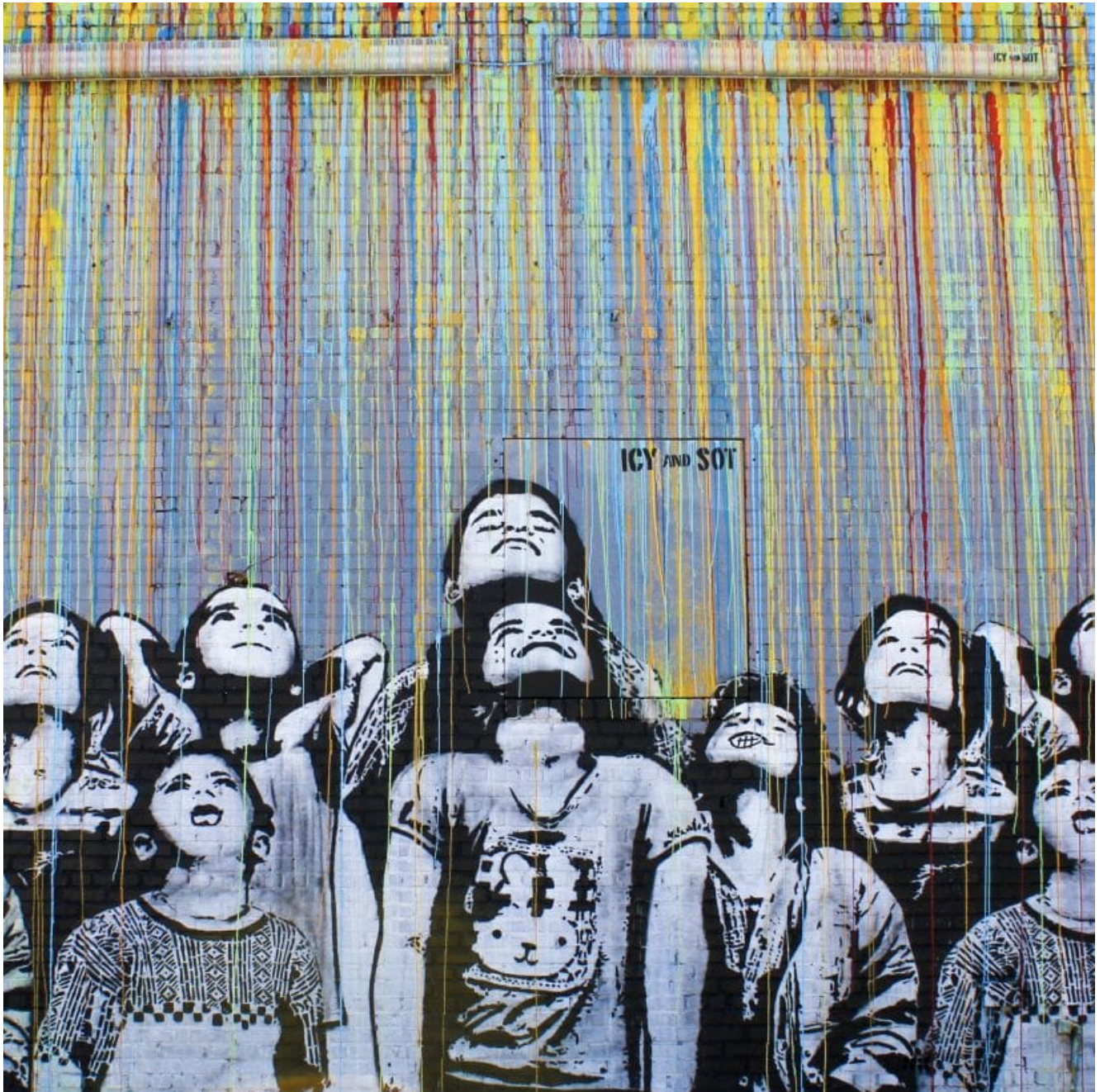




#AisforAnthropology: Introduction

written by Felix Girke
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To kick-off our #AisforAnthropology thread, Nika Dubrovsky will be talking to us throughout the week about her project, A4Kids.



Our hope is that this thread and Nika's work will inspire thoughts and conversations on whether and how anthropology can be made accessible to children.



A4Kids is a project developed and run by Nika Dubrovsky. It aims to bring the anthropological lens to children by way of (free) downloadable interactive books and workshops.



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HOW DO DIFFERENT PEOPLE IMAGINE TO BE RICH?

Here are the dreams
of several people about
what does it means for
them to be rich. What do
you think about it?

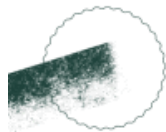
10



※ Someone wants to own a picture by Leonardo da Vinci.



※ Someone wants to throw a giant feast, invite friends or maybe even a half the world. To cheer them all.



※ Someone wants to save up, to multiply, to stash and to hoard. He or she would not give anything to anyone or would spend nothing at all, in the thrill of accumulation.



* Chaim Soutine — the French painter with Russian Jewish origin, lived in the first part of 20 century. The price of one of his painting in the Christie's curated auction was 28000000 dollars

※ Someone does not see the difference between wealth and poverty and lives in total debt.

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* Pavel Durov is a creator of the social network vkontakt, that is the Russian analogue of Facebook

※ The ancient kings and rulers loved to scatter money in the crowd. The founder of the Russian social network, **Pavel Durov***, once got in a balcony of his office and started to throw into the money the passers-by. They rushed to raise bills and pushed each other. Durov and his office staff had fun.



※ Someone wants everyone to be rich: a neighbor, a friend, a relative and even a stranger. This one dreams of common wealth.



In Nika's words, the project "started partly by way of in-between conversations – emails mostly – and Skype talks with David [Graeber] (...) It bridges two worlds: academia, and children. We are not supposed to talk to children about the questions accademia asks itself – such as what death is, what money is, or just even what is family. Rather, the parents tell their children what these things are, hence reproducing their own models. But anthropology is about something else."

A4Kids provides a framework for children to think through what Dostoevsky's calls the 'cursed questions'.

Through children's workbooks and workshops, A4Kids provides a framework for children to think through what Dostoevsky's calls the 'cursed questions' (**проклятые вопросы**) – questions about life and its meaning we all ask



No 16

YOU NATION IS YOUR FAMILY,
WHAT IF EVERYBODY
IN YOUR NATION
IS YOUR RELATIVES?



you can make a family
tree or you can just
draw them on top of
this shades



write their names



Will people in you na-
tion be divided on poor
and rich or they all will
be equal?



whould they always be
freinds, since they are
one family? whill they
invite each other on a
birthdey parties?



An example of how the books can change with time: here Nika included the work of some of the participants in a workshop in Iceland on the theme of 'nations' into the 'Nations' workbook.

The aim is twofold: to show children that the value systems we inherit are far from natural, and to encourage them to jointly reflect over values – and dare to come up with alternatives.

The 14 workbooks, aimed at children of all ages, are the results of collaborations between artists such as Nika and scholars. They were conceived to function in a somewhat more open format than is habitual. Nika sees her role and that of the authors, scholars and artists who contributed as 'facilitators': their job is to put together the questions and bring 'whatever materials we have right now in order to answer these'. But the resulting workbooks should never 'put the final dot': rather, their format makes it easy for anyone – parents and children included- to revisit, amend, add to and customize them.

A4Kids shows children that the value systems we inherit are far from natural and encourages them to dare to come up with alternatives.

This week, we'll be sharing with you a two-part interview with Nika, as well as two articles written by Nika about her work, the philosophy and methodologies behind it, how she was inspired to start it, the challenges she ran into, and why she thinks it's so important to bring anthropology to children.

Featured photo (cropped) by [Leonardo Burgos](#) on [Unsplash](#).

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