic bet of the film. The softness and lightness of these colors are used to portray a contemporary Brazil, with its extreme realities and its concrete hardships.

As a language that values the body, the gestures, the landscape and the object sounds, actions in the film speak louder than words (which are quite rare and incomprehensible throughout the film), and provide an invitation to the spectator to be sensitively affected by non-discursive sounds.

The Boy And The World highlights a child's experience in reaching his/her potential and being surprised by the unknown but boldly choosing to dare, to learn, and to participate. The world appears in the title to name the boy's journey from his own home, in the countryside, towards the city and then back to the countryside. It is all about a journey in which, allegorically, the boy seeks his identity, in the move of going after his absent father who abandoned him and, at the same time, pursues what is unknown to him, the mundane, as that which is also necessary to his own personal development. In this regard, the boy's experience in the world bears resemblance to an adventure in the sense Simmel uses this notion¹. He notes that adventure is the moment in which life can be felt in its permanent contradiction in what is given and fixes the individuals in space and time and in the movement that breaks out of the permanence of things known towards what is unknown. Movement makes one take risks and it is risk that should lead one wherever they go.

Notwithstanding the fact that the film shows the trajectory of its main character going from the age of childhood to the age of adulthood with its changes and transformations—which could identify it as a bildungsroman film—the idea of adventure here is used to point at the adventurous journey of the boy. This is made of ruptures, challenges and overruns. The argument and the narrative of the film do not focus on a supposed process of growth and development of its main character, but on a radical image of childhood considered in its conception as experience in and of the world and as alterity. *The Boy and the World* proposes viewing childhood associated with displacement and transformation—quintessential experiences of existing and learning. In addition, such a perception of childhood subverts and breaks up with canonical standards that have regulated childhood as a Western and modern social construction hegemonically present in our time.

The boy's journey takes place in an animated world that appears distant, uncivilized and 'undeveloped', whose peripheral condition announces other childhoods who have become deviant and marginal, that serve to question the central and dominant views of childhood. The boy in the film does not go to school. He wanders freely about deciding by himself where he wants to go. He does that without the supervision of adults. He leaves the countryside where he has lived with his parents in search of his father who also left to seek work in the city. In the city he faces desolation, poverty and squalor. As the film shows, the boy deviates from the typical child of modern Western countries depicted in the image of modern childhood. As such, the child protagonist in *The Boy and the World* breaks away from the universal image outlined in the international laws on the rights of the child and ratified by modern humanitarian ideals. His existence is not consistent with the representations of childhood that the globalization process helped to define mainly in northern countries.

However, the apparent negativity of this image of childhood does not adversely affect the boy's power to transform and create his world. Free from the "musts be" which the legal, scientific and political practices have determined as normative modes of child production—protected, dependent, obedient—the child is in charge of inventing his own existence within the limits and opportunities of daily challenges and adversities. Hence, lines of escape to be a child are produced that attest to other possibilities of sociality and participation. This paper will focus on two main analytical aspects that the film brings forth that contribute to de-construct a hegemonic view of childhood. Firstly, we will focus on how the boy's relationships with significant adults (the cotton worker and the urban working man) establish new ways of knowledge transmission and emotional bonds. The film shows that more horizontal relationships between child and adult can be established where novel opportunities for caring and learning can be experimented. Secondly, we will focus on how the boy participates in the public world of the city. If children's worlds have for long been the home and the school, this film breaks away with this usual way of envisaging children limited to these "proper" spaces. Childhood is reconnected to the public world of the city and the streets from where children have been for long considered uninvited participants.²

THE BOY AND HIS SIGNIFICANT ADULTS: NEW POSSIBILITIES OF LEARNING AND EMOTIONAL BONDING

The early scenes of the film show the boy routinely playing with objects, the plants and the animals picturing a simple and happy life in the countryside. Colorful images accompanied by light music suggest the idea of a good life, and of someone running free across the fields with a curious look. Suddenly the sound of a bell rings. Called by his mother, the boy soon meets up with his father, who is holding a suitcase. Father and mother establish a dialogue that is accompanied by the child. All of a sudden, the boy grasps and hugs his father's legs. As his mother holds him away, his father bends himself towards the boy and plays the flute, an object that symbolically represents his tie with his father.

The father's gesture seems to show acceptance of the child's desire as the latter does not want to let him go, and, at the same time, represents the farewell to the son, playing the flute for him. In the scene that follows the father picks up his suitcase and goes towards the train station. In this regard, the father figure stands in the paradoxical condition of securing the permanence of emotional ties, but also pointing at the movement towards the unknown

and the novelty. Thus, the father is the character who, as a recollection, will guide the search of the little boy around the world.

When the boy leaves his home soon after, he carries along with him a picture of his family. His parents are with him, as internalized and dear figures, materialized in the family photo that he carries along with him all the time. Therefore, even if unsupervised, the boy is not lonely. As he drags his suitcase to the train station in a dark lonely night under a strong wind, the film shows a sequence of dark images, with rail, rain and thunder and the boy's trip towards the risks and adventures, challenging the idea of the child as a dependent, weak, ignorant and an empty being. Thus, the spectator follows the character in his joys and misadventures, through both of the enchantments and the disappointments that he lives and learns. In general, children are not allowed to go out into the world unsupervised. The presence of an adult is a *sine qua non* condition for a child to venture into places where he has never been before, since, as a minor and incapable, the child should be *protected* by an older person. A child who wanders unsupervised denotes an *audacity* on his part—willing to be more than he is, but also attests to the *negligence* of his guardians, and adults in general. The film deconstructs this audacity, as it questions the expectation of the adult *protection* of the child as a principle and a value that should govern the relationship between the adult and child, resulting in the child dependent on the adult's authority and initiative. In his wanderings, the boy is in the company of adults and gets along with them, but does not seem to be limited by their vigilance and control.

The boy appears awakening after a restless night at an old man's house, a cotton picker. He seems to be afraid, as he looks around, not figuring out where he is; sitting on the hammock, he can see the photo on the suitcase drying after the rain of the night before. The images that follow show the boy following the old cotton picker, as he races to reach and climb the wheelbarrow that the elder pulls to the cotton plantation. In the company of a small dog, the boy and the old man leave for the work of picking cotton. The film shows children and adults together in the collective work, packing and carrying huge baskets where the cotton is placed. A similar relationship, of children and adults sharing the collective task of planting and laboring in the field, was highlighted by Benitez when he describes the forms of work and housing of indigenous Brazilians, Guaraní Kaiowá, who share the work among adults and children³. As he toils with others, the boy, without understanding very well all the implications of the work processes, begins to get acquainted with a world different from the life he led with his family. However, apart from work, the boy also plays. In the company of the dog both dive into the cotton wheelbarrow, laughing loudly, barking in a fun game of hide-and-seek. In this regard these images foreground

not only situations of oppression, but also how these are intertwined with playfulness and amusement.

The relationship of the child with the cotton picker, as an unfamiliar adult who becomes his partner in life, depicts the process of learning about the world as the boy faces the adversities. The longing for his father is always present. The problems of the adult world are shown to him, although nothing is explained explicitly. In one of the scenes, he shares desolation with the adults—as when the cotton pickers stand side by side, both adults and children, to be selected by the manager of the cotton plantation, between those who have conditions to remain at work or not. A sad moment is when the boy watches motionless his partner, the old cotton picker, among others, to be fired. In this passage, the boy experiences the oppressive world of work in the country, as unexpectedly, you do not have from where to get your daily bread. Sharing hard and inhospitable moments, the old man, the boy and the dog become accomplices of various risks and threats that arise. It is in this complicity of sharing existence with the other and being together that the boy experiences and learns, a process that dismisses the formal frame of learning process that invariably characterize schooling in modern societies.

The boy goes after the cotton picker wherever he goes along with his dog. The scenes of the film show the cotton picker's daily life of hard work: pushing the cart to work, picking cotton and going back home tired, highlighting both routine and physical exhaustion. The film does not reveal either a special feeling on the part of the cotton picker for the child, or the former's specific task of protecting the boy. For example, the coffee is put on the table. The boy, feeling at home in his house, will help himself without having to ask for it. Following the cotton picker around the boy is enchanted with the things that he learns and sees. As Honwana puts⁴, the boy shows tactical agency when he acts on the limitations of the cotton picker's home in order to make opportunities for himself. Upon coming back home, on a stormy night, the boy and the cotton picker together face the wind, the cold, and the rain. They are both equally unprotected and helpless facing the dangers—as adult and child. They are united by a bond of affection and solidarity that emerges when the two of them have to face adversity together.

When the boy seems to miss his family, he climbs up a tree and takes the picture that he carries along with him out of his pocket. At a distance he sees a truck taking a group of workers, and all of a sudden, it seems he sees his father. Memories seem to encourage him to keep discovering the world. He quickly climbs down the tree, runs behind the truck, and follows it. At this moment, he is leaving without farewells. The old man and his animal see him slightly moving away. They have not said goodbye to one another. It is life that is separating them, so there is no sorrow, nor tears, just the certainty that

the moments they spent together are safeguarded and well kept, the boy will always treasure the experience of this meeting with him. What stands out, however, is the boy's motivation to keep on following his destiny.

The next scene shows the child arriving at the weaving factory. There are machines, men working like automata, as the boy walks, investigating this new reality, in an attempt to understand the context. Not unlike previous meetings, the film shows adults who seem oblivious of the presence of the boy, and allow him to venture into the entire space. It is worth mentioning that when the child walks vigorously and curiously along the factory, amid the shadows of debris and equipment, he always associates this scene with his father's image, as if those memories instigated him to fearlessly discover what he does not yet know.

When he finally leaves the countryside and the cotton plantation, the boy takes the bus to the city, along with others—adults and children. Everyone gets off the bus, and the boy is again unsupervised. One of the adults getting off the bus looks at him in a questioning way, as if to say “do you want to come with me?” Another relationship is in the process of being established between the boy and this urban working man who happens to be the resident of a slum. In this scene, as they climb a very long flight of stairs, the boy sits down very tired, almost giving up. Then, the urban working man carries him on his back, as seen in the image below. Note that, in this situation, it does not seem that the urban man reacts by pity; nor does he want to convince the boy to keep climbing so as to stimulate his independent behavior. It is neither the pity nor the pedagogy of autonomy that moves the working man to help the boy. If moved by pity, the adult would be reacting to the fragility of the child. If he tried to encourage the boy to climb by himself, the adult would be acting as someone who knew better what the other should do. Both cases would be exposing an unequal relationship between adult and child. However, the working man helps the child when the boy shows he cannot make it by himself. By showing solidarity towards the boy, the working man ensures that his help does not go beyond what is asked. As such, he does not behold an aura of protection that often becomes incompatible with stimulating the child's participation in the world⁵.

In the city, the boy follows the urban working man, chosen as his company in the urban adventure. Both walk through the slum, passing and having a little break in front of several environments: the brothel, the Church and the bar. The boy is introduced to a vast and diverse world. For example, the child and the adult watch together a carnival parade, a popular Brazilian party that blends Christian and African cultural elements. According to Ribeiro⁶, carnival comes from a patchwork of various elements that the African held as valuable throughout the long years of slavery, such as musical feelings, rhythms, flavors as well as religiosity.



Figure 3.1. The urban worker carries the boy on his back up the stairs of the slum
 From *The Boy And The World*

The following scenes show how the world is presented to the child without the pedagogical framework in which the adult is always positioned as the one who teaches. Afterwards, the working man dozes off in front of the TV when advertisements of inaccessible products are showing in a deep contrast with his own reality. The boy goes to the couch and joins him, pulls the photo he always carries along with him, and tries in vain to show it to his company who at this moment is falling asleep deeply ignoring the calls of the child. Then the child rests his head on the man's lap and falls asleep too. Thus, the adult is the child's company, his friend, rather than his guardian, or his teacher.

At the beginning of a new day, the adult and the child set off to the beach. In a colorful setting with fun objects and sounds of birds, the boy carries a beach umbrella on the back of the bicycle. At this moment, the worker is depicted as an artist who presents the world through the colors of his trinkets that can take any shape, including turning them into an exotic musical instrument, moved by cycling. When seeing a piece similar to a flute, the boy immediately begins to blow it. At that moment, the man shows the boy how to make use of the object, a kaleidoscope. The boy laughs and is delighted on account of discovering the sequence of movements that make up beautiful and pleasant images. The boy marches and cackles, deeply captured by his toy, walks through the city, mesmerized by the beautiful images of the object which contrast the sewers, the dirt, the scaffolding, the traffic and the noises, stepping through all of this, turning the toy absentmindedly, oblivious of all the setbacks. While conducting studies on different cultures, Cohn⁷ points out that in the indigenous Xikrin culture learning is accomplished through skills that involve the observation.

The scenes highlight a way to get in touch with the world with curiosity, interest and initiative, a child who “hears and see” everything carefully, in situations where the adult presents himself as an equal, without worrying about being the most experienced icon. It depicts the challenges and dangers experienced by a child who lives several adventures in the company of adults. In this way, the film confronts the segmented contemporary contexts that have delimited the spaces according to certain age groups. As Souza, Garcia and Castro⁸ put it, these spaces separate children from socializing with adults, or the latter from living with the children.

Highlighting the curious look of the child, the scenes are presented full of sensory elements, whereby knowledge of the world, one is that is always shared with the other, is constructed and takes place. Everyday life is enhanced in its power to produce aesthetic experiences of life that include both the hardness and the adversity as well as the joys and the pleasure. In this regard, the film is shown to break off with the current Westernized paradigm in which the relationship of the child with knowledge transmission is usually managed from an adult-centered vision, figuring out the role of the adult as he who initiates the process and directs it. As older and more learned, the adult is incumbent of making it happen at his discretion. In this perspective, it is important to underscore the importance of the child’s ability to create as, according to Winnicott⁹, creativity is something that belongs intrinsically to children’s experience: the ability to create the world.

The film invites us to think about other possible ways of living and interacting between children and adults. It indicates that the transmission of knowledge according to more horizontal relationships between child and adult do, and can, take place. Here, children and adults face the world “as fellows.”

Finally, when bringing the adult and the child to the same level under similar conditions to face the world, it is worth mentioning that the film highlights, with regard to how knowledge is built, the proposal of a more equal and humane partnership, in which the adult can undress his naturalized authority that usually hinders him from sharing the life, the adventure and the unknown *with* children.

THE CHILD AND THE PUBLIC WORLD: WANDERING AROUND AND CHILDREN’S SOCIALITY

In contemporary Western society, the street, through a long and continuous process of introducing speed in modern social life is commonly encoded as an inappropriate place for children, especially when they are viewed by

normative perspectives of childhood, from which distinctions are established between appropriate or inappropriate places, learning and behaviors. In this section, we seek to show that as the boy in the film “wanders around” in a public world, essentially a world of exteriority—the world of the street, faces and subverts these normative perspectives, waving to other childhoods and other possible socialites.

In the first part of the film, the scenes show the boy “walking around” a small house, clearly in the countryside, surrounded by trees, animals and streams. This house, however, is simple and poor, but welcoming with its household elements—dishes on the dining room table, family photo on the wall, curtains in the window—a kind of backdrop of its external landscape, exuberant and colorful where the boy runs, climbs, slides, digs, an open world full of forest, flowers, birds, water, sky. Those elements “away from home” are experienced intensively and with excitement by the boy.

A country life, out of town, shows a child in a small world, small, undoubtedly, as it is circumscribed within the familiarities, both in relation to the small and known group of people with whom he apparently lives, but also in relation to the natural environment, allegedly more stable in terms of changes, but eminently “away from home.” Within this countryside context, this world of exteriority of the boy would not be easily seen as a public world, in the most common and usual meanings of this term that, to different extents, refers to a space used and shared by different and multiple actors and interests, and mainly linked almost directly to urban contexts. However, we want to point out, by bringing this daily life of the exteriorities of the boy in his country life, that more mundane forms of child sociality can take place even in contexts that are sharply not urban. The film, in our point of view, has the intention to show this by showing an image of the countryside childhood, which it is not apart from, and not regarded as an antithesis to, the image of an urban childhood. In this regard, it makes a clear recognition and compliment to the construction of an independent and free child as he/she wanders around the worlds and live his/her daily life, whether it is rural or urban.

In the first part of the film, still in the countryside context, the scenes show ways to “walk around places,” as Hernández¹⁰ refers to in his analysis of the daily life of children on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, when the boy comes across and incorporates, in his everyday life, unexpected or uncontrolled situations that make it possible for him to act as he thinks appropriate. In one of these scenes, the boy discovers, when putting his head into a dam, that the fish swim differently depending on the movement he himself makes of putting in and taking out his head of the water. A very lively scene which shows an unplanned and uncontrolled event which was made possible by his mundane moving across the country.

We argue that a more public socialization would be present in the country life of the boy, in the sense of an out-of-home, worldly sociality, which can also be recognized in the affected look with which the boy sees the world beyond this small forest of experimentation. As noted earlier, the boy, with wide opened eyes, sees and understands the reality that surrounds him, and in his countryside daily life he sees and understands the arid soil, the lack of jobs, the abandonment of land, he sees and understands the world in its historical and social process, that is, a world made of and with others: other people, other causes, other realities. There, in his countryside world, restricted and isolated, the boy can realize the ampler exteriority that determines his daily life in the country and connect it to a wider world. As it is, his own story is radically transformed by the separation of his father who is forced to leave the countryside due to the economic, social and historical conditions, beyond the will of the boy or his father's.

One night, in his room, when the bed spins like a weather vane moved by memories and longing for the father, the boy grabs his suitcase, the photo with the family, and leaves. As a Ulysses in his emergence of exteriority, the child makes the decision to go away.

From this moment, the boy's sense of adventure is evident and is highlighted, in the irruption of permanence towards what is unknown and in what he assumes as wandering outside and away from home, as Castro shows¹¹. In the scenes following this departure, the boy appears in an environment that is still rural with plantations where there are several persons unknown to him, children and adults picking cotton; a world that is distant and unknown, which foreshadows the harshness with which the public sense of world of the street—as a meeting place with other different and plural people—will now have on the wandering around of the boy.

He then starts his Odyssey towards a big city. Nevertheless, the adventures of the little Ulysses will not bear a resemblance to the image of a hero at all who bravely faces enemies or is received with honors. There will be no heroism in his urban adventures, but certainly, modest and uncertain worldly steps of an individual complying with his human destiny to live and find meaning in his wandering around in the world: he will run after a truck in search of his father, feel tired on the stairs of a slum, put water in a vase of wilted flowers.

In one scene, within a peri-urban context, the boy arrives at a factory, instructed by signs that his father could be there working. There he bumps into the cotton that he has seen harvested on plantations, and there it is turned into a long and industrialized white cloth. In our point of view, a scene that ratifies the image of the child as a child who realizes, as the song of the soundtrack, "*that the world is really big,*" a world made of continuities and ruptures, the world of the street, which reminds us of DaMatta,¹² in the Brazilian society,

the street can mean a place of indifference and impersonal ways of interacting. In our point of view, this scene seems to recognize the movement and the interaction of children in the public world, as the world of the other, of the diverse, a world of opportunities, including those tinged by indifference and impersonality, an antithesis of the familiar world. In the possibility of thus circulating in the world, these children point to the existence *not* of “abnormal” childhoods, “exceptional,” or even abandoned ones, as some hegemonic views about childhood, especially the poor ones, who live in the so-called peripheral countries of the Western developed world¹³.

The boy then arrives in the city, where, in the streets, he lives what is eminently public; he lives his most worldly adventures in a world of mysterious verticalization, with its slums mushrooming the hills, a world in which time and territory overlap in the coexistence of the scrap and the futuristic tower, the church and the nightclub, the luxury and the garbage. Having to choose his own way, in the end the boy will not find his father in the undifferentiated crowd of work and development with strangers or acquaintances passing by, as Delgado¹⁴ calls the interpersonal relations in the urbanity of large cities, the boy wanders around the streets. Just as he had already understood and faced in his daily life in the country, the aridity that life can show in the midst of an exuberant nature, now in the city he can assert himself in a sometimes very hostile environment, understanding and experiencing playfully the rigidity and the coolness of the concrete jungle.

In this concrete jungle, amid the disorders and tensions, the contrasts and the adversity, typical of a “generic city,” as Kolhas¹⁵ names the large contemporary cities heavily populated of the so-called underdeveloped countries in the southern hemisphere, the boy finds enchantment and shelter in the sympathetic company of an adult. A city, that according to Delgado¹⁶ produces and provides less routine and less predictable forms of belonging and hospitality.

In one scene, as depicted in the image below, the boy and his fellow urban company look at the skyline of the city, sitting on an abandoned car, and under this urban landscape, they see a landfill with children playing aggressively. Children who, like him, are out of their homes, school, eclipsed and invisible by the commercial media that glow in the skyline. Children who, along with young people, the drug addicted, the prostitutes, the beggars, the immigrants, the homeless, are seen as the “dangerous classes”¹⁷ of capitalist urbanized society. Classes that disturb, the author adds, the dream of public aseptic spaces, without conflicts, scenery of the consensus and the good conduct. Sitting in this secluded and ugly place of the city, the boy and the poor working man look at the children in the landfill, violent and abandoned. In this regard, adult and child both share the vision of the urban poor who, like themselves, are excluded from the goods and tranquility of upper class urban

life. Both the boy and the urban man are equally subject and vulnerable to the disastrous consequences of unbridled progress and greed, though they show solidarity with each other in adversity and oppression.

In the film, the boy gains sensitivity and autonomy while walking around in the public world. On the other hand, the streets where he walks, marked by the slowness of his walking around, typical of an urban wandering as mentioned by Berenstein¹⁸, also contain his chance of being in the place of meetings and gatherings that can be redefined and resignified. In addition, the working man's bicycle, in which the boy rides around the city, seems to us here a significant element of an intrusion, so to speak, of a child's time in an accelerated city of cars. This intrusion, which causes a "smoothing of the city"—term used by Deleuze and Guatarri¹⁹ to refer to action of transgressing forces in urban space, which are capable of destabilizing the forms and uses of a more orthodox and rigid urbanism—is powerful to convey a new meaning of the street as a public space, in the sense in which Habermas²⁰ speaks of the public sphere: a place of visibility and recognition, a place to see the other, be seen by him, and establish dialogues of disputes and understanding.

The film instigates the waking up from other "dreams," such as those that try to believe and persuade about the shopping mall as the new public space of big cities as a great place for socialization for children because they, since they are well dressed and well behaved, can walk there, under the improved monitoring and control technologies without disrupting the city business.



Figure 3.2. The boy and the urban worker look at the skyline of the city from the landfill
From *The Boy And The World*

Finally, we could refer to many other scenes that were not brought here at length, as that of the boy shaking his head with a bucket stuck on it, moving agitated among things, leaning his body over a deep water hole in his countryside daily life, and then, in the streets of the city, as he crosses large avenues, climbs scaffolds, and numerous others in order to reaffirm our understanding that the film builds the image of a boy who is all the time in the world of street, taking part in it with his wanderings around, and finding opportunities to act and be a child subject. Moreover, this is a film that reconnects childhood and the public world, in a fairly critical and very inspirational manner.

CONCLUSION

Geographical and landscape aspects that create the ambiance of *The Boy And The World* indicate clearly the Brazilian context in which his story takes places. In the making-off of the film, it is known that the main character is called Cuca and his story is a bricolage of the reality of children living in Latin American countries.

The condition of a child who is born and lives in a country of the South is therefore assumed in the narrative of the film. The language spoken by the characters, which is in a proper and unknown language, can be interpreted as an allusion to this place, peripheral and *underdeveloped*, and the ways in which subjectivities deal with the efforts of belonging and keeping local cultures and, at the same time, being inserted and taking part of the global orders of (pseudo) integration..

Even emotional bonds do not fit in the typical frame that characterizes parent-child relationships as figured in the so-called bourgeois modern family. The absence of the father, who has left home to seek better work opportunities, only fuels the boy's desire to find him and to act as he did—to launch him in the world. Therefore, in the film the boy does not appear as a fragile and powerless child, but one who in the absence of this important figure goes after him. Moreover, in this search the boy will find his father represented in two other adults: the cotton picker and the urban workingman. It is interesting to note that the boy's father, a poor farmer, will be "found again" in these two poor characters, one from the countryside and another from the city, with whom the boy develops emotional ties. Both these characters do not show any particular charisma of a father, or specific paternal emotions, but they are elected as figures with whom they boy identifies and establishes more horizontal relationships. If the specific feeling towards children was built along modernity, and if this has implied the adult's duty to protect them because of their alleged vulnerability, the film makes one interrogate this condition

as it circumscribes tenderness and protection towards children as aspects that emerge in specific conditions of childhood production. The protection of children has inspired a particular sentimentality on the part of the adult, cultivated since the emergence of European bourgeois classes, as a primordial aspect that regulates intergenerational relations. In Brazil, however, childhood protection has been only a partial determinant of the sentimentality of adults towards children²¹. In Brazil, a child's social class and race often thwart this normative basis that regulates adult-child relationships.

The childhood brought forth in the film by the image of the boy in his adventure around the world denounces these border spaces, residual where "escapes" from paradigmatic childhoods are contextualized and take place on the outskirts of the so-called developed societies. The image of a child brought by the film—unschooled, unsupervised and who wanders freely through the public world establishing horizontal relationships of knowledge transmission, clearly confronts perspectives that have advocated a universal and homogeneous childhood. However, this image of childhood that we identify in the film, can also and contradictorily, suggest a southern childhood mythologized, "indianized," in which is implied a strong, free-spirited and friendly children.

When the film chooses that the boy goes back to his country home, it seems that he also suggests the powerlessness of the subject, whether child or adult, facing a relentless reality: the sad and miserable rural reality which commit a large multitude of children to deep conditions of poverty and to daily lives of brutality and abandonment whether by individuals or social institutions. However, we endorse our view that the film brings up a firm look of recognition of Latin-American childhood which is affected by material poverty and gross social inequalities, but also produced by codes and cultural values of community life and playfulness that together create real possibilities for an ethics of a more mundane life. This is linked to the here and now of the surroundings, in which one lives and goes about, based on more collective principles of solidarity and comradeship.

In this regard, the film is a provocation that can reverberate destabilizing effects of normative and colonialist perspectives of childhood. Provocation in destabilizing the typical modes of peaceful everyday existence in a great city, as Agambem²² puts, that characterizes life in major urban centers, whether in the North or in the South, increasingly impoverished and highly privatized. The film reverberates the contradictions of the views that extol childhood as a happy moment of life, but at the same time delegate it to the institutional spaces that are unattractive and oppressive whose objective consists of the transmission of knowledge.

In this film, the image of the child seems to announce that, in spite of the hardships and sufferings that have befallen on the boy's life, he is able to pursue his adventure, his whole journey, covered by the veil of hospitality that he encountered in the world. Both the cotton picker and the urban poor man were capable of sharing all they had with the boy—affection, company and material possessions, without imposing demands or making him dependent or fragile. This contributes to relativize the seemingly supposed superiority of one specific way of living a childhood over all others. The film *Boy and the World* depicts a childhood lived out in the contradictions of both a charming and a desolate world.

NOTES

1. Georg Simmel, "A Aventura". In *Simmel e a Modernidade*, edited by Souza, J. and Oelze, B, (Brasília: Editora UNB, 1998), p. 178.
2. Lucia R. de Castro, "Cities and Social Participation: Social Inequalities from Children's and Youth's Points of View," *International Journal of Anthropology*, v16, (2001): 2.
3. Tonico Benites. "A Educação dos Jovens Guarani e Kaiowá e sua Utilização das Redes Sociais na Luta por Direitos". *Desidades, Revista Eletrônica de Divulgação Científica da Infância e Juventude* v. 2., n.2 (mar/2014), http://desidades.ufrj.br/featured_topic/educacao_guarani-kaiowa/.
4. Alcinda Honwana. "Innocent & Guilty. Child-soldiers as Interstitial & Tactical Agents", In *Makers and Breakers: Children and Youth in Postcolonial Africa*, edited by Alcinda Honwana and Filip de Boeck (Oxford: Africa World Press e Codesria, 2005), p. 32.
5. Ruth Sinclair, "Participation in Practice: Making it Meaningful, Effective and Sustainable", *Children & Society*, v.18 (2014): 109.
6. Darcy Ribeiro, *O Povo Brasileiro: A Formação e o Sentido do Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1995), p. 222.
7. Clarice Cohn, "Culturas em Transformação. Os índios e a Civilização". *Perspec.* v. 15, n. 2 (2001), http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0102-88392001000200006&lng=pt&nrm=iso&tlng=en.
8. Solange Souza, Cláudia Garcia and Lúcia R. de Castro, "Monitoramento para a Compreensão da Infância Contemporânea", in *Infância, Cinema e Sociedade*, edited by Solange Souza, Cláudia Garcia, and Lúcia R. de Castro (Rio de Janeiro: Raval, 1997), p.102.
9. Donald Winnicott, *Tudo Começa em Casa* (São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1970), p. 23.
10. Maria Celeste Hernández, *Andar Afuera: Un Analisis de la Experiencia Infantil Urbana en Contextos Sociourbanos de Pobreza en La Plata, Provincia de Buenos Aires, Argentina*. Anuales IV Simposio Internacional Encuentros Etnográficos con Ninas,

Ninos, Adolescentes y Jóvenes, accessed January 2017. http://encuentrosetnograficos.weebly.com/uploads/7/4/6/5/7465057/mar%C3%ADa_cel_este_hernández.pdf.

11. Lucia R. de Castro, *A Aventura Urbana: Crianças e Jovens no Rio de Janeiro* (Rio de Janeiro: 7 Letras, 2004), p. 23.

12. Roberto DaMatta, *A Casa e a Rua: Espaço, Cidadania, Mulher e Morte no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Rocco, 2000), p. 19.

13. Cláudia Fonseca, “O Abandono da Razão: A Descolonização dos Discursos sobre a Infância e a Família”. In *Psicanálise e Colonização: Leituras do Sintoma Social no Brasil*, edited by Edson Luiz de Souza, (Porto Alegre: Artes e Ofícios, 1999): p. 56..

14. Michel Delgado, *El Animal Público: Hasta una Antropología de los Spacios Urbanos* (Barcelona: Anagrana: 2006), p. 41.

15. Rem Kolhaas, *La Ciudad Genérica* (Barcelona: GG, 2007), p.4.

16. Delgado, *El Animal Público*, p. 20.

17. Ibid., 23.

18. Paola Berenstein, *Apologia da Deriva* (Rio de Janeiro: Casa da Palavra, 2003), p. 35.

19. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guatarri, *Mil Platôs: Capitalismo e Esquizofreia*, v. 5 (São Paulo: 34, 1997), p.188.

20. Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (London: MIT Press, 1989), p. 13.

21. Suzana Libardi, “Quando e como a proteção da infância é um valor para os adultos”. *Desidades, Revista Eletrônica de Divulgação Científica da Infância e Juventude* v. 11, n. 4, (2016), http://desidades.ufrj.br/featured_topic/quando-e-como-a-protecao-da-infancia-e-um-valor-para-os-adultos.

22. Giorgio Agambem, *Infância e História: Destruição da Experiência e Origem da História* (Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 2008), p. 11.

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