

# *Aniki-BóBó*

by Manoel de Oliveira



Portugal - 1942 - 68 min

STUDENT  
SHEET



> *Aniki-BóBó* is part of a collection of European films: the CinEd collection, a film education programme for young people.

> This student sheet allows me to rediscover the film, to go through it in words and images, to know more about where the characters live and their time, to create and invent, to go further by discovering other works: films, books, music, photographs, paintings...

*By participating in CinEd, I share the discovery of films with young people from other countries, all over Europe!*

- A** The film
- B** In Europe and elsewhere
- C** The film and me
- D** To go further

A

# The film

1

Seen in the film



Aniki-BóBó

CinEd — Student sheet

(1)

It's the start of a new day and time to go to school. Pistarim gets to school late and Eduardito sticks his foot out to trip Carlitos.

(2)

Carlitos and Eduardito are both in love with Teresinha. Who will she choose?

(3)

After class, the kids go swimming in the river. Carlitos fights Eduardito to stop him from forcing Pistarim into the water.

(4)

Teresinha goes to the local store and sees a beautiful doll in the window.

(5)

Carlitos notices that Teresinha really wants the doll. He doesn't have the money to buy it for her, so he steals it.

(6)

The next day, they play cops and robbers. Carlitos, feeling guilty for the theft, doesn't want to play the robber.

(7)

The kids skip school to go play with a paper kite. Carlitos and Eduardito fight again: Eduardito falls onto the train tracks and finds himself in the hospital. The children accuse Carlitos.

(8)

Meanwhile, Teresinha and the owner of the shop chat together. She learns that Carlitos did not push Eduardito onto the tracks – it was an accident. And he learns who stole the doll from his shop window.

(9)

The kids make up with Carlitos, who repents and tells the shop owner he stole the doll.

(10)

The owner, touched by Carlitos's gesture, gives him the doll so that he can offer it to Teresinha.

*Pistarim:* «If we were filthy rich... Billionaires! If I were rich, I'd buy the school!»

*Carlitos:* «Why?»

*Pistarim:* «To shut it down! I'd buy a car, and eat buttered steaks and nothing but. It would be perfect. What would you buy?»

*Carlitos:* «The doll...»

*Pistarim:* «Who lights the stars?»

*Boy:* «The lamplighter of the sky.»

*Boy 2:* «They say when someone dies, a star is born, and that souls are butterflies rising to heaven.»

*Pistarim:* «So that's why there are so many butterflies in cemeteries.»

*Boy 2:* «Butterflies? Your head's full of butterflies, that's what.»

*Shop owner:* «You're little, you know nothing about life. The noise, the anger...it ain't worth it.»

«Your window opens and life becomes more beautiful. (...) The school doors open, the sparrow leaves its cage.»

Street singer and the children

«Aniki Bébé Aniki Bóbó / Oiseau Tótó / Berimbau Ukelele / Salomon Sacristain / You're a cop! / You're a robber! »

Nursery rhyme

A

## The film

3

Said about the film

«[*Aniki-Bóbó*] is an autobiographical film. My own childhood was similar. I refused to have these kids only imagine a spoiled life and dream about eating steak and buttered toast and the like. I had them talk about the night and the stars, the devil and temptation. »

«The film is based on a fable called “*Os Meninos Milionários*” (Millionaire children), about very poor children living in destitute neighborhoods but who were still millionaires, gifted with the wealth of their imagination. This excess imagination inspired the love story and the story about the theft of the doll to win the girl’s heart. »

Interview with Manoel de Oliveira by João Bénard da Costa.

B

## In Europe and elsewhere

1

A film, several titles

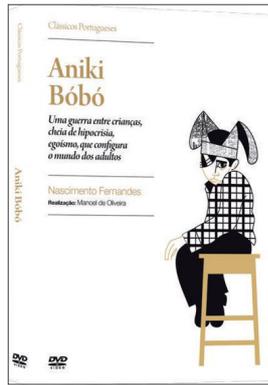
The title, *Aniki-Bóbó*, is kept as is and not translated in CinEd program partner countries. This is because the expression has no defined meaning and is therefore difficult if not impossible to translate into other languages. “Aniki-Bóbó” is an expression in a nursery rhyme used several times in the film. Manoel de Oliveira explains that he decided to use the expression, heard for the first time sung by children in Porto, as the title of his film because it didn’t have a specific meaning and lent the work a mysterious feel.

**B**

# In Europe and elsewhere

**2**

The film and its era



Spanish and Portuguese posters  
Portuguese DVD cover

### Historical context - 1942

1942 was the height of World War II, between Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime – supported by the Japanese and Italians, and the allied forces composed of several nations such as the United States, the Soviet Union, United Kingdom and France. At the time, Portugal was already a fascist regime led by António de Oliveira Salazar. This period in the country's history is known as the *Estado Novo* (New State).

Films made during this era glorify the fascist dictatorship and give foreign and local audiences a wonderful image of a regime that espouses the traditional values of “Deus, Pátria,

*Família*” (God, Homeland, Family). If these rules are not respected, the film is censored.

This is why *Aniki-Bóbó*, a work produced in this context of war and dictatorship, reflects this period. Shots of the river Douro with nearly no boats show the maritime traffic restrictions imposed by German submarines. The school teacher is strict to the point of being a caricature; Carlitos's bag is adorned with a message about always doing “the right thing”, and at the end of the film, the toy shop owner speaks about reconciliation. These elements, which all convey the importance of education at school and home and the need for the children to avoid

being naughty or silly, not tell lies, form a moral to the story that helped Manoel de Oliveira prevent his film from being banned.

**C**

## The film and me

**1**

I learn and I imagine

► How is this school different from yours? What is your class like? What kind of relationship do you have with your teacher(s)? What is a typical school day for you?

► Do you know any nursery rhymes like the one heard in the film? What is it called and what is it about?

► How are the boys, Carlitos and Eduardito, different in your opinion?

► Having seen the movie, do you want to learn more about Portugal, Porto and the other settings of the film?

**I write a letter to the director, Manoel de Oliveira, to tell him :**

- what I thought of the film,
- what touched me, what I didn't like,
- what I did or didn't understand about his choices,
- I can also tell him what you'd do differently if you had been the director.

C

## The film and me

2

## Choosing and creating images

► In the window of the toy shop is a doll. Imagine other objects that might be in this window. Draw these objects.

► What images best represent the themes of the film? Playing, for example, or growing up, downfall, guilt. Place the scenes in any order you like and add a comment about your choices.

► Carlitos has a nightmare in one scene. Look for images (photos, comic strips, advertisements, etc.) and use them to imagine a beautiful dream for Carlitos instead of his nightmare.

► Draw up a top ten list of images that touched you/affected you the most.

► What parts of the film surprised you the most? In the young viewer section, select the images that best match those moments. Place them in the right order and add a legend under each one.

► In the young spectator space, select all the scenes in which children play.

► Using the series of images available in the young viewer section and others you find (photos, comic strips, advertisements), write a visual poem, to which you can add text.

► Create your own visuals (drawings, collages, photos, etc.) on the film's various themes: images related to playing and to feeling guilt and remorse. You can also use the movie poster.



**Young Spectator Space**  
[cined.eu/en/youngsters-space](http://cined.eu/en/youngsters-space)

D

## To go further

If I enjoyed *Aniki-Bóbó*, I'll probably like:



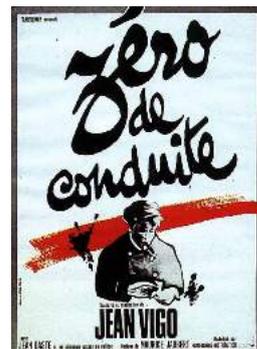
◀ *Rentrée des classes* (1956, France) by Jacques Rozier

(CINÉD COLLECTION FILM)

Like *Aniki-Bóbó*, this film highlights the importance not only of school but of playing outdoors for the children. In both movies, school is a confined space ruled over by an authoritarian teacher, in contrast with outdoor spaces filled with music and where children play, run, jump and swim in the river.

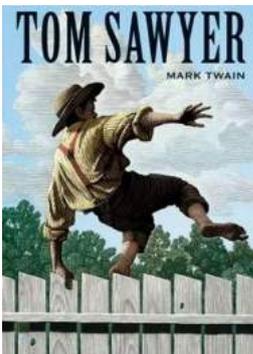
► *Zero for Conduct* (1933, France) by Jean Vigo

This film, inspired by the director's own childhood, depicts the difficult life of children in a French boarding school during that period. Like *Aniki-Bóbó* shot one year later, Vigo films the mischievous lives of free-spirited children who climb onto rooftops (like Carlitos) and rebel against the punishments of adults.



► ***Douro, faina fluvial* (1931, Portugal)**  
by Manoel de Oliveira

Though different in length and genre (Douro is a short documentary), Manoel de Oliveira's first film is similar to *Aniki-Bóbbó* for its depiction of the river Douro, its banks and the surrounding area. This silent film follows local men, women and children over the course of a work day, like the film's other main character – the Douro itself. Similarly to the fictional *Aniki-Bóbbó*, this documentary demonstrates Oliveira's love for this region, in how he films street scenes, people and their activities.



◀ ***The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876, United States)**  
by Mark Twain

Twelve year-old Tom Sawyer is the happy and courageous main character of several books written by American author Mark Twain. In his book *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, like *Aniki-Bóbbó*, the reader discovers the main character's infatuation a young girl his age named Becky Thatcher. Also depicted are his many adventures, days spent skipping school, and the mischief and tricks played with other rascals his age.

**Aniki-Bóbbó: find the same atmosphere in...**

► **The work of American photographer Helen Levitt (United States, 1913-2009)** who often focused on the world of children. One of her most famous collections is called *In The Street: chalk drawings and messages, New York City 1938–1948*. This series depicts children playing in the street, as seen in *Aniki-Bóbbó*. The happy expression of the children, the racing, the cheekiness are all the same, even if there is a huge divide between Levitt's and Oliveira's children.



*Untitled, New York City, ca. 1942-*  
Helen Levitt



*Untitled, New York City (Boy Lifting Girl's Skirt), ca. 1942-*  
Helen Levitt



*New York (Broken Mirror), ca. 1942-*  
Helen Levitt