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# CVA Newsletter 2/94

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*Editor*  
PETER IAN CRAWFORD

*Assistant Editor*  
LINDA JONSEN

*Assistant Film Reviews Editor*  
SIGURJON BALDUR HAFSTEINSSON

*Student Film Reviews Editor*  
JEFF RUOFF

*Regional editorial correspondents*

EASTERN EUROPE: Janos Tari and Judit Dorottya Csorba (Ethnographic Museum, Budapest), Mark Soosaar (Pärnu, Estonia);  
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(CEPAVEH, Brazil); N. AMERICA: Joanna C. Scherer (Handbook of North American Indians, Washington D. C.); MIDDLE  
EAST: Hanna Musleh (Bethlehem University).

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DENMARK  
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E-mail: [interven@inet.uni-c.dk](mailto:interven@inet.uni-c.dk)

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## Report and Review Articles

### THE VEJA PAYAKAN. THE MEDIA, MODERNISM AND THE IMAGE OF THE INDIAN IN BRAZIL<sup>1</sup>

Cecilia McCallum, London School of Economics

#### Introduction

In June 1992 the world environment conference in Rio de Janeiro captured the world's attention. The Brazilian media was filled with reports about the international interest focused on Brazil. Suddenly a new-story, broken by the weekly magazine *Veja*, diverted attention away from the conference. *Veja* alleged that a well-known Indian leader had raped a white girl. The story took over the headlines for most of the rest of the conference and became the subject of horrified discussion all over Brazil. In this paper, I seek to understand why, in a country where acts of sexual violence are everyday occurrences, the response to this particular story was so dramatic.

I argue that the initial divulgation of the story reflected the political and economic interests of elite groups in Brazil. It was a useful tactic to undermine national and international support for ecological movements, rural trade unions, NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and indigenous peoples in Amazonia. Furthermore, I show that the story's tactical success can be attributed to the use it made of morally laden symbolic oppositions deep-rooted in the national consciousness. It appealed to values that have been continuously constructed in nationalist ideology as transmitted in the media, in political and military discourse and in school textbooks. The basic axis around which these values revolve is the conceptual dialectic between 'the modern' and 'the primitive'. This is understood here as seated upon certain constructions of gender and sexuality. The story's power to move the public imagination can be attributed, I show, to the alleged rape's transgression of normative gender relations as these are constructed in Brazilian nationalism.

#### The Story<sup>2</sup>

The story is splashed across *Veja's* cover, with a full-colour portrait of Payakan and a caption in large letters: 'The Savage'. The sub-caption reads 'The leader-symbol of ecological purity tortures and rapes a white student, and then flees to his tribe'. In small letters, the title of the portrait is 'The Kayapo Paulinho Payakan, taken refuge in the South of Para'. Inside (just after a story on 'behaviour' reporting how 'Brega' (kitsch, bad taste) has 'contaminated the country and absolved its followers of the necessity of being chic') the main story comes under the heading of 'ecology', entitled 'the explosion of savage instinct'. The story emphasizes the links between Payakan and the ecologists and politicians of the 'first world'. Pictures show Payakan on the cover of an American magazine with the caption of 'A Man who would save the world', underneath him at the wheel of a Toyota landrover and beside a photo of his alleged victim; with Jimmy Carter; and with Washington socialites when he won a prize from the 'Society for a Better World'. It also shows Anita Roddick with Kayapo women. The text recounts how he had been turned into a hero by the first world ecologists, counting among his fans Jimmy Carter and Prince Charles. It alleges that he can raise tens of

thousands of dollars in a matter of hours, thanks to his popularity abroad. But as well as this, due to his business acumen with his tribe's products, it goes on, he is an Indian with many possessions, owner of cars, planes and lands. But instead of appearing at the Global Forum, where he was expected, he took refuge in the jungle, accused of rape, torture and attempted murder.

*Veja* is categorical about the case. The body of the long report is taken up with a detailed step-by-step account of what is supposed to have occurred. The magazine tries and condemns Payakan and his wife with no respect for due judicial procedures - 'he raped her with the help of his wife, Irekran, and in front of his eldest daughter, Maial, five years old'. Continuing in a sub-section entitled 'Acts of Cannibalism', the reporters (Laurentino Gomes and Paulo Silber) write ... 'It's a story to make your skin crawl and is registered in the testimonies of five witnesses...'. A 'medical junta' examined the girl and confirmed that she 'had been a virgin'. The chief of police said that it was the 'most barbarous case that he had seen in his twelve years in the force; and so on. *Veja* continues:

'the stereotype of savage purity will resound in many places in the world when news of the crime of Paulinho Payakan spreads. Payakan incarnated like nobody the modern Hollywood Indian, that idealized savage, full of ancestral wisdom, virtuous in his primitive and perfect ecological universe. He is a new generation indian, created in films like 'Dances with Wolves'.

This indian is just as false, suggest the reporters, as the savages portrayed in John Wayne movies, falling into contradiction with the spirit of the article. That the girl was an innocent virgin who taught Payakan's children in her spare time, the 'Amiga dos indios', is the theme of the next section, which relates how she had been taken to a barbecue with other people (including five Kayapo Indians) in Payakan's ranch outside of 'Redemption', the town where they were neighbours.

This section also tells how a local doctor had sterilized Payakan's wife without the couple's knowledge. He had tied Irekran's fallopian tubes when she had to undergo an emergency operation. Subsequently she became a heavy drinker, unable to cope with threats of divorce from her husband, who wanted a son as well as his three daughters. This information is given the reader matter-of-factly, without rhetorical excess.

The next sections tell of the attack on a dark road, including lurid details of sexual torture by the couple. Payakan's Toyota was covered in blood says the report, as if an animal had bled inside it. According to *Veja* the girl's screams had been heard by the caretaker of Payakan's ranch who rescued her from strangulation with barbed wire. With help from other people at the barbecue, the girl managed to escape. The next day, Payakan flew ... 'to his tribe, the Aukre, where he spent the rest of the week hidden. If the rape had not occurred, Payakan would today be presented at the Global Forum beside personalities like the Dalai Lama and the actress Shirley MacLaine'.

The article then swings into a judgemental moralizing tone. It is foolishness to generalize that all the Indians are 'more cruel than we imagine' (suggesting that they are fairly cruel). The crime of rape is condemnable in whatever circumstance. 'It is banished in all cultures of this planet, even the most primitive like the Brazilian indians'. This section concludes by returning to the theme of Payakan's deification by international ecologists. Thus quite unsubtly the article links the alleged monstrous brutality and sexuality of the couple to the international ecology movement.

The next section is entitled 'Rich Indians'. It begins with reference to the Mike Tyson case, saying that 'no voice defender of human rights - or of the savages, which would be reasonably appropriate for

## Editorial

As mentioned in the editorial of the last issue of our newsletter all problems had not yet been solved. That issue and the first ensuing edition of the CVA NewsNet was partly saved by a grant from the Danish International Development Agency. 'Partly' because the grant merely covered the expenses regarding production and distribution to our recipients in developing countries. The lack of more permanent means of financing, combined with various other factors, has delayed this present issue. It has also led us to reconsider the future of the way in which the Commission attempts to disseminate information and material to the world.

Without trying to sound too dramatic I can reveal that this is the last issue of the CVA Newsletter. Or, rather, this is the last issue in the current format and under the present structure. To cut a long story short we have decided to restructure the publication services of the CVA. The new structure will start with volume 1995, i.e. immediately. In the future there will be no CVA Newsletter. It will be replaced by *CVA Annual Review* combined with *CVA NewsNet*. The former will consist of an annual publication containing mainly report and review articles. In many ways it will be similar to a double issue of the CVA Newsletter but will be able to accommodate longer, more substantial, and in-depth analyses and articles. *CVA NewsNet* will consist of *news*, i.e. recent information on events, publications, seminars, conferences, films, videos, publications etc. It will be distributed by e-mail to those with access to these facilities. Subscribers will receive it by e-mail, fax or airmail. This also applies to institutions on the mailing list in most countries outside N. America, Europe, Australia, Japan, and New Zealand. *CVA NewsNet* will thus be a low-budget way of disseminating information rather than an actual publication. It will be produced as soon as there is sufficient information for one issue but at least twice a year.

The philosophy behind the change in structure is to make sure that news is news, whilst simultaneously making sure that report and review articles, on the other hand, are given the space and time they deserve. This, of course, also depends on *you*. If we do not receive reports, reviews, news, and information we cannot provide a service which is much needed around the world. It is obvious that the internet and other cyberspatial solutions are rapidly becoming everyday tools of communication in the more technically advanced parts of the world. It is also clear, however, that many of our colleagues do not have access to such facilities, and are not likely to have so in a foreseeable future. I should like to remind readers that the CVA tries to cater for the needs of all persons and institutions engaged in visual anthropology, whereas a commercial enterprise, of course, is in a position in which it is the needs of customers that matters. This comment is unfortunately necessary to spell out since we have received complaints from several (mainly N. American and European) readers, who cannot understand why we do not merely stick to e-mail. It is also worth repeating that we have no funding of our own and that the work of those involved in editing is not paid for.

The current issue was 'saved' by a grant obtained by our Chairman, Antonio Marazzi. This is why technical production has taken place in Italy. We are, naturally, very grateful for the financial support given. As to the contents we are pleased to include Cecilia McCallum's article on the Payakan case. This is the last article emanating, originally, from the conference held in conjunction with the RAI Film Festival in Manchester in 1992. Graham Townsley, in a thought-provoking piece, comments on recent developments in the field of ethnographic film and Bill Nichols' controversial term

'discourse of sobriety'. Rüsseler also takes up recent developments in her article which refers to the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis and includes specific reference to Keifenheim's work with the Kashinawa (see CVA Newsletter 2/93-1/94). The reports and review section also contains two lengthier reports from conferences. Jeff Ruoff, our new Student Films Review Editor, gives us an appraisal of the GIEFF festival, which has become one of the major ethnographic film festivals in Europe. Mathias Guenther follows up the focus on developments in Southern Africa with his report from the conference on the representation of Bushmen held in Johannesburg last year. The section with more brief reports includes a report from Asen Baiikci on the work of the new Balkan Chapter of the Commission.

This issue also reflects a terribly sad loss to our discipline. As most readers will now be aware Tim Asch died in October last year. We have never published obituaries and many regarding Tim have already appeared elsewhere (see e.g. John Marshall's in the *Anthropology Newsletter* of the American Anthropological Association, No. 1, January, 1995, pp. 34-35) but as readers will notice, the influence and impact of Tim on the development of visual anthropology runs through many contributions to this issue, which also contains a review of *A Celebration of Origins*.

Since the last issue our board of regional correspondents has been joined by Hanna Musleh (MIDDLE EAST), and Yasuhiro Omori (EAST ASIA). In the spirit of the CVA Newsletter attempting to do what others simply do not bother to do we have also appointed, as mentioned, a Reviews Editor for Student Films: Jeff Ruoff (Vassar College, U.S.A.). Sigurjon Baldur Hafsteinsson (University of Iceland) will function as Film Reviews Editor together with yours sincerely. We are in the process of confirming the assistance of regional correspondents covering the Arctic and the Balkans. Our Assistant Editor, Linda Jonsen, has put a lot of time and effort into the preliminary editing of submitted material. Since I shall be going to the Pacific for two years she will take over most phases of the actual editing, although I shall be doing the final copy-editing. We unfortunately must remind you to submit material on disk (or via e-mail) if at all possible. There is no secretarial assistance at all for typing etc. We are, of course, aware that you may not have access to a computer (in which case we accept your contribution anyway). But we do actually receive, at times, contributions which are obviously written on a computer without receiving a disk!

The restructuring of the CVA will affect dead-lines. For news about events, publications, new films and video, etc. please send it at any time since the next issue of CVA NewsNet will go out as soon as it is 'full'. As to the CVA Annual Review, containing lengthier report and review articles, the dead-line for the next (and first) issue is:

15 October, 1995

We hope that the new structure will provide an improved service for us all. If you have any suggestions, contributions - or if you do not receive the CVA NewsNet or CVA Annual Review - please feel free to contact us at any time.

Peter Ian Crawford  
Editor

the case' - was raised in the US to excuse him. But what Payakan did was worse, because Tyson had been tempted by Desiree Washington, who gave him the green light, it alleges, before changing her mind at the last moment. Payakan simply 'did what he wanted, in the most brutal form possible.' After this the article declares that Payakan was the most notable Kayapo because he was the last to give himself over to the mercantilist vocation of his people. These Indians, 'first seen by the white man in 1965' and begun to be 'integrated' in 1977, have since then become the richest Indians in the country, 'owners of a fortune in hardwood and gold which sprouts generously from the 3.2 million hectares of their reserve'. Today Kayapo villages have brick houses and parabolic antennas. Their leaders travel in zero-kilometre cars, have houses in the big cities of South Para and negotiate actively on the financial market. From 1989 to the present the little more than 2,000 Kayapo have made over 60 million dollars selling wood. Again the section ends with a reference to international connections, this time to the agreement between the Body Shop and the Kayapo to supply 6,000 litres annually of Brazil Nut oil. The Body Shop lives from the image of purity of its suppliers - it had agreements with similars in Nepal and with the American Indians'.

### The Response to the Story in Brazil

The 'Veja Payakan' became the evil counterpart in Brazil of earlier images of the Kayapo as noble savages in the Western press. Payakan had been adopted as a native ecological hero by certain environmentalist pressure group, such as Sting's *Rainforest Foundation*, in preceding years. In Brazil itself, the Kayapo were known through their struggles for land rights and the sophisticated 'media guerilla tactics' they employed<sup>3</sup>. They had come to symbolize 'Brazil's Indians' and as such they were at times integrated into nationalist rhetoric. The defiant and potentially violent masculinity of the Kayapo warriors in their body-paint and feather headdresses could be used to legitimate the nationalist project to expurgate foreign interference from the interior of the nation (McCallum, nd.). But the success of the Kayapo's media raids backfired badly during the Rio conference, when the case of the 'Veja' Payakan exploded.

*Veja* is the most widely read weekly news magazine in Brazil, in format similar to *Time*. It is displayed prominently in every sidewalk news kiosk throughout the nation, so that in June 1992 the photo of Payakan with the caption 'The Savage' caught the attention of the general public for a whole week. The story consumed attention and outraged opinion for some time afterwards. Payakan was elevated to the status of a national anti-hero, on a par with a Hitler or a Saddam Hussein abroad. He became the villain of the year alongside P.C. Farias. 'P.C.' was the man behind the huge network of corruption and profiteering underlying the Collor presidency, also exposed during the Rio conference. Payakan and 'P.C.' came to stand for the state of the nation. Thus the cover of *Istoe*, 12-8-92, contains a telling allusion to the *Veja* Payakan. Mocking the right-wing politician depicted, the magazine added a feather headdress to his portrait. PC and Payakan were the butt of endless jokes. For example, an old saying - 'Se correr o bicho pega, se ficar o bicho come' was adapted on T-shirts available in Rio in June 1992, to 'Se correr P.C. te pega, se ficar Payakan te come' (Bruna Franchetto, pers. com.). (If you run PC gets (ie robs) you, if you stay Payakan eats (ie rapes) you). 'Come' (Eat) is a double allusion to cannibalism and to penetrative sex (Parker, 1991). The *Veja* Payakan thus became a metaphor for monstrous, semi-cannibalistic male sexuality. In the streets of small town Bahia I heard schoolchildren shouting out 'Sou Payakan, vou te comer' ('I'm Payakan, I'm going to eat you'); and people frequently asked me, as an anthropologist working with Indians, whether I was afraid of being raped during fieldwork. The *Veja* caption appeared to have

fallen into a vacant space of horror (Taussig, 1987). It is as if *Veja's* Payakan was already present in the collective imagination.

The article was widely discussed in the media by all sections of opinion. The general public wrote letters of outrage and protest. Many accepted the magazine's attitudes and judgements without question. Some anthropologists denied (e.g. Senator Darcy Ribeiro) or affirmed that Indians raped (e.g. Chagnon, *FSP* 14-6-92). The Brazilian anthropological Association sent a letter of protest over the sensationalism and racism of the article to the editor of *Veja*. It was not published (Novaes, 1992). The debate rapidly came to concentrate on legal procedures (e.g. *JB* 09-6-92; 21-6-92; & 22-6-92; *A Tarde* 10-6-92). Could Indians be tried and punished under the law? Was it not the case that as tutees of the State and 'relatively incapable' they could not be prosecuted? But Payakan was a rich, property-owning, car-driving, voting Indian. No longer a real Indian at all in fact, it was alleged. The debate focused increasingly upon the bastardization of Kayapo culture. In the space of twenty years, from the time they had supposedly been 'first contacted' by white men, their materialism and alliances with international interests had led them to lose their culture. Payakan (like many of Brazil's newly 'false' Indians) could be prosecuted.

The implication was obvious: not an Indian, therefore no special rights. The battle about identity was a familiar one: To say that 'semi-civilized Indians' are no longer 'real Indians' and enjoy no special rights allows the state to divest indigenous peoples of their land. The anthropologist Carneiro da Cunha (1992) commented in an article in the respected daily *Folha de São Paulo* that a Statute about Indigenous Societies was on its way through Congress, due to be voted that August. The Statute aimed to redefine nearly all Indians as Not Indians, whilst guaranteeing Indians their rights! The Amazonian right-wing elite and their allies the military were clearly behind the Statute, one of whose chief architects was a deputy from Roraima where Yanomami lands are concentrated (Carneiro da Cunha, 1992). She is the wife of an ex-president of FUNAI (the federal Indian Agency) who had been accused of illegally selling timber extracted from Indian lands.

Geo-political and economic interests lie not far beneath the surface in these ontological debates. The Yanomami case exemplifies this point. During the 1980s the military worked out a secret policy for the Amazon that was closely tied to the interests of multinational mining concerns. It set aside a large swathe of national territory along the Northern frontier of Brazil as subject to special security regulations and planned 'colonization'. Much of the land was Indian territory, including the Yanomami area and was of great interest to mining groups (Albert, 1992; Arnt & Schwartzman, 1992). Novaes (1992) recalls the attention of Brazilian anthropologists to the recent history and current state of the Kayapo struggle to retain their hold on their territory. Laying claim to 4% of the land in the state of Para, the Kayapo had powerful political enemies (such as the state governor Jader Barbalho).

In defence of the economic and geopolitical interests the right turned to the 'greening' of their language in response to international outcry over the deforestation of Amazonia (Albert, 1992). This new form of nationalist discourse joined an increasingly incoherent cacophony of ecologism, Indianism and general greenery in the media that reached a crescendo in the months preceding and during the Rio conference. It reflected a similar trend worldwide, yet with significant differences.

### Representation of the Other in the West

Terry Turner analyses representation of the other in the 'late capitalist system':

The combination of increased productivity and a decreased productive labour force, the assumption by national states of the responsibility for guaranteeing minimal social welfare, and the great expansion of commodity circulation and consumption have contributed to a displacement of political concerns from class relations rooted in production to individual relations of consumption. The 'old master' narrative of social evolution through ever-expanded production, which legitimized the subordination of human workers and nature as productive resources, has given way to a new master anti-narrative vision of a synchronic spectrum of consumption choices, legitimized by its supposed ability to promote the quality of life and personal self-realization. This new social consciousness, uncritically severed from its roots in production, has nevertheless become the basis of a variety of critical political (or potentially political) reactions to the consequences of production, in so far as they impinge on the quality of life and the right to personal fulfilment, including the realization of individual and cultural 'life styles'. The recent widespread popularity of causes such as the environment, 'human rights' and the 'cultural survival' of indigenous peoples, owes much to these developments of Late Capitalist ideology and social consciousness.' (nd., p.3)

Turner argues that the new popular ecologism - evinced by such movements as 'Save the Rainforest' campaigns, is based upon a naive form of political analysis drawing upon the metaphors and values of consumer culture. The master value of consumerist culture is the 'production of personal identity and meaning'. Cultural and sub-cultural heterogeneity are 'so many concrete forms of consumer demand'. Within this field of values indigenous peoples become the emblem of a distinct social identity. Their life-style comes to stand for a positively valued identity. In the 'post-modern' age differences in life-style are saleable, like a 'product' on a supermarket shelf, within a political agenda that owes much to the positivist/humanist tradition. Because Indians 'have' a life-style that fits into the category of natural and therefore good, their rights are legitimate and worthy of the support of ecological-commercial groups. The emphasis in this naive politics, according to Turner, is no longer upon production but upon the life-styles to be consumed as part of the process of the construction of personal identity. The more different and exotic, the better, he remarks. Hence peasants and the urban poor have little selling value and attract little political support. In the multi-cultural marketplace of the late capitalist system, therefore, difference is marketable, meaningful and what is more politically viable.

The representation of the Indian as a metonymic link to 'Nature' in the multi-media within the new ecologism has an impact as an important part of the political process involving decisions in say Congress or the World Bank. Supposedly, public opinion has been so influenced by such a marketing of Indians and their life-styles (like *The Body Shop* and the Kayapo in Britain) in conjunction with campaigns by such organizations as Survival International that important politico-economic decisions are shaped. A dramatic case of the influence of the green lobby is the refusal of the extension of the Interamerican Development Bank loan for the paving of the BR-364 highway to Acre until the Brazilian government had taken measures to preserve the environment or delimit Indian areas. As Turner notes, there have been positive as well as negative aspects to the new popular ecologism. But he emphasizes the lack of attention to the social, political and economic context in this naive form of pro-Indian activism and ecologism. He draws, what is more, a direct parallel to contemporary trends in anthropological theory of the 'Neo-Parsonian, Geertz-Schneiderian mould', based upon the

notion that cultures can be understood as autonomous systems of symbol and meaning divorced from social and economic contexts or historical processes'.

Representations of the Other in 'the post-modern age' spring from the historical legacy of the colonial era. In her critical analysis of modernism in the West, Torgovnick (1990) also draws attention to the importance of social and economic contexts. Like Turner, she emphasises that such representations are fundamental to the construction of identity, which she analyses in terms of the constitutive relation between modernism and primitivism in art and literature. Torgovnick argues that primitivism takes shape in a highly sexualized field. The 'primitive' encapsulates images of sexual otherness - monstrous male sexuality, or mysterious female sexuality, for example. In her analysis of the consumption of Tarzan novels and films in the USA she argues that the primitive formed an integral part of socialization into values and concepts that underlie the construction of male and female identity. The privileged partner in the conceptual opposition is the masculine. Constructed in the face of the sexualized, female or primitive other, masculine identity is constituted in a field of power. It attaches to the victor, the conqueror and the lord - both of women and of the primitive others - the animals and Africans that are Tarzan's kingdom. In a later chapter, Torgovnick rereads Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness', demonstrating how it articulates a 'nexus of associations ... (basic to) ...Western conceptions of the primitive - women, sex, death, mortality' (1990, p. 156). For Torgovnick, these are not 'rational' associations but 'intuitive', the underside of the rock of Western objectivity and aesthetics' (Ibid.). In this nexus, one value can substitute for another, creating connections that are messy but fundamental in the construction of identity. Thus in Conrad, female can substitute for primitive. These substitutions bespeak an emotional turbulence that underlies the construction of identity, according to Torgovnick, and manifest itself in desires for and fears of the forbidden. She writes:

'What is clear now is that the West's fascination with the primitive has to do with its own crises in identity, with its own need to clearly demarcate subject and object even while flirting with other ways of experiencing the universe. Few periods in history have been more concerned than modernity with the articulation of the psychological subject and the cultivation of the individualistic self; yet the fascination with other possibilities, possibilities perhaps embodied in primitive societies, remained acute. 'Me Tarzan, you Jane'; 'Dr. Livingstone, I presume' - words apart grammatically, these tag phrases bespeak dramas in identity. In Marlow's narrations [as in Livingstone and Tarzan] masculine identity and the need to maintain 'masculinity' as something separate, apart, 'restrained', and in control are hidden motivators and hidden themes'. (1990, pp. 157-8).

The murky area of masculine sexuality as the possible vehicle to transgression through violence and death inflicted upon the Other (the primitive, the feminine, the sexually undefined) are embodied in certain concepts of the primitive analysed by Torgovnick'. At issue here too is the construction of identity. It follows that sexual violence can be interpreted as one means of constructing masculinity through a contest with the Other. But the victor should always be the white male, who becomes himself in the process of victory. It seems to me that such 'hidden motivators and themes' also characterize certain versions of the primitive in Brazil. To understand the impact of *Veja's* Payakan upon the public imagination, such value-laden conceptual undercurrents must be taken into account. In the next section I take a closer look at contemporary representations of this autochthonous Other in Brazil, before returning to this question in greater detail.

*The Image of the Indian in Brazil*

If we can trace significant similarities between portrayals of Indians as noble savages or vicious cannibals in Brazil, Europe or North America, it is safe to say that the post-modern thematic processes that Turner detects in the consumer politics of late capitalism are not present in Brazil. Here modernism reigns triumphant. This is not to say that images of the Indian are homogeneous. Ramos (1991) discusses images of the Indian in the context of Brazilian indigenism, showing that they convey ideas about exoticism, romanticism, backwardness, paganism and a threat to national security. She argues that the image of the Indian as exotic is used above all to impress outsiders. The romantic image is used by pro-Indian activists who expect the Indians to conform to images of the noble savage and ethical purity. As a threat to national security, in right-wing and military discourse, increasingly organized and politically apt indigenous peoples are seen as 'obstacles to development'.

Images of the exotic Other were a favourite tool of advertising companies during 1992. In the months preceding the Rio conference, many TV adverts used Indians as their main selling image. For example a number of Lee jeans adverts with the motto 'Nao e Lee que e diferente, os outros que sao todos iguais' (Its not Lee that is different, its the others that are all the same) played upon the Indian theme. As is nearly always the case, the main figure is white. In one Lee advert, a handsome young man, dressed only in his jeans, encounters semi-naked Xingu-style Indians in the forest. He understands that they want the jeans, takes them off, exchanges them for a spear and walks towards the camera triumphantly with the weapon raised. Similar ads played with the theme of the young beautiful adventurer in a natural landscape. Others specifically promoted the environment, showing scenes of animals interspersed with Indians. In one, the final image was a forest tree bleeding. Meanwhile TV Manchete attempted to repeat the success of its 1990 soap opera *Pantanal*, which had featured long sequences of wildlife and natural landscapes. Running up to June the channel provided a veritable Indianist feast: The new soap-opera *Amazonia*, a re-run of *The Guarani* (a mini-series based upon the nineteenth century Romantic Indianist novel by P. Alencar); and a re-run of a documentary series about the Indians of Xingu. In the 'ecological' ads, soap-operas and the documentary, the image of the Indian is ostensibly positively valued. It stands in turn for the mystical power of nature, the aesthetic sensuality of the body, the innocence of childhood, the defence of the environment, the occult wisdom of the natural, and other themes related to the noble savage. Indians are portrayed by painted white actors as in turn: childlike, sexual, sensual, mystic, all-knowing, animal-like, exotic, erotic, primitive. They are often the passive victim of evil conquerors and rapists. For example, in the series on the Indians of Xingu made by the journalist Washington Novaes (who appears in many of the frames as commentator) he gushes: 'The world of the Indian is like a dream. The encounter with the Indian is like a submersion into another time and space, a departure from our civilization, a return to innocence...'

In this series, subtitled interviews in Portuguese with male leaders like Raoni are interspersed between long scenes illustrating particular themes, such as childhood or curing, voiced over and devoid of subtitles. Thus only famous leaders and the white journalist have a voice in the documentary. Normally Indians on TV in Brazil are mute. Where Indians do have something to say on TV drama programmes, it tends to be in childlike pidgin Portuguese, grunts, or (in the special case of the shaman figures) in mystically oriented speeches hinting at the mysteries of the universe, and the love of nature evinced by Indians (as in the soap opera *Amazonia*). This emphasis on the spirituality of the Indian finds a possible parallel in the caboclo cults of candomble and other Afro-Brazilian

religions<sup>4</sup>. It reflects a consistent tendency to treat Indians as empowered only in the past, in nature ('ecology') or in the realm of the supernatural, as figures who acted during the origin of the nation and who mystically precede the modern present and future.

This frequent projection of Indian images in no way reflects the demographic structure of Brazil, where the elite is predominantly white. Despite the fact that at least an estimated 50 million Brazilians are black, mulatto or mestizo, there is a relative absence of black faces in the media (Burdick, 1992a; 1992b). This reflects the control over the formulation and projection of values exercised by the white elite. Consumer culture is directed largely at the minority white middle classes and based on an aesthetic that links the modern to a standard of beauty based on whiteness.

Whilst for Western viewers the Kayapo might stand for a positively valued lifestyle, in Brazil their culture is negatively valued, positive only in the sense that it stands for Brazilian identity rooted in the past. In no sense do Indians represent a project for the future. Paulo Francis, a well-known journalist and TV commentator, whose pieces are syndicated to regional newspapers, wrote a critique of 'eco-fanatics' prior to the Rio conference. He makes an unusually acerbic appraisal of the pro-Indian ecologists, under the title 'Indian wants the whistle (maybe)':

The radical chic, the politically correct, is also to pretend that one likes Indians. Nothing poorer in imagination or resources than our Indian, whom Collor Mello [the president], in the cultural desert of Brasilia, gives lands in abundance, so that the Indian, in the phrase of Vargas Llosa, stays weeping sat upon a golden stool, Amazonia rich in untapped resources. The Mayas at least painted and made sculptures. Our Indians weren't even of use as slaves. Padre Vieira took a long time to convince Pope Paulo II, a corrupt, bourgeois Italian noble, that our Indians had a soul. Paulo II must have given in because Vieira was a pain-in-the-ass in galoches. Until today, it's incredible'. (*A Tarde*, 4/6/92).

This article seems to reflect a prevalent attitude towards indigenous people among the Brazilian middle classes. For most, the image of the Indian as a negatively valued emblem of national poverty and primitivism, savagery and corruption overrides attempts to portray Indian identity in a positive way. At the start of the Rio conference, before the *Veja* Payakan, an article entitled 'Ecology with development', appeared in a leading Rio newspaper. It is by the federal *deputado* (MP) for the right-wing PFL party from Pernambuco, Gilson Machado, at the time president of the parliament's 'Economy, Industry and Commerce Commission'. The sentiments it expresses are not uncommon. The *deputado* had just returned from a visit to Canada and he writes:

What we saw in Canada... includes a practical mission of ecological zeal with development, which should be the aspiration of all. Thus, for the construction of large dams, without agitations or protests, lands belonging to the natives were there inundated. And the preoccupation of the Canadian government was to integrate them to modern society. To continue in their habitat, they became doctors, helicopter and/or airplane pilots, engineers and professionals, perfectly adapted to modern times and, above all, useful to their region. In the USA, I observed Indians practising modern agriculture, operating their tractors with hydraulic drive and even with air conditioning in the cabin. ... The image of the Indian using feathers, living naked and useless, and sleeping in grass huts, really belongs in Westerns from the beginning of this century. Now in South Africa, we know of processes of soil and coal research that, when it comes to making use of them, takes advantage as



well of indigenous labour.... In our country, unhappily, the theme ecology has been extremely undervalued, resulting in the continuation of regions that are poor and without development, which is lamentable. Now, while this goes on, Canada has pine as an export article, so that the timber industry represents one of the most relevant items of external income of that country. We should take advantage of Rio-92 and the lessons of the experience of more advanced peoples that we can have, above all, Ecology with Development. And as for the Brazilian Indian, all of us, who love our land and our people, would like to have him properly integrated to true civilization, as in developed nations. We will never agree to see him eternally dressed in a tanga.' (JTB, 9/6/92 - Machado's emphases).

The message is that Indians stand for the past, for poverty and savagery, whilst the nation's future requires the total transformation of its own savages to be able to enter into the modern age of the whiteman.

Looked at in historical context, we find that the image of the Indian in Brazil is closely tied up with the construction of nationalism as a project for colonizing the interior of the country. Within nationalist ideology, the gender symbolism sustaining the manipulation of the various images of the Indian is complex. Nineteenth century Romantic nationalism created an image of the Tupi warrior as tragic and heroic opponent of the Portuguese conquerors. He stood for National Identity against the foreign invader, a theme that preoccupied politicians at the time. Nationalist symbols based on this image from the mid-nineteenth century still figure in rituals celebrating Brazilian identity. The Indian symbolized a legitimate link to the land. In the twentieth century a new theory of national identity has become popular, based on a concept of cultural and racial miscegenation, where for the first time the African element of population is also associated with national identity. Brazilians are a unique synthesis of the three races and aspects of three associated 'cultures'. For example, a black trade unionist from Bahia explained to me, half-serious, that Brazil has three predominant influences: 'From the Portuguese, we learnt to be liars. From the Indians, to be lazy, and from the Africans, to dance samba and make parties'.

School textbooks appear to be largely responsible for the initial diffusion of the nationalist theory of racial/cultural miscegenation (Lopes da Silva, 1987; Telles, 1984). In general, the category 'Indian' is presented as generic and as belonging to the past. I quote from a text written by two school girls from a poor district of Salvador, based on the books available to them: 'At present there exists on the various continents tribes that find themselves in the palaeolithic or neolithic, like the Brazilian Indians. These 'indigenas' have instruments, religion, custom, that is, a culture that differs from the members of the national community' (Simone & Vera, 1992).

Rocha (1984) analysed images of Indians in twenty history schoolbooks published mainly between 1960 and 1972. Each one tended to copy the information and style of the others. The sources for these books were mostly the reports of early travellers and missionaries rather than recent anthropological studies. According to Rocha the following is representative:

'A close study reveals that the white element predominates over the elements of colour - the pre-historic 'indigena' and the African negro - because these other elements were not numerous enough to dissolve it. The whites, conquerors, imposed themselves on the others, did not even hesitate to cross themselves with them because their culture, superior in all aspects, would have to prevail' (quoted in Rocha c.1976, p. 39).

Rocha states that there are three rubrics under which the Indian enters into the history of Brazil in the books he studied: Under 'Brazilian ethnic group'; under 'Catequization' and under 'The first inhabitants of the earth' (Ibid., p. 34). Rocha notes that the books at one moment pronounce that the two main contributions of the Indian to the national character were *love of liberty* and the *notion of courage* - the Indian hero. Such is the legacy of nineteenth century romantic Indianism. But elsewhere, when the focus is on missionization or on the legitimacy of 'civilizing' of the Indians, they are portrayed as manipulable, innocent victims or as savages and cannibals. Such, I suspect, tends to be the extent of the basic 'information' underlying modern conceptions of indigenous peoples in Brazil among the majority of literate people. I found in my conversations with a diverse range of people in Bahia that these ideas exert considerable influence.

In Freyre's theory of miscegenation modernism reigns triumphant. Difference is celebrated in terms of its inevitable extinction through time. But the hidden and at times explicit message of many popular versions of this theory is the superiority of the white race and European based cultures which will tend to predominate over time (as some of the texts quoted above illustrate). One cannot divorce this facet of nationalist ideology from the social and economic context in which it is produced. Underlying the stark socio-economic inequalities is a hidden racism. Non-whites are aesthetically and morally devalued in practice (for instance in the job market, despite affirmations of so-called 'racial democracy' (Burdick, 1990; 1992). This is reflected in the media, where non-whites - the 'poor', Indians and Blacks are not proper citizens. The 'normative person' is white and well-heeled.

The following story illustrates this point: During the 1992 Olympics the Brazilians had high hopes for the volleyball teams. During play crowds of people stopped to watch the game, cheering on the teams. The men's volleyball team, composed largely of whites, reached the finals. Early on Sunday morning people of all social classes woke to watch the victorious final game. A middle-class white person commented to me: 'It's made me feel good watching the game, because you could see that the entire world will realize that Brazilians are normal people, and not just Indians, like they seem to think'.

This kind of attitude is common. This same person told me that Indians fascinate people in the First World, because there is no poverty there. Here in Brazil, he said, there is far too much filth and misery and so no one is interested in Indians. They stand for backwardness and unreason, for the lowest of the social classes. Brazilians want what the 'First World' already has, he said, - consumer goods, riches, efficient services, urbanization, culture and civilization. This approach is reflected in the tastes of the middle classes and the elite in his home state of Bahia: Holidays in Miami and Orlando; Scotch whisky; Brazilian rock music not samba; and English language courses. For my informant, the nation is pulled down by the ignorant and poverty-stricken masses. The 'Indian' is representative of the odious primitivism sitting at the heart of the nation like a cancer' [18].

Indians are thus in a doubly privileged symbolic site: They are both the enemies of progress (primitives) and the allies of those who have progressed, the rich foreigners (ecologists). The Indian has a strange affinity with the desired other. He is the canny ally of the foreigners whose culture and life-style are so envied, in a desire that contrasts in its homogeneity with the multi-cultural longings of the objects of desire: European or American lifestyles are conceived in opposition to all that is diverse and exotic in Brazil. They are eminently modern. But the suspicion remains strong that the progress of the 'First World' is based upon a theft and threatens to

cast civilized Brazilians into the abyss alongside the 'miserable' and primitives. The alliance between the two groups of others in the environmentalist movement is a case in point. In the discourse of the left and the right, gringo imperialists disguised as 'savers of the rainforest' continue to attempt to steal the national inheritance, whether it be land, minerals or 'data'.

It came as no surprise, then, when TV Manchete programmed in the slot that had belonged to the documentary on the Indians of Xingu a documentary series entitled *America*, a long essay on modernity and music, literature, art, film and society (black and white) in the contemporary U.S.A.

### Modernism, sexuality and *Veja's* Payakan

A few months prior to the Rio conference, a series of investigative reports into child slave prostitution in Amazonia shocked the nation, stimulating the president into a show of intervention (e.g. *FSP*, 07-2-92; See Dimmenstein, 1992). In the public imagination, Amazonia became linked to sexual horrors and perversions. Against this background, there were deeper associations between violent forms of sexuality, masculinist gender constructs and the 'space of the primitive'.

Certain constructs of gender and sexuality, integral to Brazilian primitivism, are explicitly tied in with the construction of national identity. Thus in Manchete's reworking of Alencar's *The Guarani*, Indians are portrayed not only as innocents, as mystically powerful and as cannibals but as sensual, sexually sophisticated, aesthetically naked (like the best of the bikini'd posers on Ipanema beach). The pure Portuguese girl and the Indian hero love each other platonically. The half-breed girl, daughter of a Portuguese and an Indian woman, is incapable of controlling her sexuality and her desires, despite the trappings of Portuguese civilization and Christianity. She is a modern girl in cultural chains - trapped in a past whose future is Brazil.

A gendered image of the Indian is central to the construction of national identity. In right-wing ideology under the dictatorship, the brave warrior is militarized. Occupying the empty space at the heart of the nation in a style exemplified in the later years of the dictatorship by the Kayapo, the warrior is both the brave opponent of the Brazilians and subsequently their conquered and emasculated victim. The process follows the same path as the history of Brazil, told in the schoolbooks to which the military ideologues were no doubt subject: Conquest of the savages, of the heroes; the subsequent humiliation and partial integration through Christian catechization; final assimilation through racial integration and miscegenation.

In texts and political rhetoric defending the 'integration of the Amazon region and its development', metaphors of conquest, penetration and forceful civilization are standard stock. The conquerors are painted as heroes. The process called to mind is at once a militaristic and a masculine one. It uses as its goal a patriarchal vision of the Brazilian family whereby the conqueror, in the civilised space created through his actions, makes of primitives and primitive women his means to populating the space with true Brazilians (his miscegenated offspring). The patriarch's rule over his family is a powerful if contested legacy of the nineteenth century in contemporary Brazil (Parker, 1991). But here, in the empty space of the Amazon, where savages and unsubdued female fertility reigned, masculine identity can be doubly constructed in this historic process of Brazilianization and conquest. First through violent subdual of a virile and worthy opponent (the savage as hero); Then through possession of his woman, the Indian maid.

Brazilians are never descendants of Indian men, in my experience, but always of Indian grandmothers, who married a male

ancestor and were civilized in the process (see also Ramos, 1991, p. 159). In the discourse of nationalist ideologues under the military the images of conquest and penetration of the Amazonian region through the extension of the road network make use of sexual metaphors. Later, in the New Republic, this same language reappears in promoting 'colonies' along the Northern frontier.

In the *Pantanal* television soap opera the story of masculine civilizing conquest is repeated, this time as hero-ranchers conquer wild women mystically linked to the land and to nature (and to the mysteries of knowledge elsewhere attributed to Indian shamans) through sex, love and eventually, marriage. The act of conquest is consummated in pregnancy (see also McCallum, nd.). The tension in the plot revolves around the difficulties in this Brazilian version of the 'final solution' - one where miscegenation and not extermination is the answer.

In Brazil, miscegenation is more than the mixing of races. It is a sign of the virility of whitemen. The past conquests of the white male overlords of the country are signalled in their offspring. Exotic women such as the sexy mulattoes whose gyrating bottoms are filmed year after year by white male TV cameramen (and who have become symbols of Brazilian carnival the world over) are portraits at once of past and future conquests. The conquest, once again, is double - over negro men as much as over their women. The hazy 'Indian grandmother' represents another form of exotic female sexuality that has been stolen from her emasculated savage partner and conquered and transformed into Christian motherhood. By populating of the land through miscegenizing rape or seduction and catechization the conquerors legitimate their 'right' to possession, through the masculine right of conquest on the one hand and through the feminine ties of the conquered to the land on the other. The process of miscegenation is at once a model of history and a model of sexuality, in which gendered images succeed each other in an ordered if violent sequence.

In this sequence enforced penetrative sexuality leading to pregnancy constructs white male identity in a field of power. This is a particularly virile version of the kinds of primitivism discussed by Torgovnick, one that is familiar to Europeans or Americans. It is no surprise, then, that in 1992 right-wing commentators whose natural allies are to be found among the military, like Gilson Machado, should seek to annihilate the differences between the primitive other and the modern self in the interests of progress, development and love of the nation. The project of such powerful politicians, as it was in the 1960s and 1970s, is ideologically a modernist one. The hidden agenda is geo-political (and sometimes no doubt also for personal gain). Such directly political motives also lie behind the case of the *Veja* Payakan, as I have shown. By attacking Payakan, the magazine attacked the ecological lobby and defended the interests of elite groups, right-wing politicians, the military and multinationals in the Amazon. But the media created a particularly bizarre twist in the symbolic potential of real events to achieve its purpose.

If penetrative male sexuality is a metaphor of power, and if it should take place in a field of male competition where other rivals are disempowered, then the *Veja* Payakan as rapist upsets all the stages in the nationalist story as it has been told and retold. He is a monstrous subverter of what should be the status quo, or more exactly, of the course of history. Unlike the negro in the American South, Brazilian Indians are not deemed rapists in potential. On the contrary - they are the objects of rape or its helpless witnesses. Unlike the Arabs of Saudi or the Japanese, Brazilian Indians are never rich and politically powerful - but Payakan and his people are portrayed as such. The *Veja* Payakan is a usurper, an Indian rancher, financier and businessman, a pilot and car driver, an international traveller. He is a pervert conqueror, an enemy of Brazil who has taken the place

- and the land - that should belong to true Brazilians. Yet this is not his worst crime. This is that he has colonized not only the space and rank of the conqueror, but also the processes of conquest itself. If a surgeon in Redempcao sought to emasculate him by sterilizing his wife, he struck back through the monstrous rape of a 'white woman'. Thus did he seek to reassert the same power that his financial eminence and international status had brought him, we might suppose. By so invading the trajectory of the processes of legitimate conquest, he turns the nation against its own history. The *Veja* Payakan and his 'tribe' looms in the imagination, threatening to divert the course prescribed by modernism, and to relegate the nation forever to the murky depths of savagery. At a time of increasing moral chaos and economic recession, it is no surprise that he became as much an anti-hero as PC Farias, the architect of presidential corruption. If the people of Redemption had not proclaimed his existence, then the media would still have invented him - but with another shape and another name.

### Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the symposium "Discovering Native America- Images, texts, politics" at the IIIrd RAI International Festival of Ethnographic Film (14-19 September 1992). Thanks go to William Rowe for very useful comments.
2. None of the 'facts' in this story had been proved in a court of law. The story is the result of a hasty investigation by journalists relying heavily on biased witnesses. The following resume of the story as it appeared in *Veja* should not be taken, therefore, at face value. I do not deal here with the case itself, but with the initial accounts of it in the Brazilian media. I do not comment on the real events of the case, whatever they might be; nor do I discuss Payakan himself.
3. Dressed in body paint and feathers, Kayapo 'warriors' would attract TV and media attention to their cause by public protests, such as at Altamira in 1989, where protests against the dam that would flood their territory attracted prime-time media coverage internationally (see Turner, nd.; Novaes, 1992).
4. Turner argues that anthropology should concentrate upon 'Parole' rather than 'Langue'. But it seems more appropriate here to relate Parole to Langue.
5. She explores these ideas most fully in a chapter on Michel Leiris and African masks and sculptures.
6. See do Santos (1992) on the caboclos. On Spiritism, the idea of spirituality and the Brazilian middle classes, see Hess (1991).
7. Military ideologues in the late 1980s described Indian areas as cancers or cysts in the body of the nation (Albert, 1992). For a more detailed description and analysis see Arnt (1992).

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JB 21-6-92 'Paiacan e um grande vitima'.

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FSP 14-6-92 'Antropologo diz que indio pratica estupro' Ricardo Bonalume Neto.

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## AESTHETICS, AUDIENCE AND THE SOBRIETY OF FILM

Graham Townsley

It is commonplace these days to hear that ethnographic film is in crisis. As evidence of this people point to the grave questions being asked about the power-structures which underpin it, the authorship of the messages that constitute it, the aesthetic and narrative traditions which inform it, and so forth. Taken-for-grantedness about form and style has evaporated. The whole genre is in a state of flux.

But if only this is the crisis, it seems hardly a terrible one. There is surely nothing particularly destructive about the questions being asked of ethnographic film; by and large, they are stimulating ones and have already provoked new approaches and experiments. Critical debate is a sign of health - at least life - and we should be pleased to be at the centre of it. No, if there is a terrible ill besetting ethnographic film it is not this one. It is one which is much less talked about and much more serious, namely, that hardly anybody watches it any more. This is not a creative crisis - it is a potentially terminal one; and has received much less attention. In contrast to the intense concern for the aesthetic integrity of ethnographic film as a thing in itself, the pervasive disinterest in its dwindling audience is striking.

I am not here thinking of the small academic audiences who persevere with it because it is their special interest or duty to do so, but of the mass television audiences who for periods in the 1970s and 1980s, at least in Britain, were regular and enthusiastic watchers of ethnographic film. During these periods, films would go out weekly in one or other of the ethnographic series on British television, confidently expecting to get a minimum of 2 to 3 million viewers. They often got many more.

Today, ethnographic film on British TV is in serious decline. Audiences have fallen away, the pervasive wisdom amongst commissioning editors is that 'anthropology' is bad news for ratings, nobody wants to pay for it any more or watch it. I do not know that anywhere else in Europe it is any different.

Why have audiences switched off? Why did they switch on to ethnographic film in the first place? To both these questions we have no clear answer simply because so little research has been done on real viewer responses. As others have pointed out, one of the important features of the critical debate about style, aesthetics and authorship is that it has not enough considered the effects of ethnographic film and the way it is received by different viewers. If form and style 'say something' there must be somebody there to whom they say it; but for the most part that somebody, along with ethnographic films' effects upon them, are inferred rather than demonstrated and usually by projection from the sensibilities of the highly educated and aesthetically sensitized people involved in the debate itself. There have in fact been remarkably few studies done on the reception of ethnographic film by different types of viewers.

So, for some reason, ethnographic film stopped being interesting to TV audiences and we do not really know why. Certainly, the loosely defined genre of 'ethnographic film' was very much the product of a modernist sensibility with its yearning for authenticity, exotic beauty, its gloom about modernity's destruction of 'the traditional' and its nostalgia for disappearing worlds. Perhaps people are no longer moved by these concerns in the way they used to be and the format, with its fairly standardized message about the evils of encroaching modernity, quite simply lost its interest for people. Perhaps there were just too many poor ethnographic films

for audiences to keep their faith in the genre (and many, even for those with a specialist interest, were dull). Perhaps, with the dominion of the free-market over all TV and the concomitant panic about costs, they were just too expensive.

It is not that there is no interest - either on the part of commissioning editors or audiences - in far-off lands or the 'exotic' peoples which were traditionally the staple of ethnographic film. What is out of fashion is any film which tries to seriously engage with the social-political realities they face or create any sort of sustained, intimate portrait of their way of life. In short, what is out of fashion is exactly the 'discourse of sobriety' which Bill Nichols (1992, p. 47) sees at the heart of traditional ethnographic film.

For Nichols and many others, this sobriety is the hallmark of the master narrative trying to create around itself a spurious and oppressive aura of objectivity. 'Discourses of sobriety treat their relation to the real as non-problematic....Through the discourses of sobriety knowledge/power exerts itself' (*ibid.*, p. 47). It is, of course, to this type of discourse that his critique opposes itself in the name of an aesthetic favouring the dialogic, de-centred and multi-voiced.

I am in sympathy with much of Nichols' critique, but what I want to point out in this piece is an interesting and unfortunate conjuncture which has taken place around this critique of sobriety in ethnographic film. This conjuncture is between, on the one hand, the minority discourse of radical, post-modern critique and, on the other, the much less elaborated but vastly more influential majority discourse of the mass media. Both reject traditional ethnographic film on the grounds of its sobriety.

In the TV version of this critique, ethnographic film is turgid, dull and gets bad ratings. The response, however, is not to broadcast poetically de-centred films which would challenge anybody's concept of the exotic other or indeed anything at all. The hole left by the disappearance of ethnographic film on TV is being filled not by some progressive and interesting development of the genre but by films whose construct of the 'native other' and the exotic is, in almost all respects, worse.

The travelogue has come back into fashion: 'Great Journeys', films which follow some celebrity to a far-off place and rely on his or her presence, trenchant aperçus and jokes to 'bring the place alive' - quite as if it was dead before they got there. The result is usually a jaunty and, to my mind, lame affair which, far from bringing the place alive, makes it disappear behind the personality, and almost inevitable ignorance, of the celeb in question. Alternatively - and this is probably worse - these films try to titillate their audience with a spurious sense of danger and adventure.

Alongside the travelogue, there is the sort of film now popular on some of the big cable channels which avoids engagement by scattering its focus as widely as possible. These give a sense of wandering idly through some exotic place, focusing usually on the wildlife and landscape, to which humans are seen as secondary, conjuring lush images bound together by some vague narrative of otherness, beauty, dreamlike strangeness. The aim of these films is to make these places and the exotic others who inhabit them seem enticing, strange but not alarming, different in a comfortable sort of way. Poetic flashes mingle indiscriminately with fact in a discourse which is that of an animated tourist brochure. The hallmark of these films tends to be, like the travelogue, an almost complete absence of awareness of other peoples real context and their political struggles to cope with it.

While the sober discourses of politics and anthropology are 'out', the even more sober discourses of 'nature' and 'science' are most definitely not. Above all, 'environmentalism' is now the language which has come to frame perceptions of far-off places, particularly their hinterlands, and this has resulted in a host of films in which

indigenous societies are 'fitted in' to a landscape and viewed in much the same way as other animal species. Their 'environmental adaptation' is discussed and their role in the ecological system weighed.

Since very few of these films are made with in-depth knowledge of their subjects - at least where it comes to the complexities of relationship between human groups and environments - they tend to end up recycling conventional stereotypes of popular ecological thinking. Some come off better than others from this process. Amazonian indians, for instance, tend to do well because of their by-now conventional Guardian-of-the-Rainforest status. East African and Sub-Saharan pastoralists do rather worse because one version of conventional wisdom has it, wrongly, that overgrazing is the root of much crop failure and famine. Full of urgency and seriousness, these films do not present themselves as 'like' the sober discourse of science but as the real thing.

In all ways, it seems to me, the traditional subjects of ethnographic film are not only being represented less on TV, they are being represented worse. This situation is not, of course, to be blamed on radical post-modern critiques such as that of Nichols. My question is about his remedy - not whether it is a good remedy but: for whom is it a remedy? Does it matter that hardly anybody will be aware of it? Should we be sanguine about the loss of a mass audience and simply go on trying to develop and refine film discourse?

There is, of course, no moral imperative that film should be for a large audience. Much of the current critique of film aesthetics is intended precisely to release it from the constraints put upon it by its mass-media status - constraints to provide linear narratives, characters, unitary authorship, and other elements of the mainstream Western narrative tradition which make it appealing to a mass audience. Perhaps it is nothing but a boon to be released from these constraints and be free to make the dialogic, multi-voiced, and any other type of films which could challenge that tradition. As anthropologist and film maker, on both aesthetic and moral grounds, I am totally in sympathy with this idea. The question is: who, besides us, will watch these dialogically structured, multi-voiced, multilinear, non-narrative films? The answer, of course, is very few.

Let us conjure an image of a particular state of affairs which may not be that far from the current one. It is a state of affairs in which small numbers of highly educated and aesthetically well-trained people, many or most of them supported by universities, make films which are enjoyed and seen only by a few anthropology graduates and other interested enthusiasts at ethnographic film festivals. 95% of the population has no knowledge that these films exist. This does not mean that they are not potentially interested in ethnographic film's subject matter. Far from it. Crucially, however, when presented with this subject matter in a style which in fact requires a particular type of expertise and training to 'decode' and enjoy, all but a few feel, unsurprisingly, that they are difficult to watch, difficult to understand and, ultimately, difficult to get interested in. They switch over.

As a result, ethnographic film disappears from our TV screens and films which try to take the concerns of other peoples seriously and tell large numbers of people something about their situation, disappear from popular consciousness and become the province of the initiated few.

All this begins to approach the worst possible scenario of post-modernity, in which an aesthetic/intellectual elite decides that all descriptions of the real are 'problematic', that the most radical thing of all is to be concerned with discourse and aesthetics, turns its back on an all-too intractable and complex social/political reality and closets itself with its refined sensibility about language.

Meanwhile the mass-media, which has picked up the general idea from Sunday-Supplement articles about post-modernism that 'sobriety' and the highly serious master narratives of modernism have lost their legitimacy - that fragmentation and incoherence are fine - gives itself over to crass and frivolous info-tainment.

Is there a remedy for this situation? As far as ethnographic film on TV is concerned I believe there is. It is certainly not in a return to the sort of turgid master-narrative about 'Culture' and 'Tradition' that Nichols and others have criticized so well. Film makers should really get abreast of the developments in anthropology and the intellectual world in general which have left behind the static view of culture - ours' and 'exotic ones included - as a 'thing' somewhere out there with definable rules which can be captured by filming rituals. The knee-jerk reflex of TV film makers to go for facile paint-and-feathers documentaries should, at all costs, be curbed.

At the same time, the remedy is unlikely to be in the de-centred narratives called for by Nichols - at least as far as TV is concerned. This is not to turn against experimental film or the exploration of radically different narrative structures but to remind ourselves that since this is a minority taste and will interest few people it is very unlikely to make much difference, above all to the subjects of our films.

This is the key point. We should remember that ethnographic film was never solely about exoticising other cultures and serving them up for the entertainment of a Euroamerican audience. However poorly, incompletely, distortedly it represented other cultures, ethnographic film by and large portrayed its subjects - usually marginalised, small-scale societies who are politically powerless - in a good, even rosy, light and advocated their rights to some sort of self-determination. Although the subjects of these films have very rarely controlled their own representation, these films did give them access to a large audience and allowed them to put their case. They potentially made a difference because they interested and moved a large number of people.

Through the many millions of people who watched *Disappearing Worlds* and other similar series these films had a powerful function in forming attitudes, and, in some cases, governmental policy. The almost total disappearance from our TV screens of this type of film has been a loss not just to enthusiasts interested in making and watching such films, but to the peoples who were represented in them. Their lives are now more remote not only to the majority of people in the 'developed' world but also to the urban elites in their own countries who, via cable, are fast being included in the audience for these types of documentary.

In the light of all this, I suspect that the remedy is in a development of the genre which is sober - less the sobriety of scientific master narrative and more that of reportage. Ethnographic film should colonise the arenas of information, action, and advocacy to which it lends itself well and which could powerfully underscore its legitimacy. Like the best reportage it should bring back news from little-known worlds, either close at hand or distant, of the struggles people face there and involve us in them. Rather than looking for refractory filmic languages, it should master the art of dramatic narrative - an art which surprisingly few TV documentary-makers possess - and like good drama, involves us in different worlds through their characters and the conflicts they face. It should learn the art of telling stories forcefully, coherently and in a language that its audience understands.

Rather than trying to subtly subvert stereotypes of 'the other', 'the primitive', 'the exotic' through stylistic devices of language and discourse, it should subvert them head on. To take an example that I happen to know from my own anthropological work, in order to deconstruct the image of the Amazonian indian as Noble Savage

living in timeless harmony with the forest: one has to know that all indian groups in the Amazon are essentially the tiny and isolated remnants of populations that were decimated by the 19th century rubber boom; one has to understand how indian understandings of the world, even those of the remotest groups, have been deeply shaped by an experience of colonialism going back not just a few years, but for centuries. Why, in all the plethora of paint-and-feather documentaries from Amazonia has this story never really been told properly? Films, like ethnography, should get out of some timeless ethnographic present and tell the histories behind the people whose lives they reveal.

There is no question but that ethnographic film has to be reinvented and one of the ways this could be done is as a popular form which is not afraid to use established narrative techniques and stylistic devices, but uses them, like good rhetoric, with the aim of making its audience sit up, listen and really take notice of the story it has to tell. This, more than the search for fragmented, non-linear forms, actually stands to make a difference to the worlds which are the content of our films.

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## ON SOME CONCEPTS OF REALITY IN ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM-MAKING.

*Evelyn Rüsseler, University of Munich, Germany*

### Introduction

This paper focuses on the question of how concepts of reality are established in ethnographic films. Based on the Sapir-Whorf-hypothesis it is argued that human perception is culturally determined. Several examples of culturally specific film languages are presented and discussed.

The question of authorship, authority and authenticity is raised since it still seems to be significant who stands behind the camera looking at whom. As the film-makers have been anthropologists in most of the cases it seems legitimate to ask whether concepts of reality in anthropology have had an impact on the ethnographer's film work. There seems to be a similar development of paradigms in anthropological theory and ethnographic film styles. Apart from the positivist paradigm the interpretive/hermeneutical approach to understanding culture, as well as the latest shift towards self-reflexivity in anthropological theory, have had an impact on ethnographic film production, film style, and consumption. Until quite recently most ethnographic films have been produced for scientific purposes only and distribution has been limited to expert audiences. This situation has completely changed in three ways:

1. The level of indigenous film production is increasing continuously.
2. Film aesthetics have changed because questions of authorship, authority and authenticity are answered differently today.
3. Modes of consumption and the range of audience completely changed as major TV companies, mostly in Great Britain, started to produce ethnographic films thus making them more accessible to a wider audience.

### The cultural determination of perception

'...We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation.' (E. Sapir, quoted in Whorf, 1956, p. 134)

The Sapir-Whorf-hypothesis formulates a close relationship between language, thought, behaviour, world view and reality of a culture and it is often referred to as linguistic relativity principle:

We are thus introduced to a new principle of relativity, which holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated. (Whorf, 1956, p. 214)

Whorf's thesis is based upon the notion of structural difference of all languages. He compares Standard Average European (SAE) with Hopi and Eskimo languages and resumes,

... that users of markedly different grammars are pointed by their grammars toward different types of information and different evaluations of externally similar acts of observation, and hence are not equivalent as observers but must arrive at somewhat different views of the world. (Whorf, 1956, p. 221)

It may be true that Whorf's ideas have been overemphasizing the significance of grammar and neglecting other important factors of the process of shaping an individual's world view as race, class and

gender. To the study of intercultural perception and to visual anthropology as a whole Whorf's findings are still valuable.

Actually, neo-Whorfian research groups are booming again in the field of linguistics (e.g. at the Max-Planck Institute of Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, Netherlands) and it does not seem likely that cultural relativism will lose its relevance for the social sciences in the near future. In some ways Whorf's findings could even stimulate the formulation of a principle of visual relativity analogous to the linguistic one. This may sound somewhat far-fetched, yet some authors have been successful in empirical work carried out on the hypothesis of cultural relativism.

So were Sol Worth and John Adair in 1968 when they worked with a group of Navajos in Arizona on the question of how Navajos perceive their world and whether there is a difference to the white man's world. Before referring to the examples illustrating the thesis of the cultural determination of perception I would like to point out the dilemma of the blind spot in (inter-)cultural perception. The member of a given culture (i.e. language group) cannot perceive what is beyond the scope of his culturally limited body of knowledge and range of behaviour. In case of culture contact parts of the cultural knowledge and behaviour will be congruent and others will not. Therefore he will come across certain blind spots when communicating with members of a different culture.

Sol Worth describes his amazement in a situation where he was watching two Navajo women shooting their films:

She shot very little while I was there - she didn't do any cover shots-any face shots- or any of the things I showed her. She did not seem to do any close-ups of anything at all. Not sand painting- not cans of sand- not hands- nothing. She certainly wasn't photographing the sand painting itself so as to show it either take shape or show it clearly at any point. It is a question of deciding whether she is just an inferior photographer or just terrified to shoot in this situation or whether the entire event is seen by her in a system so different from mine that I can't understand what she is doing. (Worth, 1972, p. 164)

The blind spot would still be more than just the sum of the culturally specific unknown and unconscious; it can be considered as precisely the point where one member of a culture is not able to perceive and act consciously the same way a member of another culture does.

### Film language and culture: the Navajo example

In the late 1960s Sol Worth and John Adair did some fieldwork to prove the Sapir-Whorf-hypothesis of the cultural determination of perception with a group of Navajos in Pine Springs, Arizona. They investigated the question whether there would be something like a 'Navajo-ness of seeing' and whether it could express itself in film-making. Relating to the film work they had done with black and white American city youth the researchers were particularly interested in answering questions on the nature of film and language ('Do the divisions of film language follow the normal linguistic divisions?/ 'How do people see themselves through film?'), on how a culture develops its specific codes ('Why and how develops a culture special and preferred methods of communication for different purposes and how do these preferences change over time?'). Visual images and imaginations were seen to be connected more closely to cultural patterns than modes of verbal communication. Thus, it was assumed that the Navajo film-makers made use of a film language that had a culturally specific shape too. Obviously, the fact that the Navajos were trained in film-making by Anglo-Americans could have blurred the results of the research.

A group of seven Navajo men and women volunteered to be shown how to operate a 16mm camera, some basics of film language

as to what kind of shots there are and how to edit. A one-month camera training gave the students an idea of how to make a film about their life and their culture from a subjective point of view. Eventually everybody chose a subject and began shooting his/her 'bio-documentary'. The films were usually short and focused on a variety of daily-life topics as silver-smith work, healing, weaving etc.

The material that was analyzed by Worth and Adair was remarkable in many regards. First, all of the films were technically well-made and showed a very conscious use of aesthetic elements. At first sight, the film style did not seem unfamiliar to the researchers. Soon they realized that the narrative structure of the Navajo films did not follow an Euro-American type of chronology and that the Navajos used visual codes in a quite different way.

*The Navajo Silver-smith* by Johnny Nelson shows the silver-smith walking to the mine to get the silver and walk back. This process takes up most of the film. The actual making of a piece of jewellery is only shown briefly in the end. Similarly with the film *A Navajo Weaver* by Susie Benally: walking to find wool and get other materials necessary for weaving takes up 15 minutes of the 20-minute film. The analysis of the films revealed that the events in time and space were represented through the same cultural patterns that were used in oral tradition. Close-up shots which had been introduced by the researchers were generally rejected and not used by the Navajo film-makers.

Navajos distinguish between films that were made according to Navajo aesthetic criteria from those that were made by Anglo-Americans. Subjects filmed in a Navajo film-style found a greater resonance and had a larger audience. Only traditional subjects, though, were approached with a traditional narrative structure. Modern topics were narrated the 'English way'.

*The Shallow Well* by J. Nelson provides a perfect example. Shot in the style of an educational film document, the camera focuses closely on the action of constructing the well. There are close-ups of tools and working hands (no facial close-ups here either) and in the end you see the finished shallow well and Sol Worth, depicting a Navajo, getting water. With their work done, we see men climb on to a station wagon and rolling off. Cut. End.

The Worth-Adair project shows that the method of using film in finding out about culturally specific concepts of time, space, movement and chronology and communicating them has proven to be quite successful and stimulating in the sense of reflecting one's own cultural patterns of representing 'reality':

In a period when both social sciences and the mass media are increasingly showing us the world out there through film, it becomes extremely important for us to realize that we do structure reality through film, and that the structuring process embodies our notions of appropriateness, our notions of what is important, right and good. (Worth and Adair, 1972, p. 253)

### Reality, drug visions and celluloid imagery: the Kashinawa example

Since 1977 Barbara Keifenheim and Patrick Deshayes have recurrently carried out fieldwork with the Kashinawa (Huni Kuin) who live close to the Brazilian-Peruvian border. Gradually the anthropologists entered into a lively discourse about images with the Kashinawa. Images the Indians had in mind about white people. Whites were considered to be the owners of metal, living in cold areas close to the bottom of the world mound. In order to keep the metal they had to pay a high price: constant lack of meat, low numbers of children and tiresome work at machines all day long. The white men's underworld of metal is associated with coldness, sickness and death. The Kashinawa see themselves as living in the

upper regions of the world mound where the climate is more friendly and food resources abundant. During their contacts with white people, most of whom were merchants and missionaries, the Kashinawa had the opportunity to reevaluate their image of the Whites. They experienced the machines the white people used for taking pictures: cameras.

In the early 1950s the German traveller Harald Schultz stayed with the Kashinawa for a while and shot some 16mm footage that is archived at the Institute for Scientific Film in Göttingen. During Schultz' stay an epidemic of measles broke out and three quarters of the population died. The Indians saw the reason for the catastrophe in the fact of having been photographed. As they had seen their mini-portraits in the view-finders of the cameras, they assumed that the taking away of their miniature souls was killing them (Keifenheim, 1987, p. 72). To the Kashinawa the gaze through the camera's viewfinder had the air of being dangerous as they related it to contexts of aiming at an animal when hunting or having visions after taking hallucinogenic drugs.

Keifenheim and Deshayes started an exchange of images with the Kashinawa. They returned pictures taken (Polaroids) to the depicted person to emphasize that the picture-taker had no exclusive right to them. Photographs of France and Germany, with the anthropologists' families on them were offered in exchange with food, household items or other photographs. Eventually the chief of the Kashinawa, who had been to a cinema once, allowed filming under the condition that the anthropologists would bring back a film of white men's life in the world of metal. This was done. Upon their return Keifenheim and Deshayes brought a film on Paris and another film on steel factories in the 'Ruhrgebiet' (Germany).

They had established an exchange relationship with the Kashinawa that had transformed the viewer and the viewed. When screening the film of the workers dealing with the melting steel in the factories the Kashinawa associated the film images with their drug visions. The film images were considered to be as strong and as dangerous, and they were not at all experienced as new. The only thing was that they made you sick because you could not throw them up as you would do with drug visions if they became too powerful (Keifenheim, 1987, p. 83). Drug visions are related to the outside world, the wilderness, the bush, the world of spirits, the world of the dead, the world of the strangers, the world of the white people. By taking drugs you envision this outside world, you get in contact with things outside of your body. Drugs are used as an information medium that gives spiritual access to the outside world. Therefore film images were categorized in the idiom of drug visions.

In contrast to average European film audiences the Kashinawa have no problem with the distinction of reality from fiction even if they deal with documentary shots. All film images are closely connected to the realm of fantasy, fiction and vision.

### Reality of culture as discourse in anthropological theory

Recently the relation of culture to reality has come into focus of theoretical debate in anthropology again. Whether we consider this to be an effect of the literary turn or as an outcome of the general postmodern climate in the social sciences does not make a big difference. It is important though that through the discourse on how to write ethnographies (which reflects back on the production of anthropological theory) the issues of authenticity, authorship and authority were dealt with. The attempt of acquiring 'hard facts' on cultural behaviour through fieldwork failed as well as the idea of establishing the myth of objectivity in the social sciences.

Recent developments in the natural sciences, especially in physics, have challenged the world of science as a whole. Chaos

theory, non-linear modelling, and cognitive research tried to prove the notion of objectivity as obsolete. As far as anthropological theory-building is concerned we cannot rely on single-voiced authorship of the anthropologist's field account any more. On the contrary there are shared partial truths, different points of view. We have to admit the relativity of our basis of knowledge production. This is also true for ethnographic film production being closely related to anthropological theory-building (see e.g. Crawford, 1992).

The ambiguous concepts of objectivity, truth and reality were transferred into ethnographic film-making as well as into ethnographic writing as if they were non-ambiguous. The mimetic approaches to depicting reality have been innumerable. This has been enhanced by the documentary tradition in ethnographic film-making. Since the late 1960s the direct cinema approach is the predominant film style among filmmaker-anthropologists. It has been argued elsewhere how direct cinema style perfectly matches the concept of ethnographic field method characterised by unobtrusive observational behaviour.

A critical position towards the attempt to depict reality through film has been taken by a number of scholars both in the field of documentary film theory and visual anthropology (Nichols, 1981; Ruby, 1982; Petermann, 1988). The actual crisis is not only a crisis of theory - it is more than that: it is a crisis of representation of cultures to one another. In order to overcome that crisis it is necessary to reevaluate the epistemological basis of knowledge production in anthropological theory and in ethnographic film-making.

### Reality as style element in ethnographic films

As visual anthropologists and as anthropologist-filmmakers we are dealing with discourses of reality and truth, truth about what we have seen, about what people think, feel and on how they act. Truth, thick description and actuality is what the traditional documentary audiences are believed to want, untouched by the theoretical debate on the obsolescence of truth.

In ethnographic film-making the issue of how to depict reality (and/or how to construct reality) is at least two-fold. Linked to the discourses of scientific truth, objectivity, 'ethnographicness' (Heider, 1976), expertise and ethnographic method, there is another set of assumptions on how to grasp 'reality' (which is all the material and cognitive forms of human behaviour, all the hidden and unseen attitudes towards social and cosmic order) originated in documentary film theory.

There is the notion of the similarity of the camera to the human eye that has produced the ideology of 'seeing' reality through film. This notion has been criticized by a number of scholars (Nichols, 1981; Ruby, 1982; Petermann, 1988; Trinh, 1984) and certainly there is some evidence on the neurophysiological level that the human eye works quite differently than a camera.

In the course of film history we learn that in earliest ethnographic film production (Edison, Griffith, the Lumière Brothers) many feature film style elements were used. Whole scenes were carefully arranged, staged and behaviour was reenacted. 'Acting' was not unpopular at all. 'Fake Indians' were as common as having white people with faces blackened by shoe-polish staging 'negroes'

When ethnographic film emerged as a sub-genre of documentary film more realistic approaches were taken. With the heightened mobility of the filmmaker, made possible by the development of portable 16mm film cameras and sound equipment the concept of recording reality as it takes place in front of our eyes emerged. *Cinéma vérité* in France, *Direct cinema* in the U.S.A. and similar schools in other European countries produced a new kind of documentary film with synchronous sound interviewing and shoulder camera



walks etc. They soon set up a set of rules for themselves in order to become more and more realistic. 'No fake' was the motto. Methods, techniques and tools for realistic representation of an event were developed and a realistic mode became the most dominant convention in documentary film-making since the 1960s. The observational film style with its close linkage to the paradigm of participant observation became most popular among visual anthropologists since many of them considered ethnographic fieldwork as the basis of their work. Since the 1970s the observational film style has been heavily criticized because of its lack of analysis (MacDougall 1975; 1982). Only occasionally filmmakers like the MacDougalls crossed the lines of the observer. The ruling dogma of simply observing real events and gathering data has led ethnographic film production into a one-way street as cinematographic images are composed by the cinematographer. Finally the editing process gives film its complex structure and makes it an artificial product.

The 'realistic mode' has also been challenged for other reasons. Filmmakers like Trinh and others crossed the lines by generating a narrative or building a discursive storyline or creating a personal language of images and sound. But all this happened on the fringe of mainstream documentary production that became TV production for its best part (see e.g. Roth, 1982, p. 144ff).

Since ethnographic writing and ethnographic method as a whole entered into crisis in the 1980s, the modes of representation in ethnographic film-making have been subject of criticism, too. The topics of authority, authorship and authenticity are being discussed among visual anthropologists. Often being discharged as having their origin in literary criticism postmodern arguments did find their way into the discourse on visual representation of culture.

### Authorship, authority and authenticity

A high level of authenticity in a film cannot be achieved by a gesture of objectivity pretending to merely be gathering data; it is crucial how things are shown on the screen. This is not only because a sequence reveals a good deal of information about the filmmaker's attitude towards the people filmed (i.e. vicinity or distance) but also because it expresses the authority the film claims. (Petermann, 1988, p. 2, my translation from German)

Ethnographic film-making seems to meet with ethnographic method in the concept of the authentic. If this is the case, it is partly because of the definition of fieldwork which is, roughly outlined, the collection of ethnographically relevant data in the field. Upon return to the desk at home these data are systemized and categorized and finally written up as articles or monographs. The anthropologist becomes an author whose voice is shaping and transforming the body of data, dialogue and knowledge into a discourse of anthropology. The process of transformation that takes place while writing up the field notes certainly extends along the lines of scientific as well as literary traditions the author feels part of. The fact of 'first-hand contact' however only legitimizes the interpretative job done by the author. In written ethnography and in film 'authority seems to be with the 'makers' of the product: there are always films about others' (Petermann, 1988, p. 78, my translation). Thus, the style of the field report or film becomes decisive and not the indigenous concepts of reality and/or the product film.

To what extent does the film represent an image of the observed notion of reality? The filmic representation of reality is an interpretative system as is science. Continuously we have to face the paradox that science is still more interested in the results of research done by anthropologists than in the subject of the studies themselves.

The deconstruction of the scientist's monologue and its inherent authority is rather linked with the influence that aesthetic representational systems gained in anthropology than it is due to the crisis of the representational system of science itself.

### Perspectives of ethnographic film-making

It was Jay Ruby (1982) who predicted ethnographic cinema to move into a one-way street if anthropologist-filmmakers continued to define their work according to the exclusive standards of art or science. The paradigm of the authentic, the concept of the camera recording reality creates representational and narrative patterns as well as film styles that pay tribute to the explanatory urge of science. Again Jay Ruby aimed at a new paradigm of ethnographic film-making when he wrote that anthropological thought should anticipate ethnographic film-making and vice versa. Observation should be interwoven with interpretation as comparison with analysis and method with theory. To think about a new paradigm of ethnographic film-making would mean to reflect upon film as a means of intercultural communication as well. It is not sufficient to simply utilize it as a research tool. The state of self-reflection which led to the crisis of ethnographic writing has eventually expanded into the field of visual anthropology which could be beneficial to the production of new, challenging ethnographic films.

As has been shown above, perception is determined by cultural patterns, and so is ethnographic film. As the amount of indigenous film production in countries like Australia, Canada and the U.S. is constantly rising, it seems predictable that a variety of film styles will emerge and most of them will differ from what we usually have been considering as the rules of Western documentary (and fiction in the early days) that shaped the genre of ethnographic film all along its history. The reality mode has been challenged in ethnographic writing and will be challenged in film-making because there is only partial truth in our images and no way of taking them for more than they are: vague attempts to share one's preconceptions about what is to be seen by and to be communicated to an audience.

### Notes

1. For 'fake Indians' see FIRING THE CABIN (1908, 2,25 min., USA) by W. McCutcheon. For actors staging black people with their faces blackened artificially see THE ZULU'S HEART (1908, 10 min., USA) by D. W. Griffith.

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*On the Trail of the Native's Point of View*  
**THE GÖTTINGEN INTERNATIONAL  
 ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM FESTIVAL**  
 Göttingen, Germany, May 11-15, 1994

Jeffrey Ruoff, Department of Drama and Film, Vassar College, U.S.A.

### A Home for Ethnographic Film

For five days, filmmakers and anthropologists from over twenty different countries watched ethnographic films at the second Göttingen International Ethnographic Film Festival at the Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film. Göttingen, an old university town in Germany, offered a peaceful setting for an eclectic selection of films and videos from Asia, Africa, North America, and Europe. Under clear skies, the atmosphere of the festival was casual and friendly, more reminiscent of the Robert Flaherty Film Seminar than other festivals of ethnographic film, such as the Festival dei Popoli in Florence, the Margaret Mead Film Festival in New York, or the Bilan du Film Ethnographique in Paris. From May 11-15, 1994, Göttingen drew an international audience of 300 scholars and filmmakers, plus a collection of students mostly from Germany. There were no concurrent screenings, so all those in attendance saw the same films, allowing for good conversations at meal times. In addition, most of the festival guests were staying at one of two different hotels, contributing to the cohesive ambience. The festival party, with dancing until three o'clock in the morning on May 14, confirmed this feeling of camaraderie.

### Student Film Competition

The festival opened with a Student Film Competition, which consisted of twelve videotapes, in competition for a Hi-8 video camera donated by SONY, one of the sponsors. Many of the productions were shot in video, and most of these were shot on semi-professional or small-format amateur equipment. The student screenings were well-attended and there was a good deal of speculation and interest in the competition. Most of the festival goers thought that the separate student competition was a good idea. In general, the student films were the same quality as the films in the main selection, which makes one wonder why they were segregated. During the award presentation, anthropologist Asen Balikci stated that many of the student works 'could have been easily included in the main festival program'.

The Student Film Competition included videos from Germany, the United States, the Netherlands, Palestine, Hungary, Denmark, Portugal, Iran, and Great Britain. The thesis work of M.A. students from the Granada Centre at Manchester University in England dominated the student competition, including Hanna Musleh's *Sahar's Wedding* (1992), Charlie Clay's *Pepsi War* (1992), Kristin MacLeod's *Bash Street* (1993), and Catarina Alves Costa's *Back to the Homeland* (1992), the deserving winner of the competition. The dominant style of these productions - and hence the style counselled, however informally, by the selection committee - involved observational sequences combined with interviews, sound segments of which were occasionally used over images. Voice-over commentary was comparatively rare.

Many of the student videographers were taping their 'own' cultures, as was the case with Ali Attar's *I Swear, I Love Spring* (1994), about a harvest festival prohibited in years past by the Iranian government; Amanda Crane's *Many Will Come* (1994), a University of

Southern California production about Catholics in Santa Maria, California; Margriet Jansen's *Witchcraft as Religion* (1993), about new age sects in Holland; Zoltan Fredi's *Rushes* (1993), a parable about homelessness in Hungary; MacLeod's *Bash Street*, a portrait of a homeless man in Manchester; Costa's *Back to the Homeland*, about Portuguese immigrants returning during vacation to their homes; and Musleh's *Sahar's Wedding* about the ritual of marriage in Palestine. Musleh nicely combined insider and outsider perspectives to explore family life in the context of political upheaval. Rounding out the Student Film Competition were *My Bisnis is Soup* (1994), Sebastian Eschenbach and Karin Klenke's affectionate portrait of a street seller in Bali, Indonesia, a promising first video; Peter Lutz's *Out of Place* (1993), about Bosnian refugees in Sweden; Thomas Hammer's *Carnival in Wasungen* (1993), about a government-sponsored festival in the former East Germany; and Lone Sahl Liboriussen's *Almighty, Satan and the Boys* (1992), a look at a street painter in Ghana.

Few of the student works offered explanations or interpretations; decidedly the emphasis was on showing versus telling. All too often, however, the showing was not enough as directors referred viewers to their written M.A. theses for answers to questions about context and interpretation. To my knowledge, none of them brought copies of the written theses to Göttingen. Did the absence of analysis in the videos result from a hesitation to interpret other cultures, an unwillingness to advance an outsider's perspective, and a fear of making judgments?

Some directors argued that analysis is anathema to the medium, that film and video succeed best at conveying a sense of place, mood, tempo, and feeling. Peter Lutz, whose *Out of Place* showed a stylistic mastery that eluded many of the other student videos, stated outright what was implicit in many of the directors' comments. 'Film,' according to Lutz, 'represents feelings better than ideas'. Any Hollywood producer would say the same thing. However, visual anthropologists should remain committed to a cinema of ideas, a cinema as theoretically informed, as thoughtfully constructed, and as empirically rich as written ethnography. Costa's *Back to the Homeland*, through judicious interviews and editing, managed to provide a richer sense of context and analysis than most of the other student productions. The jury awarded Costa's 35-minute video for the clarity of its presentation, the use of purely cinematic techniques, and the absence of a 'miserabilist philosophy prevalent in many social documentaries'. Speaking for the jury, Balikci noted that 'one almost feels a feminine touch,' a dubious compliment that underscored the absence of works addressing issues of gender at the Göttingen festival.

### Question-and-Answer Sessions

The festival organizers allowed twenty minutes for public discussion after each screening, an excellent idea that unfortunately didn't live up to its promise. The discussion was not always well facilitated. Selection committee members read their statements justifying the works shown, but these comments rarely provoked interesting responses. Questions were often predictable and one festival goer privately listed five proto-typical questions: 1) Did the subjects like the film?, 2) How did the camera influence the subjects' behaviour?, 3) What kind of camera did the filmmaker use?, 4) How long did the filming last?, 5) Is it ethically defensible to make films about other people? To my knowledge, no one ever asked what anthropological paradigm—functionalism, structuralism, interpretive anthropology, post-modernism, etc.—the directors favoured.

Another participant suggested that the discussions would have benefited from a charismatic, and opinionated, figure who could galvanize the debate. The exchanges after the projections were

simply question-and-answer sessions rather than actual dialogues. In addition, discussion generally lagged in the absence of the filmmaker. Conference organizers repeatedly apologized for the few filmmakers who did not attend, as if nothing could really be debated without the director. But films, like ethnographic monographs, are made to be analyzed and criticized in the absence of their authors. Anyone who has ever heard a question-and-answer session with Frederick Wiseman knows that a more fruitful exchange would take place without him. Furthermore, the meanings of films and videos lie not in the intentions of the directors, but in the minds of the audience. However, at Göttingen, the absence of the filmmaker guaranteed that little would be said during the public discussion.

The festival was conducted in English. This fact probably contributed to the reticence of some viewers to participate in the public discussions. Given the international character of ethnographic films and their audiences, directors should consider subtitled their films systematically, in whatever language they deem appropriate. Even videos shot in English - such as MacLeod's portrait of a homeless man in Manchester or my own *Hacklebarney Tunes: The Music of Greg Brown* (with Andrea Truppin, 1993) about a singer/songwriter from the midwestern United States - were not automatically comprehensible to native speakers. In this way, subtitled and titled could become a dramatic component of visual anthropology, rather than an afterthought.

Not surprisingly, the best discussions took place during the breaks between films, the breakfasts, lunches, and dinners that festival goers shared at the IWF cafeteria and elsewhere. Each day, viewers could count on a consistent group of people with whom to share reactions. At these times, vast quantities of coffee and German cakes were served up by the amiable IWF staff. The festival offered films and tapes from nine o'clock each morning until eleven o'clock each night, a rigorous schedule that didn't allow much time to rest. Anthropologist Nashko Kriznar admitted, guiltily, that he went to buy a postcard and missed seeing two films as a result.

### The Place of Voice-Over Narration

Purely observational works - apart from Frederick Wiseman's *Zoo* (1993) and Fredi's *Rushes* - were nowhere to be found at the festival, while voice-over narration appeared to be strictly 'verboten'. Unlike many of the productions shown, Fredi's short video, his first, exhibited a rare unity of style and purpose. Almost a Rouchian single-take experiment, *Rushes* ambled unsteadily from the inside of a wealthy house in Budapest to observe, through a forest of trees, an opulent party taking place next door. The videographer then proceeded, in a continuous long take, to an encampment where a homeless man was sleeping under a makeshift roof. Without any dialogue or spoken words, but with considerable suspense, *Rushes* made a compelling statement about the social injustice of contemporary Budapest. The video ended with a freeze frame of the young director reflected in the window of his home, an image implicating him in the social hierarchy.

By rejecting voice-over narration, visual anthropologists at Göttingen boxed themselves into a stylistic corner; many asserted that commentary was inherently un-cinematic and, worse, essentially authoritarian. Nevertheless, in the question-and-answer periods after the projections, typical complaints about the lack of context surfaced, especially in the case of Clay's *Pepsi War*, which contained some exciting footage of ritual warfare in New Guinea, but little explanation. Clay's principal informant was a tribal leader with a Ph.D., an arrangement that promised an intriguing mix of insider and outsider perspectives. Unfortunately, the sensationally-titled video failed to deliver. Clay admitted that he had 'no idea what was going on' while he was filming, though he referred to Bob Connolly

and Robin Anderson's *Black Harvest* (1991) and Robert Gardner's *Dead Birds* (1963) as models for his work. One wonders if good examples of voice-over narration, such as Gardner's, may be taught to students so that both didacticism and lack of context may be overcome.

In the introduction to the festival catalogue, anthropologist Peter Crawford reiterated the selection committee's disappointment with films that were marred by heavy voice-over narration. Ethnographic film, still very much in its infancy as a coherent body of work, appears destined to recapitulate the stylistic evolution of documentary film. In the 1960s, observational cinema - in the work of Robert Drew, Richard Leacock, and the Maysles brothers - reacted against what Drew dubbed 'illustrated lectures,' pictures with continuous voice-over commentary, still the mainstay of television journalism. Similarly, when Leacock taught documentary filmmaking in the 1970s, voice-over narration was considered an unacceptable technique. However, American documentaries in the 1980s, such as Jill Godmilow's *Far From Poland* (1985), Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March* (1985), and Michael Moore's *Roger and Me* (1989), rediscovered the possibilities of voice-over, using personal, ironic, and interpretive commentary to counterpoint the synchronous images and sounds.

Obviously, voice-over narration need not be the only filmic technique for making interpretive statements about culture. Any fluent camera, sound, and editing style offers certain perspectives on reality. During this period of growth, ethnographic film should embrace a wide variety of styles. In the wake of *cinéma vérité*, and Jean Rouch's praise of the participant camera, nearly all of the productions exhibited at Göttingen used hand-held cameras and available light, as if artificial lights and tripods were un-filmic or unauthentic devices. While a tripod was considered bad, handheld camera work that appeared 'as steady as a tripod' was lauded. Imagine assuming about fiction film that Miklós Jancsó's roving camera was, by definition, better at representing reality than Yasujiro Ozu's fixed camera. Rouch at least acknowledged that his camera work in *Madame L'Eau* (1993) was almost wilfully bad and that visual anthropologists should beware of the trap of producing beautiful images.

Gloriously shot, using almost exclusively natural light, David MacDougall's *Time of the Barmen* (1993) offered a pastoral elegy to the lives of Sardinian shepherds, a way of life gradually giving way to agro-tourism and economic development. This 16mm film relied on long sequence shots with very little dialogue, or action, to slowly detail the worlds of three generations of shepherds, deliberately structured to explore historical change. MacDougall was invited to make a film about shepherds by the Istituto Superiore Regionale Etnografico of Sardinia. He emphasized during the question-and-answer session that, since he didn't speak the local language, he decided to focus more on non-verbal communication.

The first twenty minutes of *Time of the Barmen* introduced the viewer to the sounds and sights of the Sardinian mountains, and the work of the shepherds, without any auxiliary commentary or interviews. There was even less dialogue than in Wiseman's *Zoo*, which, incidentally, consisted primarily of anthropomorphic conversations between keepers and animals. MacDougall gradually introduced interview material later in the film to flesh out ideas implicit in the scenes of everyday life. In this documentary, MacDougall moved away from the intertitles and Brechtian interrogative devices that he employed in earlier films, such as *The Wedding Camels* (with Judith MacDougall, 1980), for a seamless narrative style that used shifts from scene to scene for contrast and comment, not unlike Wiseman's work.

In *Zoo*, Wiseman, too, examined the relationship between nature and culture, between human beings and their animal brethren, issues he touched upon in *Primate* (1974) and *Meat* (1976). However, Wiseman's increasingly diffuse observational style left too much up to the audience at Göttingen. Very few viewers at the festival - trained anthropologists, filmmakers, and students - offered interpretive statements when asked what they thought about *Zoo*; most said that it was about 'how a zoo works'. A study of anthropomorphism, as well as the control of nature, *Zoo* delineated a totally artificial environment. The director insisted upon the fact that every twig, every tree, every part of the ecosystem was pruned and arranged.

Wiseman constructed an Orwellian world in which *Animal Farm* encountered 1984; the activities of the animals were relentlessly observed, noted, photographed, and documented at every stage of life and death, in a rigorous scientific manner, by *Homo Sapiens*. In an ironic twist near the end of the film, typical of Wiseman's dark sense of humour, unleashed domestic dogs ran 'wild' in the zoo, killing several animals, and were mercilessly tracked down and shot by the personnel. Unplanned actions - eruptions of the natural order, so to speak - were clearly not tolerated. The final sequences focused on the totalitarian regulation of reproduction as eggs were taken away from a crocodile's underground nest, counted, weighed, measured, photographed, and placed in an incubator, while a male wolf was castrated, in a surprisingly amusing scene, by a group of women veterinarians. Wiseman addressed the manipulation of nature more astutely in *Primate*, however, which chronicled experiments devoted to controlling violence and sexual behaviour in our closest animal relatives.

### 'The Native's Point of View'

Most of the directors, many of whom were in attendance - one of the strengths of the festival - claimed that the mixture of observational scenes and interviews best represented the native's point of view. (No one at Göttingen addressed the problematic nature of these terms). *Copperworking in Santa Clara* (1989/1993), Beate Engelbrecht and Manfred Krüger's elegant depiction of a Mexican craft in Santa Clara, Michoacan, was exemplary in this regard, combining observational sequences with interviews used exclusively in voice-over. Barbara Kelfenheim's *Und du bildest dir ein, frei zu sein* (1991/1992) sensitively explored the world view of a German homeless man living in Paris through interviews and scenes of everyday life in the streets. Few of the works offered any kind of explanation or interpretation from the ethnographer's point of view. As a result, some of the distinctiveness of the anthropologist's voice - one of the justifications for an ethnographic cinema - was lost. The notion that only the native's point of view is valid represents one legacy of anti-colonialist sentiment in anthropology. In this model of ethnographic film, the anthropologist becomes simply a transmitter, a transparent medium, a far cry from James Clifford's and George Marcus' call for a dialogic ethnography, much less Jay Ruby's demand for a reflexive anthropology.

Paul Henley, Director of the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, stated categorically, after the projection of his work *Faces in the Crowd* (1994), an entertaining look at hard-core fans of the British royal family, that the 'aim of anthropology is to present the native's point of view,' an assumption that went unchallenged during the festival. This assumption precludes not only a critical anthropology, but an interpretive one. The native's point of view is certainly necessary, but not sufficient, to an anthropological cinema. Like many of the Manchester tapes, Henley's collaboration with anthropologist Anne Rowbottom took, as it were, the subjects' point of view as its rallying cry. Near the end of *Faces in the Crowd*, one of the English fans of the Queen mother declared, 'We lost our colonies,

we lost our passports; without the royal family, we'd be just an island with a bunch of people on it,' a comment that provoked much mirth in the audience, but demanded additional analysis.

The emphasis on the native's point of view reached its logical conclusion with the indigenous media movement, an effort to put cameras and recorders in the hands of the subjects themselves. Few of these productions were shown, although a symposium at the 1993 Mead Festival examined this fascinating work. Following in the tracks of Sol Worth and John Adair's *Through Navajo Eyes*, regrettably without their theoretical rigor, community activists have promoted films and videos made by the natives themselves. Curt Madison's *Hitting Sticks-Healing Hearts* (1992), an exploration of a traditional potlatch produced at the request and with the collaboration of village elders in Minto, Alaska, came the closest to this emerging tendency. This fifty-eight minute documentary, well-received by the audience, was conceived as a warning to the next generation, to preserve indigenous tradition and culture. Madison has lived in this community for over twenty years and his video took an explicit stance against cultural change.

On the other hand, Jean Rouch and Philo Bergstein's remarkable *Madame L'Eau* simultaneously celebrated, parodied, and criticized cultural exchange between Africa and Europe. Rouch's long-time African collaborators, Lam, Illo, and Damour - best known for their adventures in *Jaguar* (1954/1967) and *Petit petit* (1970) - hit the road again to visit the Netherlands to study windmills, possible low-tech aids to relieve the drought in Niger. Rouch referred to this improvised fiction film as the result of a dream, a surrealist juxtaposition of incongruent images, though it fell short of his earlier works. Even more fascinating was Rouch's *Gang* (1993), directed by Steef Meyknecht, Dirk Nijland, and Joost Verhey, a behind-the-scenes look at the making of *Madame L'Eau*, which joined a long line of documentaries, such as Les Blank's *Burden of Dreams* (1982) about the making of Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo* (1982), which were better than the fiction films they examined. The collaborative nature of Rouch's endeavour, the difficult practice of structured improvisation, and the good humour of his 'shared anthropology' were well underlined.

Promising new ethnographic films from Asia generated significant comment. Hu Tai-Li's *Voices of Orchid Island* (1993), which juxtaposed three related stories of how the Yami people cope with pressures from mainland Taiwan, opened with a direct challenge to ethnographic film from one of the subjects, 'We tend to feel that the more anthropologists come here, the deeper the harm they do to the Yami'. The rest of this provocative 16mm feature film explored how the island inhabitants struggle with tourist photography, medical care, and nuclear waste disposal.

*Puji and His Lovers* (1993), a feature documentary by Fan Zhiping, Hao Yuejun, and Deng Qiyao, was the great discovery of the festival, undoubtedly a revolutionary work in the context of Chinese ethnographic film. The video traced the sometimes comical, always intrusive, attempts of the anthropologists to understand and document the sexual practices of the Yiche, an ethnic minority in a secluded mountainous region of China, a group that encourages pre-marital and extra-marital sex for men and women. As the title implied, the production focused on one young man whose experiences offered a 'typical biography'. Although marred by a terribly awkward English-language commentary, spoken by a rank amateur, the documentary amused and offended, provoking excellent debate about the process of ethnographic research. The voice-over of *Puji and His Lovers* was so consistently bad that it gradually became inoffensive, bordering on a parody of didactic, scientific, commentary. As the crew struggled to record this difficult,

and elusive, activity, the anthropologist/narrator commented on a scene of *coitus interruptus*, 'It's a pity our timing was not good'.

Refreshingly, the anthropologists and crew members were characters in the story, even being invoked as possible sexual partners. Of an attractive, but short, crew member, one woman informant stated, 'The sun can make a long shadow so long as it does not set'. Most films at the festival, like most written ethnographies, masked the rapport between anthropologists and subjects. Although this approach hardly represented a sophisticated, critical reflexivity, *Puji and His Lovers*, through sheer honesty, raised issues of field rapport and ethics that most of the other films avoided. The discussion afterwards, despite the difficulty of translating from English to Chinese and back again, was the most engaging of the festival. Viewers were particularly disturbed by the apparent invasion of privacy, unavoidable in the study of human sexuality, and by the depiction of women, since the principal crew members and anthropologists were men. Viewers were not assuaged by the videographer's comment that he had 'many girlfriends' in the village, even though Yuejun spoke the local language and the work was based on his ten years of fieldwork in the community.

From this point of view, audience members seemed much more in tune with the sensitive *Our Way of Loving* (1994), by Joanna Head and Jean Lydall, the third BBC television film about Hamar women in Ethiopia, following *The Women Who Smile* (1990) and *Two Girls Go Hunting* (1991). Based on twenty-five years of fieldwork in Ethiopia, the film demonstrated a practised relativism as it focused on women's experiences. It detailed a coming of age ceremony in which men whipped their women relatives, while one character acknowledged that 'Beating is our way of loving,' a comment that provoked surprisingly little discussion afterwards. Another BBC production, *War: We Are All Neighbours* (1993), Debbie Christie and Tone Bringa's study of the breakdown of community among Muslims and Croats in a small village in Bosnia, may have been the most dramatic work shown. Tightly structured and brilliantly shot by Doug Hallows for the *Disappearing World* series, the film clearly demonstrated the corrosive effects of nationalism and ethnocentrism. Ironically, the selection committee evaluation singled out the voice-over narration as 'often redundant,' at a festival where most films needed some voice-over but had none and the rest had poorly written and spoken commentaries. A moving and disturbing documentary, *War: We Are All Neighbours* returned to the town eight weeks after the initial filming to find that all the Muslim houses had been destroyed and the people killed or displaced by their fellow villagers.

#### Experimental Techniques

An outsider's perspective, and a critical one, was only acceptable, indeed demanded, in works that dealt with European culture, such as Thomas Imbach's *Well Done* (1994), an impressionistic study of a Swiss bank and its employees. The politically correct double standard was operative; criticize your own culture, treat other cultures with utmost respect. This montage of life inside, and sometimes outside, a major corporation used highly experimental techniques - time lapse, jump cuts, and rapid intercutting of unrelated shots. The unit of meaning in *Well Done* was not the sequence shot, but the montage sequence, the flurry of autonomous images, made meaningful through editing. *Well Done* emphasized the extent of institutional control, the elaborate grading of performance, and the profound hierarchy of the corporation. Imbach contended that the mercenary capitalist values of the bank, a depressingly anti-democratic environment, reached into the workers' personal lives. Dominance and accommodation were the order of the day. Shot on Hi-8, but distributed on 35mm film, this polished documentary

entertained the audience and received praise from the partisans of experimental efforts, while perhaps unfortunately reinforcing negative stereotypes of Swiss national character.

There were a handful of aesthetically daring documentaries at the festival. Audience members, however, displayed a general suspicion of so-called experimental techniques - slow motion, posterization, canned music, black-and-white sequences crosscut with colour sequences, etc. - preferring the conventions of plain documentary style. This may explain why the jury of the Student Film Competition - Judith MacDougall, Asen Balikci, and Lisl Waltner - chose Costa's unpretentious *Back to the Homeland*. Lutz, another graduate of Manchester University, acknowledged the influence of MTV and his use of strobe, slow motion, colourization, and non-diegetic music contributed organically to the themes of displacement and exile in *Out of Place*. MacLeod's *Bash Street* used experimental techniques to 'question the nature of representation,' in the words of her advisor, Paul Henley, who opposed these stylistic choices. Like anthropologist Peter Loizos, David MacDougall, in both his film and his interventions during discussions, was an articulate advocate of the transparent documentary style, arguing against 'special effects'. Anthropologist and filmmaker Ivo Strecker coyly pointed out that MacDougall's glowing lighting, lush colour, and elegant camera work provided a special effect all of its own. One selection committee member noted that Gary Kildea's *Valencia Diary* (1992) 'has puzzled many a viewer with its oscillation between scenes in black-and-white and scenes in colour,' implying that this practice lacked structure or pattern. Kildea alternated black-and-white scenes, primarily interviews and interactive sequences shot on Hi-8, with lush 16mm colour landscapes and establishing shots. In addition, Kildea inserted intertitles in an diary-like style detailing the passage of time before the Philippine election between Marcos and Aquino. This first-person travelogue documentary questioned the surface objectivity of traditional reportage; the journal style became current for American documentarists in the late 1970s when Ed Pincus completed *Diaries, 1971-76* (1978/1981). *Valencia Diary* seemed a bit dated in its coverage of the election despite the brilliant intimacy of the style, which captured, among other things, a Catholic priest urging parishioners not to sell their votes. Kildea's presence at the festival was missed, partly because he could have presented a vocal alternative to the straightforward documentary style that predominated. While some of the critics of experimentation remained attached to pre-modernist narrative styles, others may have reacted to the clumsy use of such devices, rather than to the techniques per se.

Although visual anthropology remains in its infancy, the Göttingen International Ethnographic Film Festival has contributed mightily to its development. With efforts like *Valencia Diary*, *Our Way of Loving*, and the controversial *Puji and His Lovers*, the field will become a respected, and innovative, dimension of anthropological inquiry. The Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film and the organizers - Rolf Husmann, Werner Sperschneider, Beate Engelbrecht, Ulrich Roters - deserve praise for an exciting and well-run festival. Unquestionably, Göttingen will provide definition to the development of an anthropological cinema in the coming years. Anyone committed to ethnographic film should plan to attend the 1996 festival; like the immigrants in *Back to the Homeland*, who return year after year to their mountain village in Portugal, I'll be back.

## Contested Images, Contexted Texts: The Politics of Representing the Bushmen of Southern Africa

*Mathias Guenther, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo,  
Ontario, Canada*

That art is, or could and should be, a concern of visual anthropology became evident at a conference on the subject, in the context of the African Bushmen (or San)<sup>1</sup>. The key theme of the international, multi-disciplinary conference was the issue of representation of this non-western people. Reflecting the research interests of the two conference organizers, Thomas Dowson and David Lewis-Williams, the mode of representation that held centre stage at the conference was the people's art, both of the past and present, on rock surfaces and on paper. A stated conference aim of Thomas Dowson's was to demonstrate the aesthetic and symbolic sophistication of Bushman art and its centrality within Bushman mental and religious culture, as well as its empowering potential, in its contemporary form. This he accomplished, with striking poignancy, by means of a major exhibition, at the Johannesburg Art Gallery, that brought together, for the first time, the work of both extinct and extant artists.

Another unusual, if not unprecedented, element of this exhibition and conference of Bushman scholars and aficionados was that some of the contemporary artists, such as Dada (Coinxae) Qgam and Thamae Setshogo of Kuru in Botswana, as well as a handful of other San delegates, were present at the exhibition and at most of the conference sessions. They were available to offer comment on their paintings, as on any other San issue, to any conference attendee who would care to ask. Few did, as far as I could tell, for reasons, presumably, of communication difficulties, pertaining both to language and to discourse. Thus, the opportunity for self-representation the conference offered to the invited Bushman delegates was realized only partially, primarily through pictures on the walls of the exhibition hall, and secondarily through commentary from the lectern or floor of the conference hall. Apart from a few brief comments by a couple of Bushman delegates from Kuru and Schmidtsdrift, the Bushman conference delegates were mute and marginal participants at the proceedings. Thus, once again, the task of representing the Bushmen fell, as it typically does at such gatherings of scholars, not to any of the San but to the 'Sanologists', the academics who were the principal participants at the conference.

However, as will be seen throughout this report, the presence of the Bushman delegates did make a difference. A number of their questions and concerns did get on the conference agenda, being amplified as well by the Europeans who accompanied each of the two Bushman delegations, working in some capacity or other of 'Bushman development'. They were the following: Joachim Pfaffe from the Nyae Nyae Foundation in Namibia (who gave a report on the educational scheme at Nyae Nyae), Catharina Meyer and Fiona Barber from the Schmidtsdrift government settlement in the northern Cape (reporting on the cultural project and the socio-economic prospects of Schmidtsdrift), and Willelien LeRoux and Maude Brown from Kuru Development Trust in Botswana (providing an overview of the various development schemes at Kuru). The Kuru delegates were accompanied also by three Bushman trustees and employees, Hunter Sixpence, Kamana Phetso and Xguka Krisjan, who gave brief panel presentations. The presentations and comments of these 'applied' workers on the real, at times burning, issues and problems surrounding the Bushmen today acted as a reality check on

the 'pure' discourse of the academics, with its penchant for the abstruse and abstract, the contrived and constructed.

A striking example of the disjuncture between the discourses of scholars cogitating in the halls of academe and of development workers and indigenous peoples labouring in the trenches at government settlements was the paper by Stuart Douglas and the discussion that followed it. The latter was initiated by the delegation from Schmidtsdrift settlement, the setting of Douglas's paper. The presenter offered an elegant, post-structuralist analysis of the murder trial of seven accused Bushmen from the settlement. Their victim had been another Bushman; they had murdered him because they held him to have been a 'wizard'. Douglas explained the light sentence the accused received upon conviction with terms and concepts drawn from the discourse on 'the other'. A central argument was that, due to the Bushman defendants' perception, by the judges and lawyers, as primitive, traditional, backwards, childlike, the accused were held to be less accountable for their crime than would any 'civilized' South African citizen. He also explained the appearance of witchcraft accusations within the community in terms of the oppressed, dependent and ambiguous life situation of the overcrowded Schmidtsdrift settlers. While persuasive and articulate, the discursive, dense style of argumentation in several places in the paper exasperated more than a few conference delegate; for instance a passage such as,

[h]is killing was a specific positioned utterance, a single discursive moment in the ongoing (re)fashioning of socio-political order at Schmidtsdrift...[a] 'scapegoat mechanism', of an elaborate institution of witchcraft beliefs [that] presented a fleeting instance of discourse, a glimpse of aspects of subaltern narrative in a greater cultural (con)text of transition.

A couple of the delegates from Schmidtsdrift (including one of the Bushmen) questioned the explanatory value of Douglas's analysis. They directed specific, concrete queries to the speaker which had the effect of accentuating the paper's academic tone, questions regarding his sources, whether he had any first-hand knowledge of the principals in the case, was himself present at the case etc. The ensuing exchange between the presenter and his critic was a stark reminder that at this conference two opposite universes of discourse played themselves out, yielding more than one charged moment of mutual impatience, misunderstanding and disagreement.

Turning now to the scholarly camp at the conference, as one might expect in a colloquium with the theme of representation of another people, a number of the papers, and the discussion that surrounded them, were couched in the terms of the alterity discourse. What was scrutinized and put on the deconstructionist dissection table were the explicit or implicit, empowering or hegemonic assumptions and agendas of those doing the representing, such as academics (especially anthropologists, archaeologists and historians), museum curators, film makers, lawyers and advertisers. What was found to be common to all of these representations is the primordialist image of the Bushmen, so popular in pre-revisionist anthropological writings about this people, as well as in early museum displays, such as at the South African Museum under the directorship of L. Péringuey (Patricia Davison). The same image is manipulated outside academe, by advertisers in the interest of consumerism (Barbara Buntman), and by lawyers and judges to justify, as discussed above, what might be deemed an unprecedented and arbitrary sentence of convicted Bushman murderers.

Kenneth Good and Bongi Radipati, in papers on problems pertaining to land and legal rights of contemporary Botswana Bushmen (or Basarwa, as the people are officially called in that

country), addressed themselves to the current 'Kalahari Debate' of anthropologists, couching their explanations of the socio-political state of the Bushmen in the interactionist terms of the revisionist paradigm. This was the paradigm also adopted by the historian John Wright, in his account of the 'Bushman raiders' of the Drakensberg in 19th-century Natal. The paper was presented as a personal revisionist exercise wherein the writer amended his previously 'isolationist' and 'pristinist' analysis of Bushman history and brought it in line with the modern paradigm.

A forceful restatement of the same point of view came from Henry Bredekamp, a Coloured from the University of the Western Cape. Presenting himself as the spokesman for the extinct Cape San - as 'something of a Khoisan' - he impassionately appealed that the Bushmen be re-presented by anthropologists and historians. In the same vein he also appealed that the term 'Bushman' be expunged from academic and official parlance, in favour of 'San', eliciting thereby yet another stalemated round of discussion on this decades-old conundrum. The new representation of the San, Bredekamp urged, should and must acknowledge the active (rather than reactive), rationally driven (rather than haphazard) and effective (rather than ineffectual) part these people played in the history of southern Africa, especially as resistance fighters. This theme also reverberated through John Wright's above-mentioned presentation and my own paper on the political organization and resistance of the 19th century Ghanzi Bushmen, to Nama and Tswana encroachers. Like Bredekamp, he pointed to the inappropriateness of representations of the Bushmen as harmless and feeble and submissive and dependent.

A key consideration of the problematic of 'other'-representation is the matter of authenticity. It appeared repeatedly during the discussion that enveloped the papers, as an issue of contentiousness that polarized some of the 'academic' and 'non-academic' conference participants. The former view of the issue, articulated, for instance, by Keyan Tomaselli, Stuart Douglas, Barbara Buntman, was that 'authenticity' is a contrived construct that varies with the ideological and theoretical assumptions of the day. Moreover, especially in its primordialist guise - in which it 'lends itself to oppressive attempts at social engineering' (Douglas) - the authenticity construct is hegemonically manipulated by those in power to serve their own academic, official, judicial or commercial interests, frequently to the detriment of the people to whom it refers.

One party to gain from this manipulation are tourist operations, which send customers on ethno-tourism safaris to Bushman settlements where the inhabitants oblige them by undressing, dancing and selling crafts. This was one of a number of scenes depicted by Paul Weinberg, in a photographic essay about the 'forgotten people' at Kakakama and Schmidtsdrift. The delegation from the latter place, specifically its '!Xu and Khwe Cultural Project', took issue with this take on the question of authenticity. Resenting the suggestion that in agreeing to represent themselves and their culture in this fashion, the San people allowed themselves to be duped and exploited, they made the point that what is authentic to the Bushmen is not some static ethnographic construct but those cultural and social objects and actions that are produced by the people within their current life situation and that are relevant to it. Ultimately, what is 'authentic' is the plight of the 4,000 displaced Bushman residents at the Schmidtsdrift settlement, whose present conditions are deplorable and whose future is uncertain.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the images on the paintings and prints of the modern Bushman artists strikingly underscored this view of things. The lino prints by the Schmidtsdrift artist Thaula Ruma depicts uniformed, white, black and San soldiers, army tents, tracking dogs, and scenes of murder and mayhem, harking back to the anti-Swapo wars in pre-

independence Namibia. Another, by the Kuru artist Dada Qgam, shows a row of angry San women forming a phalanx behind some ostriches. The artist's caption on the narrative theme of the painting is 'don't chase away our ostriches': the admonition is directed to the Ghanzi farmers who have lately begun to catch ostrich chicks to start profitable ostrich ranching schemes.

A conference participant, hailing from yet another intellectual constituency, the performing arts, whose efforts at grappling with the authenticity issue I personally found especially revealing, was the dance choreographer Sylvia Glasser. Following the motto she set herself 'appropriate with appreciation and integrate with integrity' (i.e. without trivializing, distorting or exploiting traditional Bushman culture) - she presented her dance troupe in a dream-like 'modern dance' routine entitled 'Tranceformations'. The half-hour performance enacted the trance experience of a number of Bushman curing dancers. The form and content of what I found to be a deeply absorbing performance was modeled on the extinct /Xam Bushmen, as mediated by David Lewis-Williams in his many scholarly writings.

The performance conveyed to me, more effectively than any scholar's descriptive and hermeneutic essays on the subject, the emotional and metaphysical essence of this key element of Bushman ritual and cosmology. (It seemed to have had a like effect on the Nharo Bushwomen who sat in the row before me: they rushed to the front of the stage at the end of the performance and danced enrapturedly, following the steps and body motions of the troupe dancers.) Glasser's 'take' on this Bushman ritual suggests to me that authenticity lies not in the surface texture of culture, manifested in ethnographic, museological detail, but within its sub-textual, deep-textual, emotional or ideational core. Cultural anthropologists have always maintained that one's basic access to this core is through intuition. The fact that an artist (Bushman or otherwise<sup>3</sup>), a choreographer, dancer or novelist, might be more effective at capturing that core than an anthropologist was revealed to me by Glasser's troupe's performance.

Of course, this may not necessarily be the case; for all her or his heightened, trained aesthetic and creative sensitivities, the artists, too, may off the mark. Not every artist is likely to take to heart the cultural integrity maxim quite as fervently as Glasser and, like her counterpart within academe, will proceed to write, paint or dance within the ideological context of her own culture (Torgovnick 1990). Pristinism is the operative trope very much within Sir Laurens van der Post's ethno-fiction (Barnard 1989). So it is within the oeuvre of the ethno-film maker John Marshall, as revealed by Keyan Tomaselli and Jake Homiak's paper, on the basis of unused out-takes left over from each of Marshall's films on the cutting floor. Fortunately they were not left there to be swept away by the janitor; instead this material has been archived in the Smithsonian, where the two authors did the research on their paper. The offcuts - about two kilometres-worth - reveal all of the cherished ethnographic classics on the !Kung of 'the old way' to have been subjected to extensive editing by Marshall. It consisted of excluding from the finished films acculturational, non-Bushman elements, creating theoretically or ideologically driven 'structured absences' in Marshall's films. Thus, the presentation of the pristine !Kung is a function as much of what the viewer is shown as of what is concealed from his view.

While in the theoretical limelight throughout the conference, the problematic of alterity and authenticity was not the only theme at the conference. A number of the papers concerned themselves with the debate surrounding what was the conference's privileged cultural domain, the art of the Bushmen (especially rock art). This art is as complex as it is controversial, the representations it presents are, indeed, 'contested images'<sup>4</sup>, as well as 'contexted' ones. The latter

point was a theme in Aron Mazel's paper, as well as one of David Lewis-Williams's commentaries, in which he explained the pristinist key in his early writings on rock art in terms of the then-prevailing, romantic ideological flavour of anthropological writings about the Bushmen generally. His later 'shamanic theory' on Bushman rock art was challenged by Anne Solomon for its inherent male bias and its excessively functionalist-ethnographic approach, at the expense such other perspectives as aesthetics and art history. As an alternative, or supplementary interpretive paradigm, especially for the smaller sites, Solomon suggested gender conflict and politics.

Other papers, by Emma Bedford (with Anne Solomon) and Sven Ouzman, dealt with the symbolic and narrative continuities between San art and cosmology and those of neighbouring, Bantu-speaking peoples. One of the art papers was on contemporary Bushman art, specifically of the Kuru artists and the exhibition of their work in Rotterdam last year. The slide-illustrated lecture, by C. Beumer, the exhibition's curator, focused on the engagement of the museum visitors with the pieces of art, and its aesthetic and didactic effects on them.

'People, Politics and Power' was a conference of considerable intellectual - and potential extra-intellectual - merit: following a topical theoretical approach, multi-disciplinary, on a domain of Bushman culture that has been marginalized and trivialized in an ethnographic literature traditionally moored in cultural materialism, and, most importantly, involving in the proceedings the actual people, the Bushmen, themselves, along with other non-academics concerned with issues of development. The conference could and should serve as a model for conferences on other hunter-gatherers or indigenous people, in other parts of the world, who, like the Bushmen of southern Africa, are engaged in a process of constructing a historical and ethnic identity and improving their economic and political life situation. In the Wits conference we see a colloquium of scholars, at last, that holds the potential for being more than just a gathering of jet-setting academics engaged in intellectual bead-games (as uncomfortably parodied by David Lodge). If run the right way such a conference could be the kind of happening that might make a difference to the lives of the people it is about, as a force self-construction and representation and of empowerment.

### Notes

1. 'People, Politics and Power. The Politics of Representing the Bushman People of Southern Africa.' University of the Witwatersrand and Johannesburg Art Gallery, 4-7 August, 1994.
2. What the Bushman delegates expressed in the authenticity discussions is in line with what contemporary hunter-gatherers in other parts of the world have put forward, such as the Canadian Inuit (as mediated by Milton Freeman 1980). Holding culture to be a 'dynamic and evolving reality', the Inuit deem themselves, not any outsiders, as being 'the only meaningful arbiter of cultural identity', defined in terms of the individual's 'perception of self, and the acceptance of that individual by the group he or she identifies with' (Freeman 1980:258, 266).
3. For instance the South African artist Pippa Skotnes, whose work (for example 1991a, 1991b, 1993) draws its symbolic and iconographic elements from Bushman rock art and mythology. Ms. Skotnes was at the conference, as an attendee.
4. The title of their latest book on rock art launched by Dowson and Lewis-Williams (1994) at the conference. The two editors signed over proceeds from the book to the Kuru Foundation at the conference.

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## Brief Reports and Reviews

### Review of the festival FILM HIMALAYA 1994

*'The films present our world to the rest of the world. It is perhaps time to evaluate those films.'* K. M. Dixit

Who is going to represent the realities of the Himalayan regions on film or video? Who has the chance to see those films and videos? Until a short time ago there was only one proper answer to both questions: the Westerners. Shown elsewhere as something picturesque, the pictures seldom came back to the spot where they were originally shot. Most of the hosts of film crews had never seen how they are represented in film.

The *Himal Magazine*, with Kanak Mani Dixit as editor, took up the challenge and began the process of reversing this trend. With hardly any knowledge in making film festivals and an extremely limited budget of approx. US\$ 6,000, but with a lot of good-will, enthusiasm and enormous effort, the organizing team, with the young video-maker Suman Basnet as Festival Director and K.M. Dixit as the 'soul', created in only six months a very respectable, unique forum with a friendly atmosphere for various 'Himalayan Films' entered from all over the world.

*Film Himalaya 1994* was the first ever international film and video festival in Nepal. Two feature films and 39 'documentaries' - 15 productions from India, Nepal, China and Bhutan and 27 Western productions - focusing on different aspects of life in the Himalayan regions, were selected out of 80 entries and screened in two halls at the Russian Cultural Centre in Kathmandu from 18-20 February 1994. The programme offered audio-visual productions - made by TV-stations, development and conservation agencies and independent film and video makers - on a variety of subjects like ritual and custom, local and western medicine, economy, conservation, ecology, environment, wildlife, adventure, mountaineering and so on. Such a wide range of subjects in one programme might have been amorphous; in fact they formed an excellent mix that attracted many foreign and local spectators, who came to watch, say, an ethnographic film and, once there, stayed for a film on wildlife, as happened to me with the only entry from Bhutan, *On the Wings of Prayer*. In a 'pure' ethnographic film festival I would not have seen the documentary on the endangered Black Necked Crane which nests in Tibet and sojourns in Bhutan, and I would have missed seeing the very interesting relationship between the crane's dance before departure and its imitation in a ritual. *Film Himalaya 1994* demonstrated emphatically the insight, not original in itself, that one can get glimpses of ethnography from films which do not claim to be ethnographic, such as the crane documentary and feature films, and provided a reminder that most TV productions or films made for a TV audience are too often stereotyped.

I participated in the festival mainly for two professional reasons: one, to introduce our ethnographic documentation *Deva and Cinta* and two, as a buyer for the Völkerkundemuseum Zürich where I am building up a video archive. Unfortunately I missed a number of the projections, as films were screened simultaneously in the two halls, often with asynchronous beginnings. This review is therefore based on a multiple selection; that a film is not mentioned is no reflection on its quality.

A large number of the films were made for a general TV audience or were already TV productions with the characteristic of being audios rather than visuals. What the technically brilliant but flat pictures could not express was verbally mediated, resulting in an audio-visual production where the pictures were only an illustration of the spoken word. It seems that makers of those films prefer to give answers rather than ask questions; they report mostly what they already know. *The Dentist from Mainz* provides the worst example, and I still wonder why this selfish portrait of a pseudo-altruistic dentist from Germany, pulling out teeth on his merry way through Khumbu and Mustang, was selected at all. Another example of a paternalistic attitude was one of the few Nepali contributions, *Panauti: Hamro Sampada*, on temples in the old, small town of Panauti in the Kathmandu Valley. Audio-visually on the other side was the 70mm film *Baraka*, a professionally made film without any verbal commentary. 'Baraka', a Sufi word meaning 'the breath of life', embarked in Nepal with the 'eyes' of Swayambhu on a trip, interrelating, with sometimes breathtaking pictures, aspects of life from all over the world with picturesque and superficial meditation on evolution of the present human condition. This was the opening film of the festival and one of the few which was projected as a film, while all of the others were screened from video tapes via beamer.

That *Baraka* came back to Kathmandu may be taken as a metaphor for a western trend towards an idealized Buddhism and idealization of Tibet. It seems that from a *Lost Horizon* one hopes to *Return to Shangri-La*, the mythical paradise, what should become real. Many are *In Search of Buddha* and from Seattle via Nepal to Bhutan the camera followed Bertolucci, who found his *Little Buddha* but preferred to show it in Berlin... While the film *In Search of Buddha* documented the making of Bertolucci's feature, the film *Samsara - A Tibetan Heritage*, on the reincarnation of the rinpoches of Thame and Tengboche Gumbas in the Khumbu district in Nepal, pretends to be a non-staged documentary, which, on a closer look at the film, is hardly possible. One of the qualities of this film, however, lies in the inclusion of the 'Mani Rimdu' festival from 1958. *The Reincarnation of Khensur Rinpoche*, seems to me to be an unpretentious film, a gentle documentation of a Buddhist disciple's search for his dead master's reincarnation. Common to most of the films shown on Buddhism is that at least one sequence, in which His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama appeared. A close, non-intrusive portrait of Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama and his concerns is drawn by Lemle in his film *Compassion in Exile*, adding abundant historical footage and statements of relatives and - with one exception - sympathetic persons. I was shocked and angered by the Chinese leaders and their jackals when I saw Lemle's film. But is it the whole story? Why are such films seldom controversial and why do many colour-films often draw on black-and-white?

A real black-and-white film with different shades of grey that added important facets to my already existing 'picture' of Tibet is *Dao Ma Zei* (The Horse Thief). This excellently shot feature film directed by the Chinese Tian Zhuangzhuang tells in poetic ways the story of a young horse thief cast out of his village with his wife and infant son. It mediates with a documentary character aspects of civilized and natural life in harsh surroundings and the delicate interrelationship between man, community, religion and nature. Even if this film had no ethnographic worth at all, at least it has the value of a real document of how somebody from a dominant culture portrays people of a minority culture.

'Theft' of a different kind is the subject of the spectacular documentary *Honey Hunters of Nepal*. This TV production shows the 60-year-old Manilal Gurung, who is supposed to be the last honey hunter, doing his dangerous work of collecting honey and wax from the hives of giant black bees on cliffs deep in the forested valleys of

central Nepal. Formally *The Honey Hunters* looks like one thematic unit that is complemented once by a 'real' hunting scene on the seventh day when honey hunting is forbidden by local custom. The English spoken off-commentary, telling the story of honey hunting, sounds convincingly like Manilal and fits well, besides avoiding the boring presence of talking heads. *The Making of Honey Hunters* celebrates the film-makers climbing the cliffs - with high-tech mountaineering equipment - shoulder-to-shoulder with the traditional way of Manilal and his clan members. It is not at all surprising that both films are TV productions as they match our post-modern 'Zeitgeist' of mega-adventure without contextualizing it with the local society. 'Too anthropological becomes boring', said Diane Summers, one of the directors, quoting the producer... That this is not a convincing argument is demonstrated by the ethnographic documentary *The Dragon Bride*, a witty film including numerous situations not short on a comedy in a polyandrous marriage system of Humla's Nyinba community in northwest Nepal. There, no bride is more desired than a woman born in the year of the dragon, which in this case means that a 15 year old girl is going to marry five brothers. The film worked with parallel montage, subtitled the spoken word, used hardly any off-commentary and renounced any kind of interviews. Another excellent cine-ethnography with a well contextualized marriage ritual was Kumari, a detailed close-up of Kathmandu's living goddess. This film respects the subject(s) with good editing and with a stimulating soundtrack where, besides the synch-sound, a well balanced commentary relates myths and helps us to see beyond the pictures without forcing us to listen more than to watch. To follow as closely as possible a ritual cycle celebrated among the Mewahang and Kulunge Rai of East Nepal was the video-makers' aim in the ethnographic documentary *Deva and Cinta*. As one of the video-makers I withhold personal comment and instead quote a part of Anmole Prasad's review (*Himal Magazine*, March/April 1994, p. 10): 'Filmed in searing floodlight, with little commentary and no score, the documentary is almost minimalist, a style entirely suited to the objectives of documentation. The virtually immobile camera and the live soundtrack of chanting and incessant drumming imparts to the documentary a dreamlike quality'. Another aspect of illness and healing dealing with the difficult choice Tibetans have to make between monastic medicine and allopathic cures is documented in *Shigatse, One Injection Asks for More*, while *Himalayan Visions* reported, on a blind Tamang woman who got back her eyesight, thanks to the enormous efforts of Dr. Sanduk Ruit and his team in removing cataracts, a problem which is widespread in the Himalayas.

Many films turned a critical eye on the complex problems of development and conservation. I would like to mention at least some in this context: *Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh*, a film on the impact of monetary economy on a society which was until recently on a non-monetary basis, *Call of the Bhagirathi*, on the Tehri dam in Garhwal, *Make Room for Rhino*, on the conflict between men who settled close to a National Park and the men who try to preserve wildlife, or *Pavilions of the Eight Corners* on the restoration of Bhaktapur's Chysalin Mandap. How important it is to preserve and rethink Nepal's cultural heritage was indicated also by two archival films and one old but still outstanding documentary which were the first films on Nepal.

*First American Mission to Nepal, April 1947* was taken many years before the first international road was build and showed the foot trail used by American diplomats to gain access to Kathmandu and the pomp of the Rana court. Although cinematographically it is nothing special, the film has an important historical and ethnographic value. The live spoken commentary by Hutar Baidya, a valley observer and environmentalist, made a unique event out of the screening.

Reflections on western ideas of development provoked the propaganda film for American aid: *Transportation in Nepal*. Made in the late fifties it shows a Nepal before there were highways and internal combustion engines along with a commentary who glorifies the american way of technological development as if modern is always better.

A festival on the Himalayan regions would be incomplete without mountaineering films. Of course there were several but one of the finest examples was the old documentary *The Conquest of Everest* on the 1953 British expedition which placed Tenzing and Hillary on Chomolongma's summit. Made in the fifties in a traditional way it mediates two major qualities which I missed in many of the films shown: respect towards the efforts of the local people and self-irony. With keen interest I look forward to the next festival *Film Himalaya 1996*.

Post-scriptum:

Right after the festival *Himal Magazine* started to build up a Kathmandu based repository of films and documentaries on the Himalayan regions. If you have made films in the Himalayas or if you have any knowledge where such new and old films are deposited then please contact K.M. Dixit or Suman Basnet in Nepal (*Himal magazine*, PO Box 42, LALITPUR, Nepal, Tel: + 9771 52 38 45, Fax: + 9771 52 10 13) or me in Switzerland (Völkerkundemuseum der Universität Zürich, Pelikanstrasse 40, 8001 Zürich, Switzerland, Tel: + 1 221 31 91, Fax: + 1 212 34 22). Thanks in advance for your collaboration.

Majan Garlinski

## A SILENCE IN STOCKHOLM

The 15th International Film Conference of the Nordic Anthropological Film Association, Stockholm, 26-29 May 1994.

It was like the silences that used to punctuate Heimo Lappalainen's telephone conversations, when (as Colin Young used to remark) he left you wondering whether you had called him or he had called you. Heimo was not afraid of silences, nor did he expect the rest of us to be. But in Stockholm, Heimo's last silences hung heavily over the 15th International Film Conference of NAFA, the organisation that he had helped to create and had nurtured for many years.

We had learned of Heimo's death only a few days before the conference. He had recently married, and his *Taiga* films were beginning to receive the praise they deserved. But it was little consolation to us that he had died happy. Only by the third day of the conference would we begin to imagine a world without Heimo. At the special meeting we held in his memory, there could have been no better demonstration of the power of film than some recent footage of him which for a few moments brought him among us again.

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Knut Ekström of NAFA and Ulla Edberg of the National Museum of Ethnography organized this 15th annual conference, focusing on multimedia applications in visual anthropology and two additional sub-themes: Latin America and The Family. There was a further, perhaps unintended sub-theme in several films on the plight of displaced or dispossessed people in European countries. Peter Lutz's *Out of Place* looked at the frustrations of Bosnian refugees in Sweden, caught between longing for their homeland and the need to begin life

again in a new society. *War - We are All Neighbours* by Debbie Christie and Tone Bringa examined the aetiology of ethnic hatred in Bosnia and the likelihood that former friends and neighbours can never live again in harmony. In *Sami Reindeer Herding* Ivar Björklund and Jon Jerstad showed how Sami reindeer herders, recently viewed by Norwegians as the ecological guardians of the northland, are now viewed as ecological villains.

Three films were cleverly juxtaposed in the programme to raise questions about the invasiveness of film-makers, and to imply that all films entail some intrusion into their subjects' lives. Each of these films involved a return journey. In one, *Puji and His Lovers*, by Fan Zhiping and Hao Yuejun, the film-makers return to a village in Yunnan in jolly but relentless pursuit of 'knowledge' about the prevalence of extramarital sexual liaisons in Yiche society. The film showed how easily the benign art of the interview can be transformed into a form of interrogation, in this instance by Han Chinese filming less advantaged ethnic 'nationalities' like the Yiche. The film is characterized by a reflexive spontaneity unusual in Chinese documentaries, as the film-makers stalk Puji through the night to (and into) his lovers' houses, and through the twilight underbrush where other lovers are attempting to meet in private.

By contrast *The Journey Back*, by Peter Elsass, takes itself and its ethics very seriously. It concerns a return to the highlands of Colombia to show Arhuaco and Motilon Indians a film made by the same film-makers about them six years previously. The new film is at great pains to assure us of its sensitivity and good intentions, but in demonstrating these virtues it displays an aggressiveness which many viewers may find very odd indeed. In one scene the film-makers ask a group of Arhuaco what they think of the first film, but with a seeming disregard for Arhuaco feelings and custom which one thinks they would be unlikely to exhibit in asking the opinion of fellow Europeans. In another scene they ask a group of men how they view the presence of the Colombian army, with Colombian soldiers standing about in the same shot listening, and despite the fact that government soldiers have almost certainly tortured and murdered three of their kinsmen only a few months earlier. The film is perhaps the apotheosis of modish self-reflexivity: solemn self-criticism at any cost, even if it must be at the expense of its subjects.

The catalogue description of Michael Wiström's *The Other Shore* was, if anything, even less encouraging. It promised a journey back by the film-maker to Peru to visit a poor family he had known seventeen years before, a humbling experience that leads him to a greater self-knowledge. This seemed a sure recipe for self-centred moralising, but the film proved strikingly different: a thoughtful and brilliantly made meditation on the nexus between personal relationships and representation. Wiström's problem is that, unwisely, he loves too well. The father of the family resents his growing closeness to the rest of the family, and Wiström is unable to withdraw gracefully, nor is he always adept at reading the cultural signals. In choosing to put himself in front of his camera, he communicates to the audience an experience familiar in life but rare in films: the double vision of observing oneself, as if from afar, as an actor in one's own and others' lives. But perhaps more importantly, the film expresses in an intensified form the problem many documentary film-makers face as their films progressively intervene between themselves and their subjects.

In keeping with the conference sub-theme of the family, a number of films, including Wiström's, explored the emotional ties of marriage and parenthood. Curt Madison's *Hitting Sticks - Healing Hearts* is about bereavement and the resolution of grief through a memorial potlatch in an Athabaskan community in Alaska. *Our Way of Loving* by Joanna Head and Jean Lydall, which was unfortunately omitted because of a technical problem, continues their series on

Hamar women with an account of a newly married woman's life in southern Ethiopia. *A Little for my Heart and a Little for my God*, by Britta Landorf, is ostensibly about *medahatt* performers in Algeria - socially marginalised women who dance and sing for more comfortably situated married women, but it also includes an intriguing portrait of two male *medahatt* musicians whose work and ambiguous sexuality bring them into conflict with their own families. This writer's *Tempus de Baristas* reflected the theme by focusing on a father-son relationship among shepherds in the highlands of Sardinia.

The concept of family was a kind of subliminal sub-text to the film *Children from Kallio* by Ulla Turunen and Ilka Ruuhijärvi. Over the years these film-makers have produced an extraordinary chronicle of the lives of a group of Finnish children, making one film per year as they progress from each school class to the next. Although the project suffers somewhat from a lack of theoretical focus, it remains probably the most intimate film record we have of the 'secret life' of children. This latest film is a compilation of material from the children's first school year to preadolescence, and perhaps partly because the project entirely excludes footage of the children's parents, it presents food for thought about the extent to which children socialize one another.

The other sub-theme, Latin America, represented by Peter Elsass' and Mikael Wiström's films described above, was also reflected in Gianfranco Norelli's *Apu Condor: The Condor God*, yet another account of the condor-and-bull fiesta in the Peruvian Andes, interestingly and evocatively filmed but marred by a 1950s style narration and voiced-over translations (instead of subtitles); and Beate Engelbrecht's *Copperworking in Santa Clara del Cobre*, one of the most beautiful films on local artisanship of recent years. *Let Our Songs Live*, by Mats Brodin and Anna Cnattingius, examined the situation of dispossessed Siriono Indians in Bolivia.

The conference's special theme this year was multimedia, and it introduced this topic with a timely warning from Lasse Svanberg of the Swedish Film Institute (and editor of the journal *Technology and Man*) that the information revolution, although touted by its academic enthusiasts as of benefit to human understanding, may in the end turn out to be largely of benefit to international business. Pierre Jordan demonstrated two projects that has developed at IMEREC (Institut Méditerranéen de Recherche et de Création) in Marseilles, the first a multimedia database on early ethnographic films called FIRST CONTACT/FIRST LOOK, the second, LA LECA, a hypermedia anthropological 'paper', dealing with his research on bird-trapping in Haute Provence. He also announced the planned publication by IMEREC on the first hypermedia visual anthropology journal on CD-ROM, to appear sometime in 1995. Gary Seaman of the University of Southern California demonstrated his project VIRTUAL CHIMPS, based on Jane Goodale's extensive works on chimpanzees in East Africa, and argued for hypermedia alternatives to the linear narratives of anthropological films. Peter Lindblom, of DataDesign in Stockholm, cautioned institutions against ceding the intellectual control of their projects to computer specialists and stressed the need for step-by-step approaches to multimedia design. SIDA, Sweden's overseas aid organisation, presented an interactive multimedia production on Ethiopia for school children.

In general, the hyper- and multimedia projects described at the conference appeared to fall into two broad categories: those created as models for use in education and those designed as tools for original research in the social sciences using computerized databases. Both approaches seemed to this observer to call for further examination of the epistemological premises for multimedia use - in particular, how to interrelate categories of factual, relational and experiential knowledge, and how to allow for better macro-level

structural analysis as information from existing works is progressively atomised. Film and video-makers may justifiably be wary of methods that favour examination of only the raw contents of their works, unless these are offset by other methods that allow viewers to gain a better understanding of how those contents are organised conceptually. And researchers may well be frustrated by programmes that allow them access to databases only in terms of educational objectives or preexisting categories of knowledge. Overcoming these shortcomings has now become the new frontier of hypermedia design.

The conference closed with a screening of *Firth on Firth*, the interview-film by Rolf Husmann, Peter Loizos and Werner Sperschneider on the lives and views of Sir Raymond Firth. It was a demonstration of one of the things film and video (if allowed to) can do supremely well: record without excessive interruption, the flow of interesting conversations. It also demonstrated a curious facet of interviewing: that although the subject may be at pains (as Sir Raymond Firth was) to present a considered and 'official' view of himself, this intention is often not whole-hearted and is sometimes gently allowed to slip - particularly in cases, such as in this interview conducted by Peter Loizos, in which there is a prior relationship of trust between interviewer and subject. A delicate tug-of-war arises between the subjects' reserve and the interviewer's appeal to intimacy and disclosure. Rouch's contention may also play a part: that people are more likely to be honest when they are being recorded than when they are not. What emerges is a discourse always hovering on the brink of fuller revelation and inviting the viewer to read between the lines. *Firth on Firth*, which draw our attention to the varied experiences of a single life, was a fitting closing to a meeting that began in sorrow for a life cut short.

David MacDougall, Canberra.

## FESTIVALS, JURIES AND AWARDS. Remarks by experienced strokes

This text reassembles some remarks gathered during a friendly dinner which reunited some film-makers, all of whom have repeatedly served on juries and/or won awards. All of the positions cited in support of assertions were actually experienced. The question posed was: Should international documentary and/or anthropological film festivals appoint juries to issue awards? Which festivals and which juries for which awards, for which films? How are awards useful for distribution?

Participants: Anne Connan, historian, documentary film-maker (France); David MacDougall, documentary film-maker (Australia/United States); Colette Piault, anthropologist and film-maker, Research director at the CNRS, (France); Marc H. Piault, anthropologist and film-maker, Research director at the CNRS, (France); Martin Taureg, anthropologist and journalist specialized in documentary and ethnographic film (Germany); Hugo Zemp, ethnomusicologist and film-maker, Research director at the CNRS, (France).

No divergence arose during the course of the debate. Different points of view were expressed which complemented and enriched one another, but we were generally in agreement on the heart of the matter. This is why the opinions could be brought together in a collective text.

**Festivals.** It appeared legitimate to us that the large festivals, 'big budget' festivals such as the Cinema du Réel or the Festival dei

Popoli, issue awards, but the need for more limited and specialized festivals to conform to the awards system is questionable, this often being derisory. There is absolutely no need to issue awards, nor any shame in not presenting them. The Margaret Mead Film Festival, which does not present awards, is no less regarded than the Bilan du Film Ethnographique, which does present them. Each festival is different, offering its own image. Just to be selected to participate in the Margaret Mead Festival is considered an important distinction, just as the international Forum division of the Festival of Berlin enjoys a certain reputation which attracts attention to the films shown there. Selection for participation seems to have less value in France than in Anglo-Saxon countries, perhaps because the tradition of awards is stronger in France. Simply giving awards entails additional fees for a festival. This is not due to the awards themselves, often donated by corporations (JVC, Kodak, or Fuji in Manchester or Paris) or of a symbolic nature (hand-crafted objects in Pärnu, Estonia), but by the need to put together and invite an international jury which will be sponsored by the festival. Some organizers have limited budgets and must rely on the entry fees of participants to finance their festival, which leads them to search for a large number of entries. By saving the costs of an international "VIP" jury, one is able to alleviate the budget and invite the film-makers whose films are to be shown. Thus, it is completely satisfactory that certain festivals, which have the means, give awards, but the festivals without awards can be just as attractive and advantageous for film-makers and the public. Festivals are all different, and it is fine this way.

**Juries.** First, one can question the way films are selected for a festival's programme. This appears to be a rather hidden process. The few who make the choices are part of the sponsoring organization's team. They need not explain their choices, and are often quite ignorant about film-making because they come from other fields. In regards to the members of the jury, they are often chosen for their "novel eye". Thus, a jury is made up of writers and painters, with a "novel eye" indeed, who have often never seen documentary or ethnographic films before the festival itself. It is, therefore, difficult to find a common language within the jury. Moreover, members of the jury, due to their heterogeneity, have the tendency to prefer a film for very personal reasons, tied to the subject (of which they are specialists), to the geographic area (which is familiar to them) etc... In this way each of them will only be able to express themselves in the most subjective way: I like it, I don't like it, I am for it, I am against it. This could be the case of the Jury of the Librarians at the Cinema du Réel Festival, of which the choices often resemble familiar television styles. The workings of the jury is difficult, and to a certain degree, unforeseeable. The decision-making is complex (linked to the complexity of the films themselves, see below): the results of negotiation are often difficult, compromised, even dishonestly so; they are not sheltered from internal and external pressures. More concretely, in the absence of precise criteria and specifications for the award (see below), frequently, an innovative film, which takes risks, provokes, disturbs and arouses passions among the members of the jury does not arrive at obtaining unanimous approval. The jury, firmly divided, then prefers to give the award to a more conformist film, perhaps even a mediocre one without inventiveness, but against which no strong opposition will arise. Thus, the law of the smallest common denominator is applied. One can also mention pressures that could be called political, in the literal sense (giving an award to a film from a nation which supports the country or institution where the festival takes place, accepting that a member of the jury is exclusively chosen so that his or her political power influences the award choices etc...), but also, in a figurative sense

when strategies are put into place to defend this or that film-maker-friend, or that film produced by this or that television channel, with which certain members of the jury would like to maintain good relations. If some strategies are explicit, others are less so. Thus, a member of the jury cannot know who is the friend of whom, which strategies will be put into place and by whom. The jury member often comes to question, as the public will do afterwards, the reasons for certain awards.

**Films.** Film is the most difficult of artistic creations to judge because we are all affected so directly by film that our subjective reaction can very strongly influence our judgement. Each of us sees, in fact, a different film, our imagination constructs the same film differently. This is why it is so difficult to simply recognize one or a few films while eliminating all of the others. In addition, the award given to a film, unfortunately, does not represent a critical analysis of this film; it is not generally accompanied by a detailed, critical commentary which makes known the reasons for the choice, even if a few lines are read when the award is presented. These remarks succeed in explaining certain hostilities toward some awards, the presentation of which appeared arbitrary and unjust. An interesting solution, however, is proposed: as practised by the fiction film festivals, such as Cannes, give specific awards, for example, an award for the "best leading shot" or "best interrelation", "best background theme", or best image, best sound, etc... This approach would be more precise allowing the jury to make explicit and justify its choices.

**Awards and Film-makers.** Are awards useful? Incontestably, awards are stimulating and appreciable for the film-makers who receive them. Yet, in contrast to common thought, if the achievement of an award allows attention to be drawn to a film, it is clear that it does not allow one to find better financing for the next film, especially since the principal sponsors are now almost exclusively television channels for which awards are in no way a factor in the decision. Awards are important for beginners, for first films. Incontestably, they constitute a factor of encouragement and subsequently, they can be, in the face of the difficulties in making films, an obstacle to discouragement. They allow one to gain confidence in oneself and sometimes solicit the confidence of others and obtain grants for a new project, but above all in the past because now financial support is only granted with the approval of the television channels. On the other hand, awards have an equally negative effect when the filmmaker sees his or her first film rewarded and, then, the next films receive no awards. This can disrupt a career, as in the case of child prodigies, actors or musicians, for example. Accustomed to recognition, they totally lose confidence in themselves when their work is no longer an object of reward. Some festivals propose forty films in competition to afterwards reward eight or ten. This is not a good solution. If a single film is given an award among the forty presented in competition, all of the denied films find themselves on the side of the majority and this does them no harm. If, on the contrary, ten films among forty are awarded, the thirty others are more clearly rejected. Taking into account what has been said above about the arbitrariness of a jury's judgments, this situation should be avoided: Better one single (or very few) awards.

**Awards and Distribution.** Many remarkable and award-winning films have never been shown on television, particularly by the British and American channels, simply because they are not films made for television: the criteria for each variety are different, even opposed. In addition, if during a brief period the television channels were purchasing independently produced documentaries, this is no longer the case: the films presented on television are now produced by and for television. Besides, these telefilms are often presented in

professional festivals reserved for television, such as FIPA (International Festival for Audiovisual Programs) in Cannes. In other respects, festivals endeavour to organize an extension of their programming. Thus, since 1993 the Margaret Mead Festival chose a selection of films which, after the Festival, circulated the United States. This initiative is greeted with interest. The Cinema du Réel does this as well. In particular, the award-winning films are purchased by the office of the Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (France), which has them circulated through its cultural services abroad.

In conclusion, if we desire large festivals to present awards, this must not be considered as an obligation for all festivals. The absence of awards can also be a plus for some more modest festivals. It would be desirable that juries work with more precise directives and, in particular, that awards be presented for a film's specific recognized qualities and not following a global judgement which can only be profoundly arbitrary and subjective.

*Remarks gathered, transcribed and edited in French by Colette Piault, April 1994, Published in La Revue Documentaires, No. 9, July, 1994. Translated by Holy Haverty for CVA Newsletter.*

### A VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY PROJECT IN A MULTI-CULTURAL SETTING: A CASE FROM SOUTHWESTERN BULGARIA

During the months of May, June and July 1994 in the village Breznitza, SW Bulgaria, a Visual Anthropology Workshop took place. The workshop was organized by Asen Balikci on behalf of the Balkan Chapter, Commission on Visual Anthropology, International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, and sponsored by UNESCO and the Canadian Cooperation Fund. The originally proclaimed aim of the workshop was to train a small number of young men and women from the Breznitza region in both anthropological field methods and ethnographic techniques. The trainees were supposed to originate from the four major ethnic groups located in the area. These are the Pomaks (Bulgarian-speaking muslims), the Bulgarians, the ethnic Turks, and the Rom. At the end of the training period the trainees should be invited to make a video on a subject of their choice.

The projected experiment rested on three assumptions. First, we believe that humble peasants in the Balkans have rarely had the opportunity to express themselves to a wide audience. Although literate, they may remain unable to write books. As a rule it is city intellectuals who write about them; the peasants remain silent. The workshop aimed at enabling the young peasants to address a wide audience through video technology and tell his/her story about life in a Balkan village. Second, we expected that native video recorders would express a much higher degree of sensitivity to cultural meaning and relevant ethnographic detail than could an outsider. Third, we believed that the context of multi-cultural video-making should facilitate inter-ethnic understanding and promote a more tolerant perception of the other.

Breznitza is a large and populous village located at the foothills of Pirin mountain, SW Bulgaria. The vast majority of the villagers are Pomaks. They consider themselves as Turks and vigorously deny their Slavic origin. The Christian Bulgarians are mostly refugees from Greek Macedonia, settled in the village after WWI. At the present time they are mostly elderly, retired people. Their young descendants have abandoned Breznitza and settled in the more

prosperous towns. This process of depopulation can be observed in practically all Bulgarian mountain villages. Family based mixed farming and limited stockbreeding are the main subsistence activities. Tobacco is the principal cash crop. Under communist rule, parallel to the collective farm, several workshops were established where village women could find local employment. Since 1972 the Pomaks were subjected by their communist rulers to a vigorous policy of assimilation. Personal Arabic names were changed to Bulgarian ones and Muslim rituals and practices restricted or prohibited. Thus old inter-ethnic hatreds were reawakened; they can be felt even in the post-communist period, characterized by economic decline.

Particular care was devoted to the selection of trainees. The project organizers, A. Balikci, anthropologist (CVA) and Jatzek Todorov, video instructor (Institute of Theatre and Cinema Studies, Sofia) interviewed many young candidates in Breznitza and in the surrounding villages, looking for the brightest young men and women with an interest in local folklore and/or photography. The search for Turkish candidates proved to be particularly difficult since most young ethnic Turks from the area were getting ready to emigrate to Turkey and showed little interest in local training. After many arduous meetings, five candidates were selected, representing three ethnic groups: (1) Two young Pomak men, one with an interest in photography, the other a commercial video artist; (2) two Bulgarians, the first a female teacher of English from the village school, the second an amateur video artist, the son of an orthodox priest in a neighbouring village; (3) a young Rom from the regional town of Gotse Delchev, a blacksmith by profession, with a strong interest in Rom lore and video-recording.

The workshop took place in a rented house in Breznitza. Initially, Asen Balikci taught ethnographic field methods and visual anthropology techniques: participant observation, event analyses, running records, prevalent practices in recording ritual, technological activities, body movement, complex social events etc. Note taking was recommended as a necessary parallel activity to video recording: all filmed sequences should be further described, explained and analysed in field notes! At the same time, several ethnographic films were screened illustrating points which were emphasized during the instruction process. Then followed, over a period of three weeks, the instruction in videography proper consisting mostly of systematic exercises using two VHS cameras. Dotsent Todorov stressed various strategies in following movement, sequence relatedness and the necessity for full subject records. Further, Dr. Jean Cuisenier (ex-director of the Musée des Arts et Tradition Populaires, Paris) as a guest lecturer at our workshop, spoke about naive ethnography and cited several cases of native observers studying their own cultures.

Contrary to expectations, the selection of themes by trainees for their own video production did not lead to overt ideological controversies. Given the existence of numerous problems in the region at the time, overwhelming problems which preoccupied people's minds, and were continuously discussed publicly and privately (growing poverty and unemployment, rising Islamic fundamentalism and Bulgarian nationalism, general rejection of the Rom, etc) no trainee made an attempt to tackle these problems!. In the context of workshop discussions, trainees reaffirmed their ideological positions and their attitude towards these problems, this without aggressivity. Trainees were encouraged in their freedom of subject choice and workshop organisers carefully abstained from related discussions. The following is a list of video subjects selected:

1. Bulgarian trainee: daily family activities in a large Pomak household. Emphasis on mother-child relations. Village Breznitza.

2. Bulgarian trainee: portrait of an old Bulgarian couple; various activities in the garden and inside the house, participation in church related tasks important to the elderly protagonist. Village Breznitza. (The protagonist is a helper to the village priest who is the trainee's father)

3. Pomak trainee: portrait of a Pomak bricoleur-inventor. The bricoleur has constructed a tractor from scratch with various disparate spare parts. He planned to build a helicopter in the past but was refused permission by the communist authorities because they were afraid he might escape to Turkey.

4. Pomak trainee: detailed illustration of daily activities in a large Pomak household. Emphasis on subsistence activities. Village Breznitza.

5. Rom trainee: (a) portrait of his two brothers, both blacksmiths, in their workshop; (b) a Rom wedding in the Rom section of the town of Gotse Delchev, again with typical family scenes.

Clearly the trainees selected subjects very close to themselves in settings that they were very familiar with. The first Bulgarian trainee expressed a cross-cultural effort, the Pomak family filmed, however, was a neighbour the trainee grew up with. The Pomak trainee (project 3) who was a commercial video artist was looking for an exotic subject. He rejected ritual and opted for what appeared as most exotic in his neighbourhood, a marginal man obsessed by absurd mechanical creations. In sum the trainees' videos, with a single exception, aim at presenting a stable image of their cultural environment emphasizing the extended family characterised by harmonious intra-family relations. Even the *bricoleur*-inventor was filmed continuously in his family setting, with family members coming in and out of his workshop and acting as secondary protagonists. The old couple from Banitschan was also filmed in continuous interaction with helping neighbours who seem to take the place of relatives. Clearly all videos illustrate the close relatedness of the Balkan peasant to a wider network. It should be noted that four trainees worked on their own ethnic groups showing no apparent interest in the others. Their perception of regional society is that of ethnic units who live close by, interact daily but remain separate.

All instructional activities and filming by trainees was videotaped by a professional cameraman. This was done with the intention to produce a one-hour video on the workshop which will be structured as an alternation of both materials. This video will be produced with the help of the Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film (IWF) in Göttingen.

*Asen Balikci, Commission on Visual Anthropology, Balkan Chapter*

## THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM EXHIBIT

Rio de Janeiro, September 20 - October 2, 1994

Organized by anthropologist Patricia Monte-Mór and film-maker José Inácio Parente, and sponsored by Banco do Brasil Cultural Center, the Second International Film Exhibit was a pioneer undertaking of its kind in Brazil. For two weeks people had the opportunity of meeting and exchanging while 131 works were shown. Besides enjoying the selection of films and videos the prevailing atmosphere of the event seemed to be of discussion and learning through the 'Anthropology and Cinema Forum' held within the event.

The exhibit proper was structured mainly on the basis of themes and production characteristics rather than on national origin. Among

the different themes were the ethnographic record film, classic documentary, and television productions. The set of films named 'Pioneer images' included films made by the anthropologists Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson in the course of their research in Bali in the fifties. The set 'Classics' contained films with a particularly good combination of ethnography and cinema, made in distinct times, under different conditions of production. Such as *Au Pays Dogon* by M. Griaule, made in the context of the Dakar-Djibouti mission in the 1930s; and *Chang*, made in Thailand in 1927 by E. Schoedsack and M. C. Cooper, and in 1933 added a sound track by the Thai composer Bruce Gaston. 'Timothy Asch Review' concerned the work of this American anthropologist who, since the sixties, has contributed to the encounter between cinema and anthropology in ethnographic fieldwork. His productions vast and well known, the Second Exhibit was in fact dedicated to Timothy Asch. The set comprised a sample of Asch's films, including his most recent *A Celebration of Origins* (1992), and some from the Yanomamo series (Tim Asch himself was unable to participate in the event due to his critical health condition. He died a few days after the exhibit).

Special 'Selections' also on other important ethnographic film-makers, such as MacDougall (Australia), Marc-Henri Piault (France), Vladimir Carvalho (Brazil). 'Documentary Memory' was a selection of film and video documentaries with the purpose of showing private or difficult-to-access collections, significant works from different times and with various themes from Brazil, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

'Video and Research: Brazil' comprised a selection of videos produced in the 1990s by Brazilian social scientists from different universities in the context of academic or NGO research. 'Native Media' was a particularly interesting set of films, showing the results of both the vulgarization of video systems and the new anthropological perspective that encourages those traditional 'objects' to become the producers of their own images. The video *Taking Aim* by Monica Frota is one which draws on footage shot by the Kayapo themselves, archival images, stills, and computer animation to portray an indigenous media project in a cinematic anthropological argument. Vincent Carelli presented his video *Eu já fui seu irmão*, part of the project 'Video in the Villages', developed among Brazilian Indians.

The theme 'Contemporary Diversity' covered recent film and video productions from the 1990s from: Brazil, Argentina, USA, France, UK, Mexico, Australia, Austria, and Russia. Included was a package of films from the Margaret Mead Film festival (1994) and a selection of films from Cinema du Réel. The TV Show assortment included documentaries produced for broad television audiences. From the UK there were some from the series *Strangers Abroad*, supervised by anthropologist André Singer; from USA some from the series *Millennium: Tribal Wisdom and the Modern World* presented by anthropologist David Maybury-Lewis; from France the series *Lieux Dits*, of which anthropologist Marc Piault is one of its supervisors; and from Brazil the series *Os Brasileiros*, presented by anthropologist Roberto DaMatta.

The richness of this Second Exhibit stemmed not only from the films screened but moreover from a very fruitful interaction and discussion among an assiduous audience of anthropologists, film-makers, students and patrons of Banco do Brazil Cultural Center. During the 'Anthropology and Cinema Forum' the Exhibit unfolded into several events. A workshop, conducted by Marc-Henri Piault dealt with questions related to the origin and trajectory of visual anthropology. Anthropologists and film-makers Marc Piault (France), Peter Loizos (England), David MacDougall (Australia), and Jose Carlos Avellar (Brazil) participated in a panel discussion about 'Subject and Object in Ethnographic Documentary'. Argentineans

Rudy Nunciato, Cristina Argota, Ana Maria Zanotti, Ana Poliak, and Brazilian José Inacio Parente participated in another panel about 'Latin American Documentary'. A presentation on 'Documentary Film Narrative' was given by Peter Loizos. A group of Brazilian anthropologist dealing with visual anthropology met to discuss with each other and with anthropologists from abroad their experiences in this recently born area in Brazil. The making of films and videos related to research, the use of verbal or film texts, the content of courses on anthropology and image, procedures for utilizing visual materials, and the creation of laboratories and image centres in different universities were some of the issues addressed here.

The richness of the Exhibit was assured by the presence of authors, available for explaining and debating their films, and by the warm interest manifested by an audience full of students and professional people equally involved in cinema and anthropology. The effervescence showed through in three issues of *Etno-cine*, the Exhibit journal, which during the two weeks of the festival produced a repercussion of all events, keeping people up to date, and is now a record of Second Exhibit. Besides the Second Exhibit Catalogue, with two articles, the book *Cinema and Anthropology* with the results from last year's seminars and debates (First Exhibit), issued by the International Ethnographic Film Exhibit, also includes a number of competent articles.

The repercussion of last year's Exhibit lead not only to the Second Exhibit but also to the 'Second Journey of Visual Anthropology' a travel and exchange programme within a circuit of universities that teach visual anthropology.

In all its unfoldings the Second International Ethnographic Film Exhibit entailed an encounter of many people at many levels. It reveals a continuation and strengthening of a circuit that pulls together film-making and ethnography. This shows itself in the many references in support of the Catalogue as well as in the diverse participation of Brazilians and people from abroad. One could say that if on the one hand the Exhibit is a particular space where a particular kind of people gather to see a particular kind of film, on the other hand its discussions lead to the broadening and opening of this space.

Rosane Manhães Prado  
State University of Rio de Janeiro/UERJ

## AUDIO-VISUAL PRODUCTIONS IN SOCIOLOGY.

Report on the programme presented at the XIIIth World Congress of Sociology, Bielefeld University, Germany, July 18-23, 1994. The program was a co-production between Leonard Henny (Center for International Media Research, Holland) and Siegfried Käscht (Bielefeld University, Germany).

The program of four afternoons (Tuesday - Friday from 14.00 to 21.00) consisted of presentations by sociologists who had used audio-visual media (photo, film and video) in the exercise of their profession. These presentations included a wide area beginning with the program of interactive learning and teaching of sociology by videodiscs and ending in different experiments using images in the area of sociological research. We had the opportunity to listen to eight theoretically or methodologically interesting papers, most of which were accompanied by audio-visual demonstrations, and see 18 films and videodiscs (five of which were presented as part of the

main program in connection with group discussions, and twelve others as an alternative programme daily from 19.00 to 21.00).

Siegfried Kätsch, K. D. Bock and W. D. Webler (Bielefeld) had planned an interactive program to teach the theoretical concepts of sociology to first and second year students. The student is supposed to work independently with the program, and the authors of the program hope it will help to further the student's orientation to the concepts. 'This means to the students of sociology what laboratory experiments mean to the beginners in physics.'

Luc Pauwels (Antwerpen) is preparing a handbook for visual sociology, and he presented a paper on 'Identity and Diversity in Visual Sociology. Methodological Issues and Strategies for the Future'. The speaker discussed the difficulties in applications of visual sociology and gave a practical definition: 'Visual sociology is a multi-formed compilation of research and communication activities that rely in one way or another on images, with the purpose to broaden and deepen our understanding of society.' He remarked that the strength of visual sociology is in the synergy it can accomplish with the existing way of thinking and doing sociology (by verbal and numeric means), rather than presenting itself as surrogate science.

Fred Forest (Paris) presented his philosophy and aesthetics of visual communication verbally and through performance; with the help of a film, he presented his polemic with Pierre Bourdieu and Hans Haacke about the ethics and functions of the art and the artists in our era.

The paper of Albert Piette (Paris) was entitled 'Photographs and Minor Mode of Reality'. The author had started with Goffman's role theory, and his paper demonstrated how he had managed to make the theoretical discussion more exact and give it new nuances through photo analysis. The photos showed clearly how people presented their roles in rituals, and how they managed, during the rituals, to escape now and then from their roles.

Jannick Geoffrey (Nice) told about the use of family photographs in analyzing the status and relations of family members ('Family Photographs: the Visual Patrimony'). In his presentation and in that of Ernő Kunt (Miskolc, Hungary), the possibilities of the photo elicitation method were demonstrated and discussed.

Douglas Harper (editor of the journal 'Visual Sociology', Tampa, Florida, USA) and Rolf Husmann (Göttingen) discussed 'Goals and Activities of Visual Sociologists'. The situation in Hungary was presented by Ernő Kunt ('The Hungarian Sociological School of Family Photography').

The films gave interesting visual analyses of western and non-western cultures and subcultures; examples were *In and Out of Control in a Children's Home* (Stef Meyknecht, Amsterdam); *Witchcraft as Religion in Modern Dutch Society* (Patricia van der Does and Margriet Jansen, Amsterdam); *Rossocantinuo*, a film on religious rituals (R. Cipriani, Rome); and *Nuba Wrestling* (Rolf Husmann and W. Sperschneider). We had also the opportunity to see the political autobiography *The Wonderful Terrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl*.

Prudently, the program of Audio-Visual Productions did not claim the title of VISUAL SOCIOLOGY. Nevertheless, the concept of visual sociology was used in discussions. Did we see any ways for sociology to be more visual?

Visual anthropology has legitimated its status by producing good ethnographic films. But what is visual sociology? Certainly visual sociology up to now has not been more than a promising approach, the area and boundaries of which seem to be unclear. It may consist of 'the sociology of the image', the analysis of the visual images all around us. It may, perhaps, include a part of sociology of art, the sociology of the production and reception of the images; the analysis of the meanings, processes and institutions in the area of producing and using images. Additionally, of course, it includes the

whole area of visual methodology helping in the acquisition and analysis of research material, and in the presentation of the results. Clearly, it has not yet found its status between identity and diversity, as Luc Pauwels stated. As true as this is, however, visual sociology is actively seeking its shape and status, developing principles of theory and methodology, and conducting interesting experiments with ideas and technologies.

It is clear that visual means could be used much more widely in mainstream sociology. For instance, there are respondents who would relate their autobiographies more fluently and in greater detail if one had the opportunity to look at their family photo album with them at the same time. There are students who would understand the concepts and structure of sociological theory easier if they had the chance to visualize the material instead of only reading books. There are many research problems that cannot be thoroughly analyzed or presented without the help of audio-visual media. And there are researchers who could understand their topic better by visualising it in concrete images.

The program of 'Audio-Visual Productions in Sociology' did not have the status of a permanent research committee, working group or even ad hoc group, though it has been arranged at the World Congress of Sociology five times (Toronto 1974, Uppsala 1978, Mexico City 1982, New Delhi 1986, and now Bielefeld 1994). Actually, the people who were not members of some networks of visual sociology did not know about the program before the congress: if they were lucky, they happened to find the program announcement in the back pages of the big Program Book of the Congress (in the unnumbered pages!). This reflects, of course, the marginal status which visual productions have had in mainstream sociology. But because this program now has a tradition of twenty years, and the number of interested persons has grown, I wonder if the right time to introduce a permanent group of visual sociologists into the future world congresses of sociology is not approaching.

Ritva Uusitalo

Department of Sociology

University of Helsinki, Finland

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND MUSEUM. The 4th International AVICOM Symposium in Bonn met with a good response

Around 70 speakers had agreed to present papers, 220 participants from 29 countries all over the world had come to Bonn: the 4th international annual symposium organized by AVICOM, the specialist media committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), was held in Germany under the patronage of the Federal Chancellor. For the first time it was focused on one specific theme and promised to be an unexpectedly great success.

The conference, entitled 'AVICOM 94: Photography and Museum', was held from 20 to 24 September 1994 in the Museum of contemporary German history in Bonn, which had opened only a few months before co-organizing its first international congress. Museum scientists, archivists, media experts, photo-technicians and restorers conferred about this classic medium and its relevance to museums.

Klaus Honnef (Bonn) spoke about the opposing notions of photography as an art form and as a mass medium. Ute Eskildsen (Essen) called for the establishment of photographic departments in museums, rather than creating further special photo-museums. Wolfgang Hesse (Dresden) emphasized the limited appreciation of



photography, despite the massive scale of its use in museums. A number of speakers spoke about photographic collections in museums, presenting the different ways their respective museums dealt with photographs as objects of collection: among others Vilnis Auzins (Riga), Antonin Dufek (Brno), Genya Markon (Washington), Jacqueline Dubois (Paris), Gabriele Lohberg (Davos), Urszula Csartoryska (Lodz) and Irina Saltykova (Moscow). Leonard Ahonon (Abomey) and Elie Silasy (Moramanga) described the efforts involved in setting up and managing photographic collections in museums of the Third World. Hiroshi Nakamura (Tokyo) presented information about a new Museum of Photography which will arouse considerable attention.

Ethnological and folkloristic photography constituted a separate block, in which the Hungarians were particularly well represented. Erzsébet György and Janos Tari (Budapest) gave reports on the use of photography in museums and about folkloristic photo-documentation of daily life, an area that Hungary approaches more systematically than any other European country. The papers presented by Ayten Fadel (Bonn), Elizabeth Edwards (London), Barbara Frey-Näf and Maya Natarajan (Basel), Annegret Nippa and Margot Kahleyss (Berlin), Peter Mesenhöller (Cologne) and Thomas Theye (Bremen) concerned the need to treat photography critically as an ethnological source, the establishment of ethnographic data-banks, the use of photography in ethnographic exhibitions and recent research relating to ethnographic photo material. In this block of the congress, ethnography provoked a lively discussion around the question of returning older ethnographic photo collections to the peoples who were the subjects of documentation, or granting them rights for contemporary use and publication.

Brigitte Walbe (Marburg), Roswitha Neu-Kock (Cologne), Reinhard Horn and Elisabeth Angermair (Munich), Werner Starke (Dresden), Eilis Ni Dhuibhne (Dublin) and Flip Bool (Rotterdam) presented papers on the work of their picture archive. Among others, Yvonne Deane (Leeds), Torben Lundbæk (Copenhagen) and Mariano Florito (Arcavacada di Rende) demonstrated how to build up photographic data-banks, as well as their possible uses in conjunction with new computer technology.

The contributions of photo-technicians and restorers formed another, separate and extensive block. Klaus Pollmeier (Mülheim a.d.Ruhr) gave an overview of photo restoration and conservation in Germany. Balint Flesh (Budapest) and Nonna Garbar (Moscow) presented papers on the Daguerreotype. The central theme of this block was the restoration of colour photo materials with the aid of digital processing. The speakers here were Klaus B. Hendriks (Kemville), Aristotelis Kambouris (Athens), Rudolf Gschwind (Basle), Piotr Swiatek (Cologne) and George Robinson (Munich).

The discussion of legal and ethical aspects of the use of photo material, as well as the possibilities for museums and archives, by strictly marketing photo material, to keep in check its unhindered further use and at the same time to make a financial gain, proved to be a desideratum. The contributions from Karl-Heinz Pütz and Roland Klemig (Berlin), Alexander Unverzagt (Hamburg), Terence Wright (Luton) and Luce-Marie Albiges (Paris) accordingly gave rise to a lively debate, during which museologists and archivists revealed their lack of experience of complicated legal terms. AVICOM's offer to collect further questions about this complex subject from participants, and to have them answered by experts, met with approval. These will be published later.

The arrangement and didactics of exhibitions with the aid of photography, the advantages and disadvantages of audio-slide-show compared with other audio-visual media, and possibilities for the presentation of photo exhibitions were the themes of a further block of the conference. The speakers included Hans-Walter Hütter (Bonn),

Fred Oed (Ludwigsburg), Reinhard Strube (Wetzlar), Jean-Marcel Humbert (Paris), Christian Schmiedel (Cologne) and John B. Ruddock (Skelmersdale). The final block of the conference comprised a critical presentation of the latest photographic media, the Photo-CD and the Portfolio-CD, and their possible use in museums by Frank Becher (Nürnberg) and Julien Biere (Gauting).

The AVICOM General Assembly, chaired by AVICOM President Marco Tonon (Pordenone), wound up the 4th international symposium. One of the results was to form expert groups within the international AVICOM association, for such areas as photo restoration. Finally, Egil Reimers (Stavanger) gave a presentation on the prospective General Conference of the International Council of Museums 1995, which will be held in Stavanger.

Besides visiting photo exhibitions and galleries in and around Cologne and Bonn on various evenings of the congress, on the last day a visit to the 'Photokina' in Cologne had also been scheduled.

In the early summer of 1995 an extensive book of the conference will be published in German, English, French, Italian and Spanish (The price has not yet been fixed, but will not exceed DM 40,-) Please order through: AVICOM Vice President Dr. Michael Faber, c/o Rheinisches Freilichtmuseum, Auf dem Kahlenbusch, D-53894 Mechernich-Kommern, Fax +49 2443 5572.

*(Based on a press release received from AVICOM, Ed.)*

### A FEW CONSIDERATIONS ON THE FILM-ESSAY EXPERIMENT AS A MEANS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

The ASTRA Film Studio from Sibiu, the first studio in Rumania founded within a museum, has organized the Festival of the Documentary Film. The first festival was held in 1993 and the second in 1994. The organizers, Dumitru Budrala - producer - and Simona Bealcovschi - assistant director - have expressed their wish to draw the experts' attention to some of the trends of traditional ethnographic cinematography and especially to their own, one can say "avant-garde", experiment in this field.

The very founding of the studio has been a subject of controversy, regarding the opportunity of its existence in a cultural context where the one and only solution traditionally accepted for a museum to produce a film or a promotional issue has been the application to a professional film studio. As a result, the part played by the museum was reduced to nothing but scientific consulting, whereas the cinematographic language and style could be freely chosen by the film-maker.

Yet, the valorization of a museum's patrimony by cinematographic means is not at all a promotional matter. For the production of a film about any cultural phenomenon, the grid used for documentaries (with the goal of conveying information) does not suit. The ability to choose the appropriate film language implies, especially with the comparative museums, comprehensive and keen knowledge of the respective field, along with a perfect integration in the interdisciplinary scientific parameters - instruments used by the museologist in his research work and by the anthropologist for his investigations.

In an attempt to clarify this matter, the ASTRA Film Studio is proposing its own experiment. The film-makers of the studio are scholars. Before drafting a script (either about a cultural phenomenon, a concept or a museum object), they go through a comprehensive bibliography and make their own field research and investigations (sociological, ethnological, etc.) together with

folklorists, historians, ethno-musicologists. The productions of the studio are film essays. The tendency is to re-create the classical type of film, the one produced according to the documentary style. The topics usually belong to the philosophy of culture. The text is not supposed to reveal concrete information, but rather to decode an abstract notion (e.g. a concept).

The novelty of this type of language consists in the position given to the commentary, by refusing the didactic-like discourse of sterile narration with mere instructive aims. The text and the image become equally important, if they are supported by a commentary of great stylistic value.

This experiment has started from the observation that today, at the very end of the 20th century, humanity is experiencing a true resurrection of mythicism. Cosmism exists in the Romanian mythology as a conception (an ethical attitude), but also as ethno-cultural behaviour. The ideal core of the film is therefore to accurately perceive the mythological aspect of human thinking.

#### EXAMPLE

In the film *The Power of Endurance* (film-essay /PAL/20 min.), the third chapter has been reserved for the DANCE, the archaic, collective dance. The dance is approached neither as an *art for the chosen ones* nor as an expression of the *ludus*, but as a cosmic mood that genetically pre-exists in each and every free human being. In this respect, the dance is a transcendence, an urge to break the circle of individuality and integrate in the freedom of the other, in the COLLECTIVE FREEDOM. We have in view the similarity of the human movement with that of the planets in a solar system, considering any archaic thinking/expression as a human thinking/expression of a cosmical model.

A script of this type belongs to the field of the philosophy of culture and its priority is certainly not to convey information. Furthermore, such a script cannot be addressed to the uninitiated present-day spectator, who usually receives the message from the view point of his high commercial quotient. The film means to decode a concept: the perception of DANCE within the former human communities. A continuity can be observed both in tradition and with the symbols. What the film is bringing as a novelty is the special importance given to the TEXT. This type of narration is based on a commentary of high stylistic value, belonging to pure aesthetics rather than to the scientific report. The word is conferred its entiregnoseological value and the resulting narration is a philosophical essay. The text is a poem and so is the image. The more archaic the concept, the more stylistic virtues of the language the text will use, with the image pointing out all connotations. Nevertheless, such an experiment will bring about certain question marks. Starting from the premise, that the contemporary spectator is a true product of cultural neo-imperialism and that his receiver-qualities are systemically being distorted by the technical infrastructure (in other words, we are dealing with a manipulated spectator, a slave of the fashion and of his own automatisms), the following questions are likely to arise:

Who can this type of film be addressed to?

- a) To an audience consisting of average, ordinary people?
- b) To the initiated spectator?
- c) To the specialists? To which ones?

Is the film essay an objective means for the interdisciplinary research or, on the contrary, the over-aesthetic cinematographic discourse will damage the informational qualities of the film?

These are some of the topics discussed during the debates at the 2nd edition of the Festival of the Documentary Film, Sibiu - Rumania, 1994.

Simona Bealcoroschi  
ASTRA FILM STUDIO  
Piata Mica 11  
2400 SIBIU RUMANIA

English version, Adina Vargatu

### The 2nd ASTRA Festival of Anthropological-Documentary Film, Sibiu, 20-22 October 1994. Reflected upon by a member of the jury

At the Second ASTRA Festival of Anthropological-Documentary Film, which took place in the Transylvanian city Sibiu, Rumania from 20-22 October 1994, some 13 foreigners (non-rumanians) had found their way. We had come to enjoy an interesting festival, in a very hospitable atmosphere. During the three-day programme 40 films in competition were shown to us. Of the 40 films, a little more than half of them were Rumanian, many of them unfortunately without subtitles. Being a privileged member of jury, however, I was lucky to have a person translating ad-lib the dialogue in these films.

Most of the Rumanian films were documentary of a general sort on culture in the more limited sense, such as TV-productions on art and architecture and drama-documentaries on historical events and persons. Quite a few of the non-Rumanian films would be known to the CVA reader: Thus the two films *Futura - A Lobi Potter tells her Story* and *Copperwork in Santa Clara* by Beate Engelbrecht and Manfred Krüger, *Firth on Firth* by Rolf Husmann, Peter Loizos, and Werner Sperschneider (IWF), *Tadzhik Buffet* by Knut Ekström and Erik Strömdahl, *Let Our Songs Live* by Mats Brodin and Anna Cnattingius, *Hitting Sticks, Healing Hearts* by Curt Madison, and *Out of Place* by Peter Lutz have all been shown at the most recent international ethnographic film festivals.

Watching 40 films in three days means going through a fairly packed festival programme, tight and with no time for discussions. Since many of the film-makers were present, at least some short introductions to the films and their makers would have made it more interesting. The situation was frustrating, I imagine even more so for the film-makers.

While the film-makers - foreign as well as natives - were given absolutely no speech time, the situation for members of the jury was rather different, but in my opinion not less problematic. In Sibiu, the jury-members were treated as VIPs (even though some of its members did not see themselves as such and tried to protest against this special status). The fact that three of the seven members in fact are high-ranking Rumanians, of course, made the scene unavoidable.

This being my first experience as a member of a festival jury, I was of course curious as to find out the procedure and principles for such work. Much to my surprise, I was told that the jury would bother neither with criteria nor with categories of any sort, each member should just make up his or her own mind as to "the best" films! How many "best films" then? To be decided later...

Only at the final day the 'criteria' for awarding prizes were 'revealed' by the President of the jury to the rest of the members of the jury. Thus, we were informed: 1) the amount and grading of prizes (1 first, 3 second, and 3 third prizes within the ECU money, and a prize in LEI for a non-European film), and 2) that we were now to make our choices among the best anthropological films! After having watched so many good documentary films, though not necessarily anthropological films, this bit of information was slightly frustrating. (Somehow - unless you define all films as anthropologi-

cal - you cannot blame a film for not being anthropological!) With no criteria, no categories, no time for stating the reasons for ones choices, voting became unavoidable. And since we also lacked principles for making a vote, I am not quite sure what it is that I may have learnt about the "procedures" of jury-work! That the President of the Jury afterwards, in public, expressed his personal regrets concerning some of the films awarded (by other members of the Jury), with a vengeance made me wonder what sort of business this award-giving-business is!

Now, irrespective of my opinion on film festival competitions in general and jurors in particular, the reader might want to know who actually won the prizes as well as a bit more information on the content of the festival as such: There were 3 Rumanian films which were awarded prizes by the jury. These were: *Lindenfeld 1994* by Radu Muntean which is a portrait of village that in former times was inhabited by Germans. (The Germans/Saxons used to form a rather considerable ethnic minority in Transylvania, now they are almost all gone, having left for Germany during the Ceaucescu regime). In *Lindenfeld 1994*, only three inhabitants are left - two men and a woman. The film portrays their relationship of mutual hate and love. *Lovage* by Simona Bealchovschi is a film about a ritual celebrating the presumed fertile qualities of the herbal plant lovage. Finally, *Scream in the Ear-drum* by Radu Igazsag and Alexandru Solomon, a chronicle of the Rumanian avantgarde movement 1916-1947.

Of the non-winning Rumanian films, I should like to mention two productions by Rumanian students at Atelier VARAN in Paris: *Isolation Chamber* by Elena Raicu and *There Was Once a Village Here* by Udvardi Arpad. *Isolation Chamber* is on one hand a simple description of a working day in a slaughter-house near Bucharest. Having watched many an ethnographic film with scenes of ritual slaughtering, I found that this was an excellent comment on a modern, perhaps just as ritually way of treating and dealing with the animals that we produce en mass just to kill. I thought the editing was quite cleverly done. I realized only later that *Isolation Chamber*, being a metaphor for the political situation in Rumania before the revolution, signalled yet another, stronger, meaning to some of the Rumanians present. The other VARAN production, *There was once a village here*, deals the concrete tragedy of a group of people whose village brutally and without warning was destroyed, and replaced instead by malfunctioning hardly finished housing-blocks. The film is engaging in its direct approach and contact with the people involved.

Of the foreign films, the jury found *Let Our Songs Live* - a calm, close and unpretentious portrait of a group of Siriono Indians (Northern Bolivia) worthy of the first prize. Mats Brolin, as already mentioned, was there to receive the prize of I-forget-how-many ECU. Beate Engelbrecht (not present herself at the festival) was given a prize for her two films (mentioned above). Fortunately, her colleague Rolf Husmann was there to receive the prize, and to transport it back safely to IWF. Curt Madison, could go back to Alaska with One Million Lei in his pocket for *Hittings Sticks - Healing Hearts*. Also to be awarded a prize was the film *What Magdalena Said* by Michael Stewart (BBC). The film has as its point of departure a sentence flung out by a young Slovakian Beauty Queen, Magdalena, when asked what she wants to become: "I want to become a public-prosecutor to clean my town of all the brown-skinned inhabitants." The film-maker seeks out the background for Magdalena's statement in her home town, where a harsh conflict between Romanis (Czech gypsies) and the Slovakian population is growing, the recent division of the country into Slovakia and the Czech Republic certainly not making the situation for the gypsies less difficult. One could sense the strong feelings in the audience aroused by this film, again it was a pity that these sentiments could not be expressed in an open discussion.

Finally, a Finish film was awarded a prize (of some million Lei): The film *House of Full Service* by Lasse Naukkarinen represented a fine example of subtle Finnish documentary style. Finally, turning up some days into the festival was an old friend of CVA, Asen Balikci. He is still going strong in his Bulgarian village.

I should like to conclude these comments on the Astra film festival in Sibiu, by mentioning the organizers of the festival, the two most important persons behind the ASTRA Film Studio, Simona Bealcovschi and Dumitro Budrala. They did a great job in organizing the festival, and I am sure that the ASTRA Film Festival will last long.

Linda Jansen  
Assistant General Secretary, NAFA

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## THE VISUAL VOICE FESTIVAL CONFERENCE '94

The Visual Voice Festival Conference was held at the University of Natal, Durban from July 24 to July 30. The Confest covered a wide range of interests with the focus on the cultural dimension of visual communication. It included the Fourth International Oral Tradition Conference, the Ethnographic (Inter-cultural) Film Festival, and a first for South Africa, the Conference on Communication for Development.

More than 100 delegates attended from as far afield as Japan and France. Presenters hailed from most of the Southern African countries, Australia, New Zealand and France. The confest also attracted many enthusiastic students. Events opened with an 'Informal Friday' under the title of Communication and the Community. To set the tone Helge Janssen performed the Red Bull, an exotic, guttural and gestural piece of ancient movement, with stamping and hypnotic grunting of the mythical bull. This was followed by a keynote address from the poet laureate for Africa, Mazisi Kunene, titled 'Gifts from the Great Continent', focusing on African cosmology and what Africa can offer to the rest of the world.

Dr Jane Meyerowitz (Computer Science Department) and Dr Maurice Mars (Medical School, University of Natal) offered a spectacular glimpse into the future with a stunning demonstration titled Multimedia - interactive computers, animation, sound, video and talking books. Laura Cloete of Wits Television Services, recently returned from a number of conferences in Europe, gave an update of international multimedia developments, which included some strong criticism voiced by several delegates about the increasing use of multimedia for teaching anthropology. Presenters included Andy Mason of Artworks, Ros Sarkin of the Durban International Film Festival, Tim Quinlan from the Institute for Social and Economic Research, UDW (Community Video), Adi Paxton (Centre for Cultural and Media Studies - Gesture, Dance and the Imagination), Fafa (Greetings from Tekweni to Kilimanjaro), and Arnold Shepperson (Tits and Bums - the Body and the Screen).

Film screenings included *Ethnographic Film - An Interview with David Turton; Umkhumbane - Cato Manor Whose Land? Whose Memory?*, the premiere of *Artrage* (Kamschilla Naidoo), and a powerful student film, *Hot Feet*, a first attempt by Heli Guy who had never held a video camera before this production. The keynote speaker at the Ethnographic Film Festival was the renowned French anthropologist and film-maker Colette Piault, who is research director at the CNRS in Paris. Colette also conducted an ethnographic film workshop which proved so successful that plans are being made for a return visit.

Visual Voice hosted the first meeting of the Community TV Forum, which initially aims to set up a TV station on the Durban campus of the University of Natal, and then assist with Community TV stations in the Rural areas. The Forum was attended by Tracy Naughton (the Mother of Australian Community TV), and visitors from Johannesburg, including both FAWO and the Community TV Consortium.

Another motivation at the Confest is the plan to establish a film museum in Durban which would have a bookshop, screening room, educational facility and a coffee bar. The Film Museum Group aims to link-up with numerous international film organisations, including the Frankfurt Film Museum, Facets Multimedia Cinematheque (Chicago) and the Film/Video Centre (Atlanta). Contact is also being made with various culturally based film units throughout Africa which can assist with building up a film and video library.

A new film and culture journal titled *Visual Voice* is being prepared by the DTP students at the Centre for Cultural and Media Studies at the University of Natal – the journal will be launched at a spectacular electronic event later in the year.

The theme for *Visual Voice '95* is 'Inter-cultural Film, Semiotics and Orality'. The Confest will take place in the last week of June and has already secured a number of presenters, including David Turton of the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology at Manchester University, and Professor Teshome Gabriel of the Film Department at UCLA.

For further information about *Visual Voice '95* please contact the co-ordinator, Mikhail Peppas, at the Centre for Cultural and Media Studies, University of Natal, King George the V Avenue, Durban, 4001, South Africa. Phone (031) 260 2505. Address: Centre for Cultural and Media Studies, University of Natal (Durban), Private Bag X10, Dalbridge 4014, South Africa.

Mikhail Peppas

### The first 'or d'œuvre' Student Meeting in Berne, 10 June 1994

Early summer 1994 saw the first of a hopefully long series of Swiss student meetings focusing on Visual Anthropology. The field has a long-standing tradition at Berne University, with at least one lecture or practical course a year being organised by student work group Agva (Arbeitsgruppe visuelle Anthropologie), and several students currently engaged in producing videos. Over time the wish grew to knit closer ties with other Swiss students in order to exchange ideas and experiences, and to coordinate activities so as to further Visual Anthropology in Switzerland.

Thus, the first 'or d'œuvre' meeting above all had the aim of establishing contacts between interested students from different universities. The second goal was to provide an overview over the films and videos produced by (student) anthropologists and film-makers with an interest in the field. Not aiming for the croquette in the first go, it was decided to concentrate the activities on a single day. Ranging in format from 16mm and Beta SP to U-matic and Super 8, 13 films and videos were shown in three blocks, making for a full-day programme. 'Agva' was very pleased to note the fact that all but two of the film-makers were able to attend the event. To add to the discussions two anthropologists had been invited to participate as independent commentators: Barbara Lueem, lecturer at Basel University and Heinz Nigg, video-maker from Zürich. Both have a more than decade-long active interest in the field and were eager to promote student activities.

The event took place in newly renovated Unitobler, Toblerone chocolate factory turned university. A fiftysome had gathered there, many of whom came from Zürich and Basel, and some even from Lausanne and Geneva. The first festival block was dominated by a discussion of film-maker's ethic responsibility in directing their subjects. It was spurred by the film *Zaugg - Ein Portrait* by Armin Biehler, a film showing the life of a railway mechanic. *Das Geschenk* by Mehdi Sahebi initiated another discussion about commentary style versus evocative style - its very artistic imagery not dictating a clear-cut interpretation. The two films *Moslem Brothers* by Barbara Etterich, Sabine Hagmann, Mark Froesch, Thomas Isler and *Le départ de Kadidia* by Valerie Périllard both showed different forms of culture clash and how to deal with it, first in the case of Turkish immigrants, second with a Burkina Faso student in Paris. The after-noon's topics were circling around the question of how to represent a critical content (in *1000° C* by Damaris Luethli) and about how much subjectivity we are willing to accept (in *Document Vietnam* by Patrick Tresch). Another theme was the description of a situation from different points of view (*Gesprache in Biligiri Rangana Hills* by Stefan Lang), yet another 'the Rouch way' (*Le voyage où l'on ne tombe jamais* by Antigone T. Froehlich).

The evening programme featured the more experimental works - films on the border of anthropology (depending on your favourite definition of 'ethnographic film'). First to the screen were parts I & II of Flavia Caviezel's alp trilogy (*Hier ist schoen* and *La historia dil Segnes*), followed by Gabrielle Baur's *A Tale*. A political detour (*Schulter an Schulter* by this reporter) and the power of the free market forces (*Im Zauberspiegel* by Manuel Schuepfer) marked the close of a very successful first 'or d'œuvre'.

Stefan Lang  
University of Berne

### PÄRNU INTERNATIONAL VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY FESTIVAL, July 3-10, 1994

This summer's festival was a big success in many ways; first of all I would like to mention that we had 150% of our average number of films in the competition: 62 films, and half of them were, as mentioned by the press, of a very high quality. President Meri arrived for the first working day with his own film about a shaman on Taimyr peninsula, filmed 15 years ago, and gave an excellent speech. Ex-President Rüttel also spent half a day and the new Minister of Culture, Peeter Olesk, participated at the closing ceremony. According to our traditions, the last day of the festival was dedicated to Kihnu Island where we spent some happy hours in that lonely place.

The main award, an authentic Estonian blanket, was this year given to the Japanese film *Living on Agano River*, by Makoto Sato; a two hour long epic documentary about a polluted river and people suffering in their eastern calm way. Wayne Barker, Australian Aboriginal film-maker, was for his film *Müli Müli* recognized as the best indigenous film-maker, and given the Andris Slapinsh Memorial Prize. The Audience Award went to two films (shared): *The Belows* by V. Kossakovskiy (Russia) and *The Sultan's Burden* by J. Jerstad and Lisbeth Høltedahl (UK/Norway).

The 1995 Pärnu Visual Anthropology Festival (July 2-9, 1995) will be dedicated to indigenous film-making, but the programme has plenty of space for good documentaries in general, and we hope to see more films on community studies.

Mark Soosar  
Pärnu, Estonia

## Film Reviews

### *Voices of Orchid Islands.*

100 mins. Video. English translation. Produced by Hu Tai-li and Daw-ming Lee. Anthropologist: Hu Tai-li. Camera: Lin Chien-hsing. Sound: Chen L-Ling, et al. Editing: Hu Tai-li and Daw-ming Lee. Year of release: 1994. Distributor: Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.

Between the Philippines and Taiwan lie the Orchid Islands, where the natives fear spirits called *anito*. *Anito*, in Filipino religion is a general term for deities, benevolent and malicious spirits and the souls of the dead. In *Voices of Orchid Islands*, *anito* is presented as being an evil force, that influences individual lives and well-being, cultural and social forms and external relationships with the outside world. *Voices of Orchid Islands* is about these complex relations among the Yami people.

In the beginning of the video we are presented with the anthropologist, two Yamis and a local doctor. The three of them living in Yayo village, were the Yami people live. This is an interesting part as these people reflect upon their anxiety and gain in participating in this video. Their concerns centre around two things: The right and opportunities of the Yami people to speak for themselves and who should, and actually do, benefit from making a video like this. We are left with these questions in mind and then introduced to three forces that have and will in near future, change dramatically the lives and ways of the Yami; Tourism, Western medicine and nuclear waste (which is stored in the island) - all forces that are inflicted by heritage, *anito*. We then follow some of the conflicts these forces create for the Yami.

There are several aspects that I find less successful in the video. One, is the incorporation of few clips of ethnological material, such as the telling of myths. That does not strengthen the video. Rather the opposite. Another thing is that what I see as being the concept of the video, *anito* in cultural context, is not worked out thoroughly. For example, we are not offered a clear understanding of how the new forms of the vicious *anito* (tourism, western medicine and nuclear waste dump site) is dealt with by the Yami on a daily basis. There are several suggestions towards that direction but more should have been done. Finally, on a technical note, subtitling in English is often difficult to read, as white letters often are on a white background.

The video, however, is interesting from various perspectives and its weaknesses that I mentioned last could quite possibly at the same time become its strength if appropriately contextualized. The video questions its form in an interesting way. In relation to image producing tourists and, what Richard Chalfen has called 'image vendors', i.e. indigenous image producers, the beginning of the video depicts image producing tourists in 'Cultural Village' and its inhabitants, the Yami. The latter try to control the image production by for instance, forbidding tourists to take their picture. In one scene we are exposed to a young boy who shouts to Us: "Don't take any pictures of people!" I asked myself: What am I doing? Am I "anito"? "My" camera? My culture(s)? Or all things combined? In that sense *Voices of Orchid Islands* is very successful.

Sigurjón Baldur Hafsteinsson  
University of Iceland

### *Nusrat! Live at Meany*

Ethnomusicology Program, University of Washington. VHS 101 min., \$35.00, 1993. Available from University of Washington Press, P.O. Box 50096, Seattle, Washington 98145-5096, USA.

*Qawwālī* is a Muslim devotional music played at Sufi shrines in India and Pakistan. Its normal setting is the *sama*, the "spiritual concert", where members of the audience experience varying degrees of ecstasy. In the twentieth century *qawwālī* also became a media-transmitted popular music, first through the production of 78rpm phonograms, and later through Hindi movies, which used *qawwālī* as a spectacular form of ensemble music. Women *qawwālī* groups, which never existed in real life, were created for films. In these ways, *qawwālī* became a music for the concert hall, and *qawwālī* singers became national and international stars. *Qawwālī* is a form of North Indian classical music, using the same melodic modes (*rāgs*) and metric cycles (*tāls*), and instruments such as the small Indian harmonium and tabla drums. The performance ensemble has its lead soloist (sometimes two), with other occasional solo singer(s), and a small vocal chorus which also have the important role of hand clapping in time with the music.

Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, from Pakistan, is today the best known *qawwālī* star, having performed on stage in many parts of the world, and with a large body of recordings released. He is particularly notable for his familiarity with North Indian classical vocal music, a style he frequently utilises in performance. In 1992-93 he was artist in residence in the Ethnomusicology Program at the University of Washington School of Music, and the concert shown in this video is described as the "highlight" of his residency.

The video contains performances of eight *qawwālīs*:

1. (2-00) *Allah Hu*. Traditional Urdu *hamd* (song in praise of God).
2. (17-10) *Man Kunto Maula*. Arabic and Urdu *qaul* (Sufi hymn) by Hazrat Amir Khusrau.
3. (26-46) *Tanam Farsuda Jan Para*. Persian *na'at* (song in praise of Muhammad) by Jami.
4. (38-45) *Haq Ali Ali*. Urdu *manqabat* (song in praise of Ali) by Saim Chishti.
5. (53-53) *Mera Piya Ghar Aya*. Panjabi *kalam* (mystic text) by Bulleh Shah.
6. (1-07-52) *Akhian Udikdian*. Panjabi folk song.
7. (1-20-07) *Mast Mast*. Panjabi folk song.
8. (1-33-14) *Shahbaz Qalandar*. Panjabi folk song.

Each is introduced by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan in English. This is a good mixture of items, with various sub-genres of *qawwālī* represented (*hamd*, *qaul*, *na'at*, *manqabat*, *kalam*), sung in several languages. Some of these songs are among the best known examples of *qawwālī*, especially items 1, 4, and 8. Nusrat seems to have been in good form, and the video will be of great interest to any admirer of his work.

The television camera work and mixing here seem to have been carried out by members of the Ethnomusicology Program. There are some clumsy camera movements and some bad cuts, revealing the inexperience of the crew, but any ethnomusicology professor would feel pleased with the results obtained. The sound recording is of rather better quality. The stage setting does not help, but this is the context in which most people in Europe and North America experience non-Western music. There is perhaps an over-emphasis on Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan himself, so that even when other singers get their brief solo spots we are often still watching the lead soloist. This reinforces *qawwālī* as a solo virtuoso song style and underplays its importance as a communal music.

The concert' is a well-established genre of music documentary. Apart from the inherent nature of the subject matter (a 'traditional', 'other music') there is nothing distinctly ethnomusicological or anthropological about this video in terms of approach or insight. The subject is very much what happens on stage, the product rather than the process. It is in some ways like the visual equivalent of a long playing disc. The film-makers have not really succeeded in communicating the concert as a social event. It is only towards the end that any audience response (apart from the sound of applause) becomes evident, when spontaneous dancing (mainly by Asian members of the audience) starts up at the front of the stage. Even as a straight-forward record of a concert questions arise, since we do not know whether other items were performed which are not shown here, or whether this is the sequence in which the items we do see were actually performed.

This is where a short study-guide would help, giving some background information about *qawwali*, about Nusrat, and about his visit to the States. In addition, the songs themselves are not subtitled. That in itself is not necessarily a bad thing, since sub-titles would distract too much from the observation of the performance itself. But it would be useful to have both original texts and translations in a study-guide, along with other musical information about the various items. Professor Lorraine Sakata, Washington University, and Dr. Adam Nayyar, Lok Virsa in Pakistan, are credited as consultants, and they have jointly carried out extensive research with Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan in Pakistan. The information for a study-guide is available from these experts.

It is nearly 25 years ago since Mantle Hood, arguably the foremost ethnomusicologist of his time, wrote that 'the motion picture constitutes a unique and perhaps the most important form of documentation available to the ethnomusicologist.' (in *The Ethnomusicologist*, 1971:269). Sadly, with certain notable exceptions, ethnomusicologists have lagged behind in using film and video, both as a research tool and as a way of communicating the results of research. How far does this offering succeed in realising Hood's vision? What do we discover that we would not learn from an audio recording of the concert? In fact, quite a lot. *Qawwali* is a highly theatrical genre. Although the performers remain seated on the ground, there is a great deal of motional information here, particularly in the hand movements and gestures of the lead soloist. Visually, that is where the fascination resides. It would be difficult to find better examples of the way that a singer's flowing gestures coordinate with the vocal line, indicating that the creative impulse resides in a stirring of the whole body. But having seen some of Professor Sakata's own videos of Nusrat performing at Sufi shrines in Pakistan, one cannot help feeling that the best is yet to come.

John Baily  
Goldsmiths College, University of London

### *A Celebration of Origins*

45 mins.. Film. Anthropologist: E. Douglas Lewis. Camera: T. Asch. Sound and editing: Patsy Asch. Production: Dept. of anthropology, Australian National University. Year of release: 1993. Distributed by D.E.R., 101 Morse Street, Watertown, MA 02172, USA.

*A Celebration of Origins* depicts the people of the Tana 'Ai region of Flores, Indonesia, and their reconstruction of rituals that had not been performed since 1960 due to poor harvest, epidemics and growing influences of the District Government and the Catholic Church. In the Tana 'Ai region there are seven ceremonial domains

and one of them is the domain of Wai Brama, the oldest according to the myth of origin. The film follows the people of the oldest domain in the recreation of these rituals. What follows are revelations of how principles of social order are manifested in rituals, how a small community responds to growing influences of a nation state, and how the concept 'tradition' gets a whole new meaning.

Let me say something about the third point. To the people of Wai Brama the rituals were very successful and for the months and years that passed after the event they had several signs that it was, such as good crops and healthy animals. The value of the past lies in such well being in order for the "youths to grow and the young men to rise up" as one of the ritual leaders says in the film. The celebration on the other hand was not an easy or straight forward thing to execute. The actual source of the domain, the ritual leader of the community had died and in the course of that, there were conflicts of authority; who should organize the rituals, and what should actually be done? The film depicts this process of negotiation between ritual leaders and other authorities, in- and outside the community. Is then tradition just a question of authority?

*A Celebration of Origins* is tremendously coherent and for those looking for ethnographic films for their classrooms on the complexity of culture - look no further. The film is also quite interesting for those film-makers and anthropologists who are grappling with, for instance, representational aspects. But one of the ritual leaders in the community, Pius, participated in the post-production of the film and has a clear voice in the work. The magic words, pointing towards theoretical and methodological implications of the film's multiple layers, are collaboration, translation, negotiation - concepts that Timothy Asch explored in his films through the years, considering the people he worked with, the content of his films and observing his interest in using film for teaching about cultures.

Sigurjón Baldur Hafsteinsson  
University of Iceland

### *Threads of Life: Hemp and Gender in a Hmong Village*

Produced by K. Culhane-Pera and S. Morgan. Directed by S. Morgan. Ethnographer: K. Culhane-Pera. Camera: S. Morgan. Editing: S. Frey. Video, 28 min. Distribution: DER

*Threads of Life* illuminates the multiple uses of hemp fibre cloths in a Hmong village in the mountains of Thailand. The complex production of a hemp cloth seems to be a disappearing craft which implies inevitable changes in Hmong culture; their religion, ceremonies, life cycle rituals such as birth, marriage and mortuary rites. The motivations for these changes are, however, not explicitly addressed in the video.

The same can be said about the reading into the subtitle, which underscores certain relations between hemp and gender to be addressed within the work. That it does not. Instead it emphasizes the significance of hemp and hemp fibre cloths at a cultural level, rather than for gender roles. The video on the other hand vividly shows the cultural life of the hemp threads and their importance in the afterlife of expired Hmong villagers. A very interesting and a successful attempt to tie material culture with religious belief. And considering the alternative perspective the video offers to Westerners of the uses of hemp, it certainly is of much interest to those who teach anthropology.

Sigurjón Baldur Hafsteinsson  
University of Iceland

## CVA NEWSLETTER

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### *Nuhoniye: Our Story.*

55 mins. Video. Directed and produced by Alan and Mary Code. Editing: Greg Nosaty. Production: Treeline Production. Year of release: 1992. Distributed by D.E.R., 101 Morse St., Watertown, MA 021172, USA.

*Our Story* is about the history of 250 years of a culture contact of the Sayisi Dene people in northern Canada and the British colonists and later, the Canadian Government. In 1910 the Canadian Government fraudulently obtained the land of the Dene with a treaty that demanded a complete surrender of all rights to the land, the right to hunt and trap. The consequences of the treaty were tremendous sufferings for the Dene, sufferings that have not yet ended. The treaty, for example, uses words like 'rights', 'privileges', 'acre', 'latitude' and 'longitude', words that the Dene had no words for in 1910 and therefore no conception of their meaning. Taking note of the discussion among anthropologists today about human rights issues and the possible contribution of indigenous people to human rights declarations, the experience of the Dene is worth considering. In that sense *Our Story* is relevant to everyone who is engaged in anthropology and human rights issues.

In her book, *Primitive art in civilized places* (1989), Sally Price argues that 'primitive art' in Western societies lack individuality, being defined as a product of a culture rather than a specific artist. Similar thing occurs in documentaries and ethnographic films, such as *Our Story*, as people interviewed are often not introduced by name. As rhetoric it can be a very efficient device to create a coherent voice but at the same time in can entirely miss the point when unconsciously used. In *Our Story* there is a turning point in the story of the Dene people, which a man (obviously not a Dene) introduces and he adds that this change have some prospects for the renewal of Dene culture. We get no information about who that man is (an anthropologist?) or why he, instead of a Dene, introduces this crucial turn. Who is telling the story after all? Is it the Dene people? Or is it anthropologists or social workers? I want to know, considering the title of the work.

*Our Story* is, however, a very moving video about the social, cultural and economic impact of European expansion on the lives of the Dene. It shows clearly the larger framework of changes that have occurred but at the same time also the impact of 'small' things that can easily turn the course of history. I am here thinking of an example discussed in the video, where one photograph of dead caribou, taken by an outsider, caused the Dene tremendous difficulties. The Dene were accused for the so called 'caribou crisis' or the depletion of caribou in the early 1950s on the basis of the content of the photo. It later turned out that the depletion had natural causes. The same can, however, not be said about the past or today's trauma of the Dene. They still wait for the Canadian Government to take course of action to give them back their land.

*Sigurjón Baldur Hafsteinsson*  
*University of Iceland*

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### *Apu Condor: The Condor God*

28 mins. Video. Directed and produced by Gianfranco Norelli. Research: Javier Univazo. Camera and editing: Guillermo Garlick. Production: East-West Production. Year of release: 1992. Distributed by D.E.R., 101 Morse Street, Watertown, MA 02172, USA.

*Apu Condor* (The Condor God) by Norelli displays the annual Yawar Fiesta of the Apu Condor as it is celebrated in the village Cotabambas in the Peruvian Andes.

The video depicts the preparation of the festival, which involves a group of men who set out to catch the sacred Condor God, which is to partake in the celebration. The video follows the catching of the 'guest' which has not been conducted for five years. Then we turn towards the function and meaning of the condor for the fiesta. In the culmination of the celebration the condor is mounted on a bull which, the voice-over narrator informs us, stands for a reversion of the colonial domination - the condor (i.e. the Incas) rides the bull (i.e. the conquerors) instead of the other way around. Visually these sequences of the condor on the bull are very intriguing and directs our attention towards, for instance, the political significance of 'entertainment' or other 'innocent' aspects of peoples lives. This high point of the fiesta also combines well both the historic relations of the villagers with the conquerors and their relationship with the Mestizos landowners today. There are two things which we see as drawbacks in the work. One in conceptual, the other technical. The mildly romantic view on the relations the Incas supposedly have with nature should have been questioned instead of amplified. We see this in sequences like when the condor is caught and at the end of the video when the condor is released. As the video deals with power relations and the cultural construction of symbols, the 'man vs. nature' issue should have been addressed differently. And secondly, to use a voice-over narration, sometimes with heavy Latin-American accent, is not such a good idea. It sometimes is difficult to understand, let alone the exoticizing effect it has.

*Sirkka Möller and Sigurjón Baldur Hafsteinsson*  
*University of Iceland*

## World Events

### International Conference on VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNIC MINORITIES IN CHINA Beijing 24-28 April, 1995.

In close cooperation with IWF (Institute of Scientific Film), Göttingen, Germany, and Guangzhou Tung Ah Audio-Video Production Co.Ltd., the Institute of Nationality Studies (INS) of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, People's Republic of China, organizes an International Conference on "Visual Anthropology and the Ethnic Minorities in China".

The first of its kind ever to be held, the conference has the following aims:

- to continue and intensify the successful scientific cooperation between the three organizing institutions, which so far has resulted in the publication of Chinese ethnographic films in Europe and America.
- to stimulate the process of scientific exchange between visual anthropologists from all over the world with their Chinese colleagues.
- to present the latest 'state of the art'-reports on Visual Anthropology in China.
- to discuss the latest international theoretical developments in Visual Anthropology.
- to screen examples of new award-winning ethnographic films within the frame of the conference.

Moreover, the conference provides a unique opportunity to establish a Chinese Association for Visual Anthropology in order to maintain and widen international contacts in the future. The conference is scientifically supported by the International Union of the Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences' Commission on Visual Anthropology (CVA).

The conference programme consists of:

- a key-note presentation given by an internationally well-known visual anthropologist.
- 8 papers by internationally recognised visual anthropologists.
- 8 papers by Chinese Colleagues.
- special presentations by the IWF, Göttingen and the Center for Visual Anthropology, USC, Los Angeles.
- film screenings.

For further information please contact the Conference Organizers at IWF at:

Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film (IWF),  
Nonnenstieg 72, 37075 Göttingen, Germany  
Tel.: +49 551 5024 225 Fax: +49 551 5024 400

### The 16th NAFA Annual Meeting and International Film Festival 100 YEARS OF NORDIC ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM

To mark the 1995 centenary of film, the Nordic Anthropological Film Association (NAFA) has decided to focus on the Nordic countries. Within the theme 100 Years of Nordic Ethnographic Film a number of related issues shall be addressed:

- In what ways have the Nordic cultures been represented on film over the last century?
  - What common features, if any, exist between the representations of cultural realities made by Nordic ethnographic film-makers?
  - How are the Nordic cultures visualised and perceived from outside?
  - Ethnic Minorities; To what extent have they been represented by the majority? And how far have they been allowed to reply in terms of self-representation? And in representing the majority?
- A selection of films, both historic and contemporary, both about the Nordic countries and by film-makers from the North; will hopefully throw some light on these and many other questions.

The festival will take place at  
The National Museum in Copenhagen from the 10-14 May, 1995.  
For registration and further information please contact NAFA:  
Nordic Anthropological Film Association  
Dept. of Ethnography and Social Anthropology  
University of Aarhus  
DK-8270 Højbjerg  
Phone: +45 86272433 ext.260 Fax: +45 86270708

### 6. Film Forum Freiburg - Ethnologie + Dritte Welt Freiburg, 23-28 May, 1995

Freiburg once again provides the venue for one of the established biennial events within ethnographic and documentary film. As usual a general screening programme will be accompanied by more specialised side programmes and retrospectives. This year's themes will be:

- Melissa Llewelyn-Davies Retrospective,
- India
- Masks
- Community based Visual Anthropology
- Vietnam
- New Ethnographic films

Invited guests are:

Jean-Paul Colleyn (F), Pierre Haffner (F), Jhala Jayasinhji u. Rajkumari Roy (India), Gerhard Kubik (A), Eliane de Latour (F), Melissa Llewelyn-Davies (GB), Jean Lydall (GB), Curt Madison (USA), Sudhanshu Misra (India), Terence Turner (Brazil)

Further information is available from:

Film Forum Freiburg  
Kommunales Kino  
Urachstrasse 40  
D-79102 Freiburg Germany  
Tel.: +49 761 7090033 Fax.: +49 761 706921

### The Vth MESSAGE TO MAN ST. PETERSBURG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL St. Petersburg, June 16-21, 1995

A Documentary and Short Film Festival including:

- International Competition
- Debut Films International Competition
- Special Programmes

Four categories of films in competition:

- 1) full length documentary (max. 120 min.)
- 2) short documentary (max. 60 min.)
- 3) short feature (max. 60 min.)
- 4) animation (max. 60 min.)



## CVA NEWSLETTER

Films submitted must not have been released before January 1994. Only 16mm and 35mm prints with optical or magnetic sound is accepted.

Films awarded main prizes at other international film festivals can participate only in the Special Programmes.

Submission deadline: April 10, 1995

By this date the selection committee should have received:

- 1) A VHS-copy of the film (PAL, SECAM, NTSC)
- 2) A completed Entry Form.

To get Entry Forms as well as further information about the festival, please contact:

*"Message to Man" St.Petersburg International Film Festival*  
12, Karavannaya Street, 191011 St. Petersburg, Russia.

Telephone: +812 235 2660 or 230 2200

Telefax: +812 235 3995 Telex: 121395 LCENT RU

### THE 2ND MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY SEMINAR Moscow, 26-30 June, 1995.

The themes of the seminar will be:

1. Audiovisual means of cultural heritage research (archaeology, history, ethnography, folk-life)
2. Scientific audiovisual information in educational programmes. Practical experience.
3. Modern information technologies. New possibilities in education.
4. Visual anthropology archives and data bases. Theory and practice.

For more information please contact:

Dr. Andreeva E.D.

Department of Traditional and Cultural and Natural  
2 Kosmonavtov Str.

Moscow 129366, Russia

Tel.: +7 (095) 286 1319 Fax: +7 (095) 286 1324

E-mail: postmaster@heritage.msk.su

### Meetings of International Visual Sociology Association

The International Visual Sociology Association will hold its annual meeting, July 6-9 in Windsor Ontario.

Send paper abstracts to John Grady by April 30.:

Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, Wheaton College, Norton MA 02766, U.S.A.

The conference is at the University of Windsor. For information about registration, reach Vito Signorile, Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, Univ. of Windsor, Windsor, ON Canada N9B 3P4, E-mail: vito@server.uwindsor.ca

### Visible Evidence Conference

Visible Evidence III - a conference devoted to documentary media has been announced for August 17-20 at the Carpenter Center at Harvard. People interested in attending or organizing a panel or giving a paper should contact:

Michael Renou/Patty Zimmerman  
School of Cinema  
University of Southern California

Los Angeles, CA 90089-2211

Fax: +1 213 740 9471

E-mail: mrenou@cinema.usc.edu

### A Q E C Association Quebecoise des Etudes Cinematographiques CALL FOR PAPERS. CINEMA ONE HUNDRED YEARS

**A retrospective and current look,  
flash-back and panoramic view of cinema**

One hundred years ago, all around the world, we started hearing about strange apparatus bearing curious names: Cinematographe, Kinetograph, Bioscope, etc., describing a strange machine that would later give birth to an industry, an art, a language. Cinema is no longer that scientific curiosity as in its beginnings, however, the terms used to define it seem somewhat out-of-date. With the appearance of new audio-visual technologies and an ongoing reevaluation of the history cinema, we can no longer define the medium in the same way as before.

For its 15th colloquy, 16-19 November 1995, the Quebec association for cinema studies (AQEC) proposes to reexamine the definition of cinema, one hundred years after its invention and commercialisation, along three perspectives: aesthetic, sociological and historic. Moreover, part of this colloquy will be devoted to the historical research conducted by the GRAFICS (Groupe de recherche sur l'avenement et la formation des institutions cinematographiques et sceniques based at the Universite de Montreal).

To insure a greater cohesion amongst the participants, one restriction applies, that we wish to be more inspiring than compelling: your analysis should take into account time and space. Naturally we wish to study cinema in regards to its past and future, but also in regards to other media and the societies where it thrives. On that note, here are a few suggestions. Aesthetic perspective: What is the specificity of cinema compared to other art forms, other media? What will become of cinema faced with new technologies, computer generated films or interactive video libraries? Sociological perspective: What is the place of cinema studies within a changing university, a basin of knowledge? Has cinema become an art form for cinephiles only, after having been part of the mass culture? Historical perspective: What is the place of cinema within history itself? What is cinema history today?

Your proposed papers should therefore go along one of these general perspectives, while at the same time putting forward a new point of view based upon a reflection of the history of cinema and its present situation. We look forward to receiving your proposals before 30 April 1995. These should include your address, occupation or formation, and a summary of your intervention no longer than one page.

Please return your proposals in care of:

M. GERMAIN LACASSE Responsable du colloque AQEC 1995 6332, Ave. DeLorimier, Montreal, P.Q. H2G 2P4 Tel.: (514) 722-4440 Fax: (514) 343-2393 e-mail: lacasse@ere.umontreal.ca

### AAA Session on Tim Asch

The Society for Visual Anthropology is sponsoring a session of scholarly papers at the 1995 American Anthropological Association's meetings in November at Washington, D.C. on the work of Timothy Asch.

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## World News

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### Visual Anthropology: A Call for Papers

The journal "Visual Anthropology" seeks to publish articles, comments, discussions, and film and book reviews that contribute to the following areas of scholarly endeavour:

- the study, use, and production of anthropological and ethnographic films, videos, and photographs for research and teaching
- the analysis of visual symbolic forms from a cultural-historical framework
- the study of human behaviour through visual means
- visual theories, technologies, and methodologies for recording and analyzing behaviour and the relationships between different forms of communication
- the analysis of the structuring of reality in performances and artifacts
- the cross-cultural study of art and artifacts from social, cultural, historical, and aesthetic points of view
- the relationship of cultural and visual perception
- the study of forms of social organization surrounding the planning, production, and use of visual symbolic forms
- the support of urgent ethnographic filming
- the use of media in cultural feedback
- and to encourage the development of third world ethnographic media productions

Manuscripts and enquiries to:

Paul Hockings, Editor, Dept. of Anthropology (M/C 027), University of Illinois, 1007 West Harrison Street, Chicago, IL 60607-7139, U.S.A., Fax: +1 312 413-3573

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### NAFA Network

The Nordic Anthropological Film Association (NAFA) has launched a newsletter, NAFA-Network, as an information service provided for institutional and individual members. The newsletter will cover the development of visual anthropology activities in the Nordic countries and information on significant events, projects, and activities around the world. While institutional membership to NAFA, giving access to the use of films from the ethnographic film archive, is open to Nordic institutions only, individual membership is available to any individual in any country. The annual membership fee is 100 SEK (Approx. £ 8.00/US\$ 13.00) covers the NAFA Network subscription, 6-8 issues per year, access as observer to the annual meetings, and a 20% discount on NAFA Publications. For general information on NAFA and for a list of publications please contact:

Peter Ian Crawford, NAFA General Secretary, Castenschieldsvej 7, DK-8270 Hoebjerg, Denmark, Tel.: +45 86 272333, Fax: +45 86 275133, E-mail: [interven@inet.uni-c.dk](mailto:interven@inet.uni-c.dk)

For membership registration please contact:

Knut Ekström, Assessorsgatan 18B, S-118 57 Stockholm, Sweden, Tel./Fax: +46 86412189

For the NAFA Network:

Daniel W. Papuga, Editor, Ethnographic Museum, Frederiksgate 2, N-0164 Oslo, Norway, Tel.: +47 22859991, Fax: +47 22859960, E-mail: [daniel.papuga@ima.uio.no](mailto:daniel.papuga@ima.uio.no)

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### Ph.D Programmes in Visual Anthropology

The Centre for Cultural and Media Studies, University of Natal, Durban, South Africa offers a thesis research Ph.D in Visual Anthropology, supported by some coursework (also at MA level). CCMS also runs the biannual Visual Voice Ethnographic Film Festival Conference, usually in conjunction with Orality and Semiotics conferences. Visiting professors and conference guests who have lectured in our programme have come from all over the world. The visual anthropology course can be complemented by one on development support communication, an imperative link in the African context. More details can be obtained from:

Centre for Cultural and Media Studies, University of Natal, Durban, King George V Avenue, Durban 4001, South Africa, Fax: +27-31-260-2214, E-mail: [TOMASELL@SUPERBOWL.UND.AC.ZA](mailto:TOMASELL@SUPERBOWL.UND.AC.ZA)

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### The Center for Media, Culture, and History, New York

New York University's Center for Media, Culture, and History is a collaborative project, drawing on faculty from the program in African Studies and the Departments of Anthropology, Cinema Studies, Comparative Literature, and History. We address issues of representation, social change, and identity construction embedded in the development of film, television, and video worldwide. Our focus is on the role that these media play in shaping our perceptions of history and culture; in forging individual, collective, national, and transnational identities; and in mediating the direction and character of social change.

The center works across disciplines to foster the innovative development and analysis of media from a multicultural perspective in ways that link us to other arenas such as independent film and video production, community-based museums, and media resource centres. Rockefeller residencies will bring together people who are building the interdisciplinary discourse necessary to interpret the complex relationships among media, culture, and history. Through the residencies, the center will especially seek to attract those whose focus is on multicultural, third world, and indigenous work.

The Center for Media, Culture, and History is supported by The Rockefeller Foundation and New York University's Faculty of Arts and Science and Tisch School of the Arts.

We welcome scholars (both independent and university-based), media makers, and cultural activists to apply for either one-semester or two-semester residencies.

## CVA NEWSLETTER

For an application or more information, contact:  
*Faye Ginsburg or Barbara Abrash*  
*Center for Media, Culture, and History*  
*New York University*  
*25 Waverly Place*  
*New York, N.Y. 10003*  
*Fax: +1 (212) 995-4014*

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### SOCIETY FOR VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

SVA, a constituent unit of the American Anthropological Association, stands for the Society for Visual Anthropology. It aims to foster and support a broad range of approaches to visual symbols, phenomena, and media in anthropological research, teaching, theory, methodology, and practice.

The SVA encourages the use of visual means of description and analysis to study and interpret human or humanly relevant signification, perception, behaviour, interaction, and communication in context, including such topics as: the analysis of visual symbolic forms; visual theories; relationships among different channels and modes of communication; the visible expression or construction of emotion; proxemic and other analysis of space, place, and territory; kinesics and other systematic study of body motion, communication, gesture, or dance; the structuring of reality as denoted by visual productions and artifacts; the study of art, artifacts, or performance from social, cultural, historical, folkloric, semiotic, or aesthetic, points of view; forms of social organization involved in planning, producing, and using visual signs interrelated with speech or verbal art; visual approaches to the ethology of human and other life forms; a variety of kinds of visual research in archeology; visual analyses and methods in the professional practice of anthropology; the use of media in cultural feedback; visual means of communication in classrooms, museums, and between anthropology and the public generally; visual ethnography; and the anthropological study, production, and use of film, photography, or video.

The Society for Visual Anthropology offers as benefits of membership: participation in the annual 2-day Visual Research Conference (no charge), subscription to the Visual Anthropology Review, a reduced subscription to the journal Visual Anthropology, and participation in the only annual American anthropological film screening with discussion that fully integrates anthropological scholarship with the visual medium. In addition SVA annually sponsors workshops ranging from 'how to make a film' to 'teaching with visual tools' etc.

TO JOIN SVA or for information or to subscribe to Visual Anthropology Review call SVA Secretary Pamela Blakely at Tel: +1 215 545-3586.

*Fadwa El Guindi*  
*President of the Society for Visual Anthropology*  
*E-mail: ELGUINDI@ANTHRO.SSCNET.UCLA.EDU*

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### THE TIMOTHY ASCH MEMORIAL GRANT IN VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Donations in memory of Timothy Asch and his contributions to the field of anthropology and pedagogy can be made to the Timothy Asch Grant in Visual Anthropology. The grant will be available to any aspiring visual anthropologist towards the production of a film, video, or other form of visual (i.e. photographic, multimedia) project of anthropological and/or social value. It will be awarded

biannually, dependent of capitalization. A committee of two anthropologists and one film-maker from the University of Southern California will select the grant recipient. The first two grant awards will be restricted to Tim's former students. Donations should be made to:

The Timothy Asch Fund  
Department of Anthropology  
University of Southern California SOS-154  
University Park, Los Angeles CA 90089-0032  
Tel.: +1 213-740-1900, Fax: +1 213-747-8571.

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### Letter from Dr.S.Narayan, A.N.SINHA Institute of Social Studies, Patna, India.

For several years video-movies starring Mohan Lal, Mnenakshi Seshadri or Amitabh Bachchan were the stuff of the Indian diaspora's nostalgia, temporarily reconnecting them with the world they had given up from the comfortable distance of the couch. Even so, there was no getting away from the fact that watching videos was no more than a form of cultural consumption, doing little to build a sense of community even when it was accompanied by tables of Indian food or the proverbial forest of bottles. The television screen, it now turns out, is no match for the computer screen and the enormous new possibilities it has opened up for communication, between professionals, computer hacks, university students or battered suburban women of Indian origin.

Electronic Mail (E-mail) now connects the world of the Indians in the United States with that of their counter-parts elsewhere, constituting a busy highway of traffic in recipes, information about hotels, brides and grooms and notes on politics, religion and the future of the Indian Nation. An almost entirely free, easy to use and wide reaching form of communication, it is, most importantly, interactive, allowing merely all those with a computer and an E-mail account a degree of freedom to participate in fields they may earlier have felt self-conscious about addressing in a face to face public forum.

It is tempting to (over)draw the parallel between the role played by the printed word in building national communities of the other kind, as in India's own experience, and E-mail today. One of the principal battles in which dozens of E-mail users are engaged, especially in the U.S., is in defining and defending conceptions of Indian nationhood in these troubled times. Broadly divided between those committed to a secular democratic Indian tradition and those arguing for a militant Hindu nationalism, E-mail users question the assumptions of the other side.

The South Asian Women's net has provided an escape and a welcome community for immigrant women, battered wives and unmarried or childless women - those who cherish an opportunity to share their experiences and know that they are not alone. Maybe these new E-mail users will finally pose greater challenges to the kind of long-distance nationalism that currently dominates the electronic mail network.

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### NEWS from DER

We are very enthused about 3 projects which are at various stages of fruition. The first is the 3-hour film project *A Kalahari Family* which tells the complex and compelling story of the small band of IKung

San as they were catapulted from living the life of hunter-gatherers in 1951 when the Marshall family first encountered them, and takes you through 44 years of filmed history. It will answer many questions as Marshall includes many voices, they will be the actual voices of the individuals we were first introduced to in the earlier Marshall films, Tsamko, Toma, Nlai and members of their families. The voices of politicians, bureaucrats, army officers, wildlife management officials, can all be heard. We have a 15 min. demo tape of the project which we are using to raise the last bit of post-production funding we need to finish. Our recent acquisition of the Media 100, a Mac-based digital editing system similar to an Avid, has made life much easier and greatly improved the speed at which we can realize this and other projects.

The second project, one I am more directly involved in, is the production of a multi-media interactive CD-ROM on the IKung San. I have teamed-up with John Green, formerly at Stanford who was instrumental in setting up their media services dept. in order to pull together the necessary group of collaborators and advisors necessary to create the kind of full immersion learning tool on the subject which we currently envision. So far we have outlined our goals and have a basic graphic structure outlined. It is likely that we will be relying on the resources of Prof. Steve Lehrman at the Center for Educational Computing Initiatives at MIT for their creative solutions to realizing the kind of content rich product we have in mind. We are pleased at the response we have received so far. Jake Homiak of the Smithsonian's film archive and Prof. James Gibbs, Stanford will be members of our advisory group. I would appreciate any reaction, suggestion or feedback any of you may have concerning what you would like to see in such a tool. We have access to a tremendous archive of previously published as well as unpublished material including genealogical studies of over 6,000 IKung San individuals going back as far as 1880. Such information could easily be included in the CD if there was a perceived interest in such material.

The third project is DER's homepage on the WWW. Our URL:

<http://cs.wpi.edu/~ptbast/der/homepage.html>

It is just a skeleton at the moment but we are building on it and fleshing it out with additional text, still images from our photo archive and hopefully sometime before hell freezes over, we will also have video clips. What thrills me is when we get calls at DER from people who have discovered us on the WEB and it turns out that we happen to have just the piece of information or obscure film they were searching for. Then power of this medium has really just begun to enter my consciousness. What an adrenalin high!

As a last note, DER has been very actively seeking new film/video titles over the past year in order to offer a wider range of material. We recently acquired more than 15 New titles which I am very excited about. Two of the most interesting young film-makers are Victor Masayeva Jr. whose film *Imagining Indians* is one of the few ethnographically related films to use irony and humour as a vehicle. He experiments with the medium. The Czech film-maker Jana Sevikova produced two films *Piemiule* and *Jakub* both of which have been screened at the Mead Festival and *Jakub* was given the top Award for Excellence at this years SVA film festival in Atlanta, U.S.A.. These are complex films (originally shot in 35mm) with a distinctly European point of view. If you know of interesting new material, looking for a distributor, please let me know via e-mail or contact me directly at Documentary Educational Resources, 617-926-0491.

Cynthia Close

## AUDIOVISUAL INSTITUTE Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona

The Audiovisual Institute forms part of the Pompeu Fabra University which, together with Audiovisual Communication Studies, the Media Centre, lecture halls, and other facilities, comprise the Pompeu Fabra University Audiovisual Complex, the future site of which will be the old Born Market in Barcelona.

The Institute's general aims are:

- \* innovation and experiment in audiovisual production;
- \* research into new audiovisual languages promoted by computers and electronics;
- \* audiovisual production based on new technologies and audiovisual production for disseminating knowledge;
- \* promoting assistance and resources for audiovisual creation, particularly aimed at new authors or those under training;
- \* development and dissemination of audiovisual culture, particularly in the University.

In pursuing its objectives, the Institute acts in the fields of RESEARCH, PRODUCTION and EDUCATION.

Basically, the Institute works in the field of new audiovisual forms and with contents which are normally neglected by commercial circuits.

Audiovisuals should represent the complementary nature of sound and image. The Institute provides a suitable environment for creation, research and dissemination, aimed at students, professionals, the industry, and society.

For more information contact:

Audiovisual Institute,  
Pompeu Fabra University,  
La Rambla, 31, entl.  
08002 Barcelona,  
Tel.: +34 (3)4123991  
Fax.: +34 (3)4124162  
E-mail: iua@upf.es

## BRITISH SCHOOL PHOTO ARCHIVE

The British School in Athens has launched an exciting and ambitious programme to preserve photographs from the school archives and to make them available to interested parties as computer images. The images include mainly archaeological records, but moreover cultural ceremonies and costumes.

The images will be digitized at very high levels of resolution and stored in computers for access on high resolution work-stations and even by remote access from abroad. Once the originals have been digitized, they will be properly stored and protected from degradation. School officials expect to digitize some 65,000 images at resolutions as high as 5,200 dots per inch.

For further information about the project or the technologies to be used, contact the BSA, 52 Odos Souedias, GR-106 76 Athens, or the system designer, Carpenter Associates, P.O.Box 7945, Aspen, CO 81612, U.S.A., Tel. +1 (303) 927-3990.

## New publications and films/videos

### VIDEOS ON DEVELOPMENT THEMES The TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

The Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay, is a pioneering institution for social work education and social sciences research in South Asia. The audio-visual unit of this institute has produced an extensive collection of videos on themes of social concern; such as indigenous peoples, empowerment of women, ecology, natural resources management, popular culture and people's movements. The videos are being bought by universities, media training centres, non-governmental organizations and government agencies and are a valuable resource for creating awareness and debate on Third World issues, with specific reference to the Indian context. For copies and further details contact:

HEAD, AUDIO-VISUAL UNIT,  
TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,  
DEONAR, BOMBAY 400 088, INDIA  
TEL.: +91 22 5563289  
FAX.: +91 22 5562912

### XOANA *Images et sciences sociales*

Analysier le rôle de l'image dans la recherche en sciences sociales.

Rares sont les chercheurs en sciences sociales qui n'utilisent pas l'image dans le cadre de leur recherche. Il est d'autant plus important de réfléchir aux conditions, épistémologiques aussi bien que méthodologiques, de cette utilisation. L'image - spécialement dans ses avatars photographique et cinématographique - entretient l'illusion d'un rapport non ambigu avec la 'réalité'. Or le sens d'une image n'est pas donné, il se construit au sein même du dispositif de la recherche scientifique. L'ambition de *Xoana* est de servir de support à la réflexion et aux débats dans ce domaine, sans esprit de chapelle.

*Abonnement et information:*  
Éditions Jean-Michel Place  
12 Rue Pierre et Marie Curie  
75005 Paris  
Tél. +33 4633 0511  
Télécopie +33 4634 5265

### DOX - Documentary Film Quarterly

"DOX is the new international magazine on documentary film, film-making and film viewing ... provides a forum for an informative and progressive dialogue on documentary films and documentary film production, against the background of audio-visual arts and industry, the media and the world in which we live ... presents the personal reflections of film-makers, producers, distributors, historians and other specialists...

For a one year subscription (4 issues): ECU:25/US\$:28(plus postage)

For more information contact:

DOX, Documentary Film Quarterly  
Joh. Verhulststraat 70A  
1071 NH Amsterdam  
The Netherlands  
Tel +31 20 675 5746 Fax +31 20 675 6026

### From the CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDIA RESEARCH:

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A collection of Television Documentaries from Eastern Europe and from The South.

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"... made by film-makers who have their roots in very rich film cultures, with their tradition of long takes, poetic images, curious metaphors and surprising editing." (Leonard Henny)

For more details contact: C.I.M.R.

Mijndensedijk 74  
NL-3631 NS Nieuwersluis,  
The Netherlands  
Phone: +31 2943 3459  
Fax: +31 2943 1877

### THIRD WORLD RESOURCES PRODUCES 800-PAGE DIRECTORY

Third World Resources announces the publication of an 800-page guide to print and audiovisual resource materials on Third World regions and issues.

Third World Resource Directory 1994-1995 contains more than 2,500 annotated and cross-referenced listings of books, periodicals, pamphlets, curriculum guides, bibliographies, videos, films, audiotapes, and compact discs. Gathered from more than eighty countries the resource materials are organized under 100+ region/country headings and into 39 topical chapters, including children and youth, human rights, intelligence agencies and operations, labour, militarization, racism, transnational corporations, and women. The oversized directory also contains a unique Directory of Organizations with full contact information for some 2,300 international publishers and distributors of Third World-related print and audiovisual resources.

For more information contact Thomas P. Fenton or Mary J. Heffron, c/o Third World Resources, 464 19 St. Oakland, CA 94612-2297 USA.

Tel.: +1 (510)835-4692, ext.113.

Fax: +1 (510)835-3017.

The following publications, films, and videos have been submitted for review:

*Publications:*

DOX, Documentary Film Quarterly

Xoana - Images et sciences sociales (journal)

Gaylord Torrence: *The American Indian Parfleche. A Tradition of Abstract Painting.* University of Washington Press, September 1994.

Continuum (journal)

Allen Wardwell: *Island Ancestors: Oceanic Art from the Masco Collection.* University of Washington Press, December 1994

Lucien Taylor (Ed.): *Visualizing Theory. Selected Essays from V.A.R. 1990-1994.* Routledge, 1994.

Chuck Scott: *Lesotho Herders Video Project - Explorations in Visual Anthropology.* Intervention Press, 1994.

Jack R. Rollwagen (Ed.): *Anthropological Film and Video in the 1990s.* The Institute, Inc., 1993.

H. H. Philipsen and B. Markussen (Eds.): *Advocacy and Indigenous Film-making.* INTERVENTION No. 1, Intervention Press, March 1995.

Nora M. Dauenhauer and R. Dauenhauer (Eds.): *Haa Kusteeyi, Our Culture: Tlingit Life Stories.* University of Washington Press, April 1995.

*Films/video:*

*Copperworking in Santa Clara del Cobre* (IWF, 1994)

*Weavers of Ahuiran* (IWF, 1993)

*Recently Published*

**CRITICAL ARTS: A JOURNAL FOR  
CULTURAL STUDIES**

Media Education, Vol 8 Nos 1 & 2 1994  
Issue Editor: Jeanne Prinsloo

This volume reflects a growing recognition of the importance of MEDIA EDUCATION for a democratic citizenry both here and globally. We argue this at a point in South Africa's history which is fluid and flexible, but which is only a brief moment in time.

The class for closure will result in curricula decisions sooner rather than later. It is precisely for this reason that this issue of CRITICAL ARTS should focus on Media Education now. The intention of this volume is to provoke interest and debate in this crucial area for both education and democracy in South Africa.

150pp. Photographs, Illustrations

Copies are available from:  
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Private Bag X10,  
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Fax: +27-31-260-2214

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Prices on request.

CRITICAL ARTS examines the relationship between texts and contexts in the Third World, cultural formations and popular forms of expression.

ISSN 0256 0046

**CALL 1-617-926-0491 OR  
FAX 1-617-926-9519 (USA) to order a  
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video's and film classic's in anthropology.**

Documentary Educational Resources was founded in 1971 by John K. Marshall, Timothy Asch and Napoleon Chagnon to promote the use of ethnographic and documentary films for teaching purposes. The entire collection of their work, from **THE HUNTERS**, Marshall's early classic on the !Kung San (Bushmen), up to **A KALAHARI FAMILY** (in production), to the Yanomamo series by Asch and Chagnon including **A MAN CALLED BEE** and **THE AX FIGHT**, is currently available in film or video from DER.

**A CELEBRATION OF ORIGINS**, the most recent release by Timothy & Patsy Asch and Ed Douglas Lewis on the contested nature of ritual life and the people of Tana 'Ai on Flores, has been awarded the 1st prize, *Bilan du Film Ethnographique*, 1994, *The Award for Excellence, Society for Visual Anthropology 1993* and *The Festival dei Popoli*. Other films available from this series on Indonesia include the 5 Bali films featuring **JERO TAPAKAN** and the Roti collaboration with James Fox, **THE WATER OF WORDS** and **SPEAR AND SWORD: A Payment of Bridewealth on the Island of Roti**.

The **NETSILIK ESKIMO** series, created under the direction of Dr. Asen Balikci in 1963-64 is currently available from DER in video as well as the **ALASKAN ESKIMO** films by Sarah Elder and Leonard Kammerling.

New Releases focusing on European Studies include **PIEMULE** and **JAKUB** by the Czech filmmaker Jana Sevikova with the scientists from the Ethnographic-Folklore Institute Academy of Sciences in Prague. Both films were featured at the Margaret Mead Festival in 1993-94 and have been acknowledged in festivals in Europe and the USA.

**DER**

**Documentary Educational Resources,  
101 Morse Street  
Watertown, Massachusetts, 02172-2554 USA**

is your primary source for films and videos on  
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*All video titles available in PAL format.*



**intervention press**

## **Advocacy and Indigenous Film-making**

*Edited by Birgitte Markussen and Hans Henrik Philipsen*

This is the first issue in a new occasional papers series called *INTERVENTION - Nordic Papers in Critical Anthropology*. The issue examines various examples of indigenous film-making and the involvement of visual anthropologists in projects which capacitate and facilitate an independent production of visual documentation in these communities. The thematic issue follows up a seminar held at The European Film College in Denmark in October 1993 organized in collaboration with The Nordic Anthropological Film Association, and contains invited contributions from leading visual anthropologists. It is published in association with the Commission on Visual Anthropology of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences.

### **CONTENTS:**

Hans Henrik Philipsen & Birgitte Markussen: Introduction - the professional native and technological broker

Peter Ian Crawford: Nature and Advocacy in Ethnographic Film: The Case of Kayapó Imagery

Dominique T. Gallois and Vincent Carelli: Video in the Villages: The Waiāpi Experience

Asen Balikci and Mark Badger: A Visual Anthropology Seminar for the native peoples of Siberia and Alaska

Timothy Asch: Bias in Ethnographic Reporting: A personal example from the Yanomamo ethnography

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