Methods and Theory

This part of the website elaborates the methods that were used to conduct the fieldwork in 2015 and to gather audio-visual data in order to investigate the initial research questions, which are as follows:

- What was the motivation leading to the decision of Arlo and Robyn to leave behind their life in San Francisco and to go 'back-to-the-land'?
- How did their children experience growing up on Olala Farms?
- How is life on the farm today, and what has changed over the years?
- What stories surrounding Olala Farms, do Robyn, Arlo and others have to tell?

As written in greater detail in **About the Project**, these questions have been adjusted and revised during the entire research process. In addition to these research questions, the methodological question of exploring different ways of presenting and communicating the collected data, has also been dealt with during the entire process, and lead to the production of this website. Thus, the initial research questions are answered by means of the different categories and topics that can be found on this website (**Explore the Farm**). This writing, first of all, deals with the decision of using visual methods as the primary means for data collection, as well as how the methods were implemented. Secondly, the subchapter **Exploring and Documenting Everyday Life by means of Ethnographic Methods** outlines the methods and theoretical approaches that were used to explore the subject matter of the 'everyday life' and 'mundane activities' surrounding Olala Farms. The subchapter **Different uses of the Camera: shoot to edit vs. filmic note-taking** explores the different uses of a video camera in ethnographic research, as well as ways of dealing with the filmic material. Finally, **Ethnographic Film and Reflexivity** focuses on the various theoretical approaches connected to ethnographic film, also providing an outline of how it is understood in the context of this project. Different theoretical approaches will be referred to, such as ethnographic understanding, subjectivity, and reflexivity (just to mention a few). Included in this chapter is an excursus on working with **Oral History** that is available in form of a PDF.

At the beginning of this project the decision was made to gather data and conduct the research by means of visual research methods, in this particular case through the use of a Canon XF100 video camera. Not conforming to Sarah Pink's suggestion of making this decision only after knowing more about the field of research, the decision was made in advance. "In practice, decisions are best made once researchers are in a position to assess which specific visual methods will be appropriate or ethical in a particular research context, therefore allowing researchers to account for their relationships with informants and their experience and knowledge of local visual cultures" (Pink 2001, 31). For the simple reason that both of us are familiar with the American way of life, due to the fact that we both have lived in the USA before, we were already quite familiar with the local visual culture and therefore made our decision of using visual methods beforehand. Resulting in the initial goal of producing an ethnographic film documenting Robyn and Arlo's life on the farm. The rather naive decision of entering the field with a camera, even though neither of us had any previous experience in how to use it, was not only based on our interest in film, but inspired by Lawrence G. Desmond's video from 2012, showing Arlo Acton working in his yurt studio. Also, the predominance of written texts – especially in the field of anthropology, but also in the social sciences and at a university in general – inspired us to work with visual methods. Even though we didn't know much about the place or its residents, Olala Farms seemed like the perfect setting for producing an ethnographic film. Especially the artistic life and work of Robyn and Arlo in connection with the 1960s movements in San Francisco appeared to be very appropriate for visual illustration. Due to the short preparation period of less than four month, with seminars and lectures at the university still going on, we didn't have enough time to extensively build and extend our knowledge about the ongoing discourses in the fields of ethnographic film. The only texts we looked into before leaving were *Film und Feldforschung* (film and fieldwork) by Edmund Ballhaus, written in 1995, and the introduction of the book *Ethnographic Film – Revised Edition* by Karl Heider, released in 2006. Reading these texts helped us, at least in some way, to comprehend how an ideal research process, with the intention of producing an ethnographic film, should and could be executed. What we didn't realize at the time was how much our vision of the finished film, was influenced by the ongoing conventions of television, documentary films, film in general, and, of course, personal preferences. This lead to the idea of a clear and detailed storyline of how the finished film should look like even before going to Olala Farms, already including much of the sequences that we wanted to feature in our ethnographic

documentary. Inspired by these conventions, we tried to be as objective and observing as possible, something we learned from TV documentaries, which meant: trying not to appear in front of the camera ourselves and generating footage that is seemingly uninfluenced by the presence of the camera. In the beginning we tried to hide behind our camera and use our tripod for almost every shot, placing the camera as unobtrusively as possible. During the course of our research at Olala Farms we realized that the situation on-site was quite different from what we expected and from what we knew. Therefore, we had to improvise and adjust our methods, resulting in the two of us occasionally appearing in front of the camera, and the protagonists reacting directly to the camera. In retrospective, these are things that we should have encouraged from the beginning. Further, we had to separate our initial vision of a final film from the conventions of television and film that initially influenced and inspired us, which finally resulted in this completely different outcome of producing a website.

Thus, our entire fieldwork was basically a learning-by-doing process that demanded constant improvisation and an adjustment of methods, and of the way we were working. The following subchapter goes into the way of dealing and examining the 'everyday life' by means of visual research methods.

Exploring and Documenting Everyday Life by Means of Ethnographic Methods

As briefly mentioned above, and as seen by exploring Olala Farms through this website, a big part of the research was the exploration of the trivial tasks and activities of everyday life on the farm:

> They are activities that seem unimportant and are rapidly forgotten: a passing feeling, something caught at a glance, things hardly noticed. [...] These undercurrents in people's lives often go unnoticed, both by people caught in the daily flow of routines and by scholars trying to understand people's behavior. It is precisely because many of these mundane activities tend to be invisible – seen as unimportant or just taken for granted – that they play such a powerful role, especially in the reproduction of society.
> (Ehn, Löfgren and Wilk 2016, 1)

In the beginning of our research we were looking for "the visible and dramatic" (ibid.), we wanted to get footage that was as entertaining as possible, because most of the movies and documentaries we have seen previously influenced our ideas about the finished product. Shortly after arriving at Olala Farms, it became clear that the place had changed from what we knew beforehand – which was based on stories that Lawrence G. Desmond had told us, but he himself had not visited the farm since 2012. The daily routines were rather slow and involved a lot of sitting around, having discussions, or preparing meals. This was of course due to the fact that Robyn and Arlo were getting older. During our four-week stay we did not experience any special events or spiritual gatherings that used to take place on the property, no artists at work, and there were days when – viewed from a filmmaker's perspective – nothing happened at all. After rejecting the main idea of focusing on the 'dramatic and exciting', the focus was changed to exploring everyday life on the farm, including the seemingly trivial tasks such as cooking, sitting in the driveway, or having discussions. This change of focus evolved from talking to different people who were either living on the property or just visiting the farm. We were told that it was the routine and the activities of everyday life that made Olala Farms such a special place. Consequently, we were encouraged to try to capture the 'atmosphere', surrounding the place and the people living there because that was how life on the farm manifested itself. This newly found focus on the 'atmosphere' turned out to be productive in several ways:

> First, it makes one think about how such moods are produced, sustained, or changed. Second, it opens up the question of how people come to share an atmosphere or are taken in by it and how it may dissolve boundaries not only between people but also between the body and the material surroundings. Third, it is a concept that focuses on the totality of an

> emotional mood, on how many different sensual elements are combined:
> light, color, space, smell, sound, and touch, or movements like rhythm and
> pace. (ibid., 83)

When dealing with and examining 'everyday life' and the 'atmosphere' of a place, one needs to be careful to not only observe the activities and things that stick out of the ordinary, but rather to be more attentive to the seemingly unimportant and unobtrusively 'familiar'. To get a deeper understanding of how life at Olala Farms works and expresses itself, one needs to be observational in a sense of not only using the eye, but to observe with "the ear, the nose, and the skin, three subtle forms of communication" (ibid., 84). Thus, working with the familiar, requires new approaches and ways of working:

> To make oneself a stranger to the familiar and become surprised by the
> ordinary is a demanding task that calls for practice as well as
> unconventional methods and analytical tools. [...] The idea is to explore the
> way people themselves experience and understand their environment, the
> dynamic ways in which everyday life creates a home and makes it
> meaningful to those who inhabit it. (ibid., 25-27)

Our way of doing fieldwork, with a focus on the 'mundane', was strongly influenced by the notion of 'thick description' coined by anthropologist Clifford Geertz who suggests a more in-depth approach: "Clifford Geertz adapted the concept 'thick description' in his approach to ethnographic study to suggest a more penetrating approach which recognized the multiple layers of our social reality. [...] It is not a case of enumerating 'social facts' about behavior [...] but about understanding the significance of such phenomena to the social actors and meanings revealed about the broader society" (Spencer 2011, 33). Thus, "[d]oing ethnography is like trying to read [...] a manuscript – foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior" (Geertz 1973, 10 in ibid.). Being influenced by this way of doing ethnography, exploring the 'atmosphere' and the 'everyday life' at Olala Farms went hand-in-hand with the demand for holism when working with ethnographic film, voiced by Karl Heider. Accordingly, we embraced everyday life and tried to document the totality of the place, and, most importantly, the atmosphere surrounding Olala Farms, including the smell, the sounds, and the mood. It is needless to say that four weeks of being in the field are not enough to achieve holism, or to integrally experience the totality of Olala Farms. However, we hope that our website gives an accurate impression of how we experienced and observed the way of life and the atmosphere of Olala Farms.

Coming from an anthropological background, our methodological approach is obviously ethnographic. "It is about qualitative techniques for collecting or producing material on social life in different settings though interviews, observations, and other fieldwork procedures where the researcher is personally present in 'the field' of study" (Ehn, Löfgren and Wilk 2016, 2). What this definition of the 'ethnographic' is missing, is the importance of the connection to subjectivity and reflexivity as central features of the process. Therefore, Pink's definition of 'ethnography' has been applied in the process of fieldwork:

> I shall define ethnography as a methodology […]; as an approach to experiencing, interpreting and representing culture and society that informs and is informed by sets of different disciplinary agendas and theoretical principles. Rather than being a method for the collection of 'data', ethnography is a process of creating and representing knowledge (about society, culture and individuals) that is based on ethnographers' own experiences. It does not claim to produce an objective or 'truthful' account of reality, but should aim to offer versions of ethnographers' experiences of reality that are as loyal as possible to the context, negotiations and intersubjectivities through which the knowledge was produced. (Pink 2001, 18)

With this understanding of 'ethnography', we patiently documented, questioned and observed, trying to understand, comprehend and analyze what has changed on the farm since Robyn and Arlo grew older, and what it means to be living there today. Thus, as already briefly mentioned above, it should always be kept in mind, that the collection of data underlying this project, is based on our own experiences and our understanding of life on the farm - based on a four-week stay in 2015 - therefore representing only a snapshot of a short period of time, and is part of a narrative that is much more comprehensive. Through testimony and the memory of our protagonists, we were able to incorporate stories about the past into our project. Even though the website is about the life and times of Robyn and Arlo, it is just as much the story of the two of us conducting research, and the time we spent on the farm.

The decision to investigate the 'everyday life' and 'mundane activities' at Olala Farms, by means of a video camera as the primary research tool, was based, as noted above, on our personal interest in the medium of film and video, and influenced by the video of Arlo Acton working in his art studio. In connection with the topics discussed throughout this chapter, we are now convinced that the decision of working on a filmic ethnography was justified - because we think that the final product gives a much better impression of the 'atmosphere' of the place than a purely textual account could ever have, for the simple

reason that "visual material provides a form of 'thick description' which helps in the exploration and understanding of theoretical ideas" (Spencer 2011, 33). In line with this, "watching 'real people' […] talk about their lived experiences is refreshing […] because it captures an *embodied* expression, not abstract truisms", thus "[v]ideo narrative records are a powerful visual form bringing an authenticity of lived experiences to the issue. They are, arguably, empowering as stories are told in people's own words" (ibid.). Therefore, having used a video camera to capture the 'whole' of Olala Farms seems reasonable, especially because:

> Imagery is explicit and specific, capturing the instance in action. […] [It is] not untainted realism, but sometimes it might present us with ways of seeing the world which rupture the familiarity of the everyday, insisting on a closer look at those things beneath the mundane surfaces. (ibid., 34)

Following this analysis of how to examine and document 'everyday life' and why it makes sense to use visual methods, another important goal of this project was to learn as much as possible about creating and mediating ethnographic data and ethnographic knowledge, which will be discussed in greater detail in the following subchapters. We will talk about some of the difficulties that can arise when using a video camera, and elaborate our understanding of ethnographic film, in the next paragraphs.

Different Uses of the Camera: Shoot to edit vs. Filmic note-taking

The camera was used to document and record the daily life at Olala Farms, to collect as much audio-visual data as possible, in four weeks of fieldwork. More importantly though, "[v]ideo is not just a useful recording device; it also has distinct advantages as a way of presenting research. Video images presented on a screen come to the viewer directly as perception. Hence, they have an apparent immediacy and realism which is different from that apprehended in the 'interiority' of our thoughts when we read a book." (Jacka and Petkovic 2000 in Spencer 2011, 59). These two aspects of working with a camera can be summed up in one sentence: Film or video can either be used as a tool of producing footage (regardless of whether it will later become a film or not) or as a medium for communicating ethnographic knowledge. Karl Heider compares the work of an ethnographer and the work of a filmmaker, remarking that an ethnographer "[g]athers data by making observations and asking questions [, a]nalyzes data [, w]rites and rewrites [and p]roduces a written report", while the filmmaker "[s]hoots footage [, e]dits footage [and p]roduces a film" (Heider 2006, 8). The fundamental distinction lies in the difference between working with text and working with images. While an ethnographer is very free in rearranging sentences over and over, a filmmaker can only work with the images he originally shot in the field. This of course means that, even though the filmmaker's ethnographic understanding might have changed since producing his footage, the footage will nonetheless reflect the understanding he had at the time of shooting. It is for that reason that Edmund Ballhaus postulates going to the field on two separate occasions. The task of the ethnographer in the first phase is to get to know the location and the people and to decide what aspects are worthy of depicting in the finished film. Shooting takes place entirely in a second phase. There should be a clear plan on what needs to be filmed and the ethnographer might bring along more people this time, such as filmmakers and sound recordist, even though this is not recommended by Ballhaus because it substantially changes the field, which is already transformed by the introduction of a movie camera (cf. Ballhaus 1995, 16-17). The absence of a clear image of the finished film while filming will result in a reliance on material other than the footage shot, such as a voiceover narration which accompanies the images throughout the film, or supplemental written materials. "[I]t is significant […] that the filmic gap is frequently closed by words. When this is done, then the filmicness of the film is diminished, and the product edges toward a spoken book." (Heider 2006, 9-10) Ballhaus goes even further, saying, that being

incapable of shooting-to-edit will make producing a finished film impossible (cf. Ballhaus 1995, 17).

Due to our inexperience and the limited time available, going to the field twice in the sense that Ballhaus demands, was not possible. As mentioned above, we had a clear conception of our finished film, but it was impossible to comprehend if we would be able to shoot it in the way we had envisioned it before actually being there. However, it should be clear to any reader at this point that the initially envisioned film would have been impossible to produce. Because we read Ballhaus before we went to Olala Farms, we did not start filming right away and spent a couple of days getting to know the place and the people who live there. In the days before we started using our camera, we did not manage to detect a specific subject of interest, upon which we could focus an entire film. It was for this reason that we decided to focus on the 'everyday life' and on the 'atmosphere' of the place, as is explained above.

This newly found focus did not solve our problem of not knowing how to structure our film. This led to a working style that was an amalgam of using the camera as a tool to produce footage and using it as a means for communication. This means that we shot cutaways, establishing shots and other material that later helped us in the editing process, but at the same time used the camera mostly as a tool to record whatever happened, without having a clear conception of what to do with the footage later. It can be said the camera was used a tool for filmic note-taking, which also led to the two of us not taking as many written field notes as we should have. Nevertheless, the goal of producing an ethnographic film still remained for a long time. In the end, we went home with almost 50 hours of footage shot. So even though the plan was a finished film, we did not work towards that goal in the field, mostly because we wanted to show the farm in its entirety, and did not know what to omit.

Even though the differences between the two ways of using the camera should have been clearer to us before entering the field, the use of the camera can not only be justified by the subject matter, as mentioned above, but also by the "immediacy and realism", mentioned by Jacka and Petkovic at the beginning of this chapter. By focusing on the place and the atmosphere of it, having moving images of the farm can give the viewer a much better sense of what being there means. We also believe that learning by doing is one of the best ways to broaden your horizon and knowledge of a particular subjects, and that concepts like the ones elaborated in this chapter can be best understood when they are preceded by first-hand experience and by making your own mistake. So even though we

think that proper preparations are very important, there certainly are situations when preparation can be neglected at least to some degree, because much can be learned from these situations, as long as the willingness to get into the subject matter more deeply later is at hand.

Ethnographic Film and Reflexivity

After we returned from Olala Farms, we began to read up on theory about ethnographic film more deeply. Now that our interest in the subject was awoken, we visited more seminars dealing with ethnographic film, read texts and watched films in our spare time, and had many fruitful discussions about it, realizing that we had only superficially dealt with the subject before the time spent on the farm.

Heider writes that "[t]he most important attribute of ethnographic film is the degree to which it is informed by ethnographic understanding" (Heider 2006, 4), meaning that it was made by a person with training as an ethnographer. To better grasp the concept of ethnographic understanding, one needs to work with a definition of ethnography that is a detailed account of human behavior based upon on-site research that makes assumption about a culture as a whole. Coming from the field of Anthropology and Popular Culture, the way we went about conducting our research was through ethnographic methods, it can therefore be said that the way we worked was informed by ethnographic understanding. An ethnographic film or in our case, an ethnographic website, is not just a reproduction of reality but a representation reality. Because "[a]nother major feature of ethnography is truth" (ibid., 6), Heider demands that "we can ask that distortions [of reality] are kept to a minimum and used for ethnographic purposes, not for merely cinematographic reasons" (ibid.). This is an aspect we do not completely agree with, it will be discussed below.

We visited the Regard Bleu, the university's own ethnographic film festival some time later. In this year, a symposium with guests such as Paul Henley from the Granada Center for Visual Anthropology at the University of Manchester and Peter Ian Crawford from the Visual Anthropology Department at the Aarhus University, was held, discussing, among others, objectivity and an observational style of ethnographic filmmaking. We realized that there was no clear consensus about the nature of objectivity in ethnographic film and the means by which to achieve it. It rather seemed that there were two opposing camps: a realist one, that thought that an observational style of ethnographic film is the only way of ensuring realism, and a formalist one, that believed in the role of the ethnographer/filmmaker as an auteur with his own distinct visual style, demanding an appropriation of film styles borrowed not only from fictional film but also from experimental film and animation, when appropriate. We found ourselves agreeing with the second group and believe that the artistic means that film offers should be used in an attempt to better convey ethnographic insights and that an observational style of

ethnographic film should be only one among many. This of course posed a problem for further work on our project, because we had shot all our footage in a style that we now thought might not be entirely appropriate for what we wanted to show.

We continued reading theories about ethnographic film and soon came across Jay Ruby and his book *Picturing Culture. Explorations of Film and Anthropology* that has been a major influence. Similar to the formalist's standpoint at Regard Bleu, Ruby objects not only to an observational style of ethnographic film but also to the current state of ethnographic film in general. He calls for a new paradigm in ethnographic filmmaking in which all film styles are allowed, new ways of narrative and storytelling are explored and, most importantly, films are reflexive and tell not only the story of the informants but only the story of the filmmaker / ethnographer. He calls this an "antirealist approach" – a formalistic instead of a realist one – and adds that "the danger of realism for anthropological communication is that it may confuse readers and viewers into thinking that an anthropological representation is merely a copy of nature" (Ruby 2000, 270). This means that the reality of the pro-filmic situation needs to be distorted in some way in order to clearly show that what we see is not reality itself, but a representation of it, a version of reality. His demand is diametrically opposed to Heider's demand of keeping distortions to a minimum, and it is the defining difference of their understanding of ethnographic film.

Another of Ruby's demands is reflexivity. Being reflexive and showing what circumstances lead to the creation of a work is not supposed to produce objective data, but helps viewers better understand the subjectivities and intersubjectivities present in the work, as explained by Sarah Pink:

> Indeed, the assumption that a reflexive approach will aid ethnographers to produce objective data represents only a token and cosmetic engagement with reflexivity that wrongly supposes subjectivity could (or should) be avoided or eradicated. Instead, subjectivity should be engaged with as a central aspect of ethnographic knowledge, interpretation and representation. [...] Rather than existing objectively and being accessible and recordable through 'scientific' research methods, reality is subjective and is known only as it is experienced by individuals. By focusing on how ethnographic knowledge about how individuals experience reality is produced, through the intersubjectivity between researchers and their research context, we may arrive at a closer understanding of the worlds that other people live in. It is not solely the subjectivity of the researcher that may 'shade' his or her understanding of 'reality', but the relationship between the subjectivities of the researcher and informants that produced a negotiated version of reality. (Pink 2001, 19-20)

Along with Ruby's new paradigm, the term of ethnographic film should be abandoned and replaced by 'anthropological cinema', which is defined as "films designed by anthropologists to communicate anthropological insights. It is a well-articulated genre distinct from the conceptual limitations of realist documentary and broadcast journalism. It borrows conventions and techniques from the whole of cinema – fiction, documentary, animation and experimental" (Ruby 2008, 5). Even though Ruby was pessimistic about the future of ethnographic film to some degree, a number of text written at about the same time show that his proposed shift might have already started (cf. Schneider/Pasqualino 2014: *Experimental Film and Anthropology* or Russel 1999: *Experimental Ethnography*).

Once we began editing new problems surfaced. As we already suspected before, making a standalone film from the material proved to be very difficult because there was no obvious structure or a coherent story to tell. The way in which we shot our footage – described by the term of filmic note-taking above – made editing difficult. Some interviews also posed problems because answers were often very long and tended to digress to other subjects or trivial details (you can see an example of this in the video "How they met Antonioni" that consist of a single take slightly longer than half an hour, containing the answer to only one question), thus some interviews more resembled oral history interviews than interviews to be used in a film. In other words: the interviews were a great source of information, but many were almost impossible to use in a film. When reading up on oral history we realized that its theory addresses a number of issues that concerned us while making this website. You can read more about his in the excursus about Oral History.

For a time we thought about making a filmic collage about the farm, but we soon gave up on this idea for various reasons, leaving us with a few self-contained sequences and a lot of footage still unused. Even though the footage was not shot in the best way conceivable, it was still possible to edit further sequences with the material. However, it cannot be said that those sequences were reflexive. Because reflexivity now was a goal, the need for text arose. We did not want to use text in our film extensively; we therefore began thinking about new ways of presenting our research that would combine both the non-linearity of text with the visual capabilities of film. This does not mean that we think that "[a]n ethnographic film cannot stand by itself" (Heider 2006, 116), but rather that we were not able to produce an ethnographic film standing by itself from the footage produced. In our opinion, supplemental written materials can be beneficial for certain projects, however, the primary aim of an ethnographic film should be to convey ethnographic knowledge

visually, not verbally. This is the only way we can learn to communicate abstract concepts by means of the medium film. For the second project we realized jointly, *Blackmoore – Zwischen Fantasie und Realität*, an ethnographic film about a Swiss Viking association, we did not provide any additional written information and did not see any reason to do so.

We soon found inspiration, once again, in a journal article written by Jay Ruby called *A future for Ethnographic Film?* In this text, Ruby describes his own work on a project about Oak Tree Park, a suburb in Chicago. Similar to ourselves, Ruby wanted to produce a filmic ethnography but ultimately decided that "a hybrid [of text and film] might be a way to overcome the inherent limitations of the traditional ways in which films, still photographs, and written texts have been utilized" (Ruby 2008, 6). He produced several CD-ROMs and a website to experiment with different kinds of presentations. We will talk more about this in the following subcategory titled **Advantages of a Multimedia Ethnography**.

Advantages of a Multimedia Ethnography

As mentioned in the previous sections (**About the Project** and **Methods and Theory**), during the course of this research project many changes and adjustments have been made concerning the use of appropriate research methods, the adaption of the research questions and the thematic emphasis, the embedding of the gathered data into the theoretical discourse, and eventually the shift from the initial goal of producing an ethnographic film, to creating this website. After we returned home from fieldwork and began to extend our knowledge concerning different strategies of working with visual material in the field of ethnographic film, we came across a very promising approach established by Jay Ruby. In his text *A future for Ethnographic Film?*, he elaborates his search for an appropriate way to 'publish' his findings, which also included a more active engagement of the often rather passive audience:

> Soon after I started this study, it became clear that I could not successfully publish my findings in a film or book. As I shot more and more video footage, I could see that these media would not allow me to convey the anthropological insights that I was beginning to discover. So I started considering alternatives. I knew I needed to be able to include the texts that I was writing and the photographs of the community and family snapshots. In addition, I had come to the conclusion that I could not edit the videos I had shot into a coherent film. I therefore selected clips that allowed people to talk about their lives in a manner similar to a life history. Finally I needed to find a way to put all these media together in a way that would allow people to understand the ways in which they enhanced each other. So I started experimenting with various interactive, multimedia solutions.
> (Ruby 2008, 8-9)

After a thorough examination of our raw footage and the written accounts and photographs we had accumulated, we went through a similar search: "By examining how different visual and written materials give meaning to one another, […] some video footage is best used as realist recording, while other sequences communicate expressively" (Pink 2001, 141). Due to the comprehensiveness of the various topics we dealt with during our research and the broad subject matter of trying to convey the experiences we made at Olala Farms to the audience – such as trying to recreate the atmosphere surrounding the place – we also felt the need to combine our videos with text and photographs. On the grounds of trying to communicate our ethnographic insights, that were gathered and produced with the aim of reaching some sort of 'holism' of everything we experienced during our four-weeks on the farm, we also needed to find a way of putting together all the different and complementary media to accurately present

our insight. Just like Ruby, we also felt the need for the viewer to play a more active part, because our aim was to convey our own experience of arriving at the farm, not knowing much about the place, and starting to explore the property. Seeing as we only spent four weeks on-site, we only managed to document, explore and study a fraction of the 'totality' of Olala Farms, which lead to the idea of letting the viewer actively explore the farm in a similar way we did, but in his or her case by means of using this website. The aim was to get the viewer to understand how this data was gathered, what methods were used, and how we actively and subjectively experienced the entirety of our research, consequently we "wanted them [the audience] to be self-conscious and thinking throughout the experience", comprehending our research process as a whole (Ruby 2008, 7). It should be clear that we, agreeing with Ruby, don't believe "that film can never be an expression of anthropological knowledge" (ibid., 6) without a complementary text. Therefore, we needed a platform of research presentation through which we were able to keep the audio-visual material (resp. ethnographic video) as the core of our research.

Since we collected roughly 50 hours of audio-visual material during our four-week period of conducting fieldwork, we argued in the previous texts that we did not simply use video as a data collecting tool, "but as a technology that participates in the negotiation of social relationships and [as] a medium through which ethnographic knowledge is produced" (Pink 2001, 138). On this account, we want to address the meaning we attribute to the 'audio-visual material' that we produced, and use Sarah Pink's term of 'ethnographic video', "to refer to any video footage that is of ethnographic interest or is used to present ethnographic knowledge" (ibid., 139).

> From this perspective 'ethnographic video' does not need to conform to specific film styles or conventions. Rather, it becomes 'ethnographic' when it is used as such. Therefore video representation of any length or style that are used to represent ethnographic knowledge may be referred to as 'ethnographic video'. (ibid.)

Therefore, after thorough evaluation of the 'ethnographic video' we accumulated while conducting our fieldwork, we came to the decision that we "could not edit the videos […] into a coherent film" (Ruby 2008, 9) without having to omit most of what we intended to present and communicate to the audience (as elaborated above). However, "[w]hen video plays a key role in the research it seems appropriate to incorporate video in its representation. This does not necessarily mean editing a documentary ethnographic video, but, for example, using video clips, stills or transcripts in conference presentations

or hypermedia texts, or with written descriptions in printed publications" (Pink 2001, 142).

Consequently, we decided to represent our research by incorporating 'ethnographic video', text, photographs, and hyperlinks on a platform – in our case this website – with "no defined beginning, middle, or end" (Ruby 2008, 10). This way of representing and communicating ethnographic insight created new and appropriate opportunities of dealing with the countless hours of 'ethnographic video' at hand. The "[f]ootage of activities, actions, events, interviews, landscapes […], or other visual aspects of culture can be carefully edited or simply [be] selected as unedited footage. While a set of clips may not fit together coherently as a full-length documentary narrative, they may be combined with written or spoken words, sounds or stills to tell another story. Each clip may itself represent a short story, demonstrate an activity, or represent an informant's spoken narrative or visual self-representation" (Pink 2001, 148).

By working in this manner we began incorporating 'ethnographic video' in the form of (edited and unedited) clips throughout the website: adding written descriptions of the clips if necessary, adding photographs and excerpts' from selected interviews, provide information of how the different media enhance each other, use links to connect the different pages with each other, or to include links "to Web sites that expand on things that are only superficially covered on the original page" (Ruby 2008, 10). This alternative way of representing our research made it possible to choose from different options in how to use each 'ethnographic video' - depending on our vision of how we intended to situate the 'clip' in relation to the other media (i.e. such as text). Leaving each video clip to tell its own ethnographic story:

> Some clips may be realist references to actions and events that respect the order these occurred in. Other might be edited to represent 'real' sequences of events, that divert from the original chronology of the footage. (Pink 2001, 148-149)

Apart from these advantages of incorporating 'ethnographic video' in the representation and communication of ethnographic insights about the activities, the people and the atmosphere surrounding Olala Farms, and our own personal experiences we made, the nonlinear fashion, with no clear beginning, middle, or end, that is encompassed in the use of a website, turned out to be very rewarding as well. Because this research was conducted on the basis of rather explorative research questions, a nonlinear approach gives the audience the possibility to "ignore anything that doesn't interest them", and the

provided links "allow anyone interested to pursue a topic in more depth" (Ruby 2008, 10). We conclude that this alternative way is best suited for the presentation of our research, and for conveying ethnographic knowledge to the viewers and readers.

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