CVA REVIEW

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Toward Media Anthropology

an editorial by Ron Burnett

I recently received a superb essay from a student of mine on the history and development of community radio in Canada. He argued for community radio as a tool of liberation, unfettered by the requirements of visual representation, not constrained by the centralised control of modern media monopolies. He talked about participation, about the opening up of a personal space for discourses which are fundamentally oppositional and guided by a sense of alternativity. "An alternative is an-other. In the sense of alternative media, alternative is perhaps the others. In the sense of community-oriented radio, it is the alternative to rigid formatting, highly packaged, regurgitated information, the search for profit and slickness at the expense of content and social responsibility. It is the 'other': the blacks, the women, the gay men, the prisoners, the adolescents, the community centres, the hispanics, the lesbians, and the children. It isn't just things about them, 'for' them - it is by them, and of them."[1]

This important concept - meaning recovered and then transformed by political and cultural activity, is being found at the margins of an increasing number of social configurations. There is a close yet ambiguous link between all of these activities and the growth and development of new technologies. From lowcasting to camcorders, from electronic publishing to facsimile machines we have entered an era in which the way information is transmitted is of less consequence than the use which is made of information. This proliferation, however, carries with it a number of dangers, not the least of which is an overinvestment in the effects of information, an overestimation of the changes which are produced through this circulation of knowledge. I would characterize this latter problem as the remnants of an attitude which seeks to construct an utopian ideology on the rather slippery foundation of communication and exchange.

Thus what is important about experiments in community radio is the way in which they allow disenfranchised members of the community to enter into the technology of sound, to engage with the technology not so much to produce a representation which communicates but to participate in the creative process.

I make this point as an indirect way of commenting upon many of the articles in this issue of the CVA Review. All the articles are evidence of this rich contradiction at work. The articles reveal an effervescence of activity at so many different levels that any effort to reassemble them into an argument about social change may be doomed to failure. It seems clear that the 'visual' in visual anthropology is doing very well indeed but that something crucial is missing when 'sound' is so obviously left out of the nomenclature. Yet, there are few ethnographic films which do not make use of sound, which are not steeped in traditions of the oral and the auditory. In fact it was with the coming of sound in 1929 that ethnographic films gained an authority with regards to the visual which was not questioned in great depth until the early 1970's.

There is of course a link between the evolution of the documentary cinema and the role of ethnography and anthropology as underpinnings for a neo-positivist approach to social, political and cultural realities. Too often, however, ethnographic and documentary films are conflated into one as if their histories have followed a similar route. The contexts out of which the former developed are substantially different from the latter. This has as much to do with disciplinary boundaries as it does with the way in which knowledge circulates, particularly knowledge which has been configured as 'visual'. As Johannes Fabian has so cogently argued, the relationship between the visual and visualism has historically been dependent upon pedagogical strategies designed in the first instance to both validate and organize knowledge into a presentable form.[2] The visual in this sense depends less on the truth or on the real than it does on the use to which the images are put, on their location in a particular culture and the applications which are made of the information which is produced.

Yet as Christopher Pinney has argued in a recent issue of the S.V.A. Review the residual effects of naturalism, which has been a guiding element in the development of ethnographic films and videos, remains in place in even the most progressive of texts, those premised on self-reflexivity and on a critique of ethnographic truth. This is because ethnography still sees fieldwork as the underpinning for the discipline, as the basis upon which images as such, can be produced. "Given this historical legacy of a particular method of data production the whole project of anthropology remains dependent on the acknowledgement that the whole thing is the product of the individual being there, being 'exposed to the light'. Within this inescapable parameter, reflexivity, the 'crack in the mirror' always becomes further proofs, further guarantees of the truth of the representation."[3]

An argument can be made that when the disenfranchised gain a voice, as has been the case with community radio, that the result challenges the very idea of fieldwork and its forms, the very notion of an elsewhere which can be found either through research or through the image. The argument was brought home to me when I viewed some the footage shot by Andris Slapins and Yuris Podnieks, filmmakers and members of the growing nationalist movement in the Baltic states of the Soviet Union. The letter by William Fitzhugh in this issue commemorates the unfortunate and politically motivated death of Slapins who to my mind was a great cinematographer. The footage I saw just could not have been made by a foreign ethnographer. My aim in saying this is not to produce an essentialist argument or to suggest a kind of outside- inside distinction the parameters of which are locked or frozen in time. The boundaries between different cultures have been broken down to such a great degree, that there are no original or unique moments left outside of a vast mosaic of interchangeable elements.

But the Slapins-Podnieks imagery is striking because it comes from, springs out of, a deep sense of disenfranchisement. The voice which speaks in their films is experimental, documentary, fictional, ethnographic. Their's is a postmodern assemblage in the tradition of Trin Minh-ha, a self-reflexivity which does not have to declare itself. Its modus-operandi from the start is to make the medium speak because it has been silenced for so long. Their films echo with the excitement of discovery as if the medium of film has been dormant for decades, as if the forms we have grown accustomed to can be remade, reworked. Their fearless use of montage echoes Eisenstein and Dziga-Vertov, a combination which neither could have foreseen and which neither would have desired.

I began this editorial with a comment on sound and on the visual in visual anthropology. It is thus not an accident that Duncan Holaday's piece in this issue has as its sub-title, Toward Media Anthropology. Hopefully that is what we can move towards, a discipline in which the visual is removed from its exalted place with much the same critical energy that has informed the re-evaluation of anthropology as a discipline over the last ten years. The decentering of 'visualism' is part of the same process of reenfranchisement which marginal activities have produced with increasing energy. In order to accomplish this we will have to much more closely link the activities of Cultural Studies and Communications with Media Anthropology.

I will end by saying that the future of this journal is very much up in the air. We operate with an insecure funding base and voluntary staff. Asen Balikci and I have discussed converting the journal into a yearly publication with a modest subscription rate or reverting to a newsletter format. Please send us your comments and suggestions for the future. Given that Asen is likely to be away for much of this year you might wish to direct your ideas to me at the Graduate Program in Communications, McGill University, 3465 Peel Street, Montreal, H3A 1W7, Quebec, Canada. My facsimile number is (514) 398-4934.

Dr. Ron Burnett, Co-editor and Director of the Graduate Program in Communications.

[1] Ian Pringle, Active Culturalism - Cultural Activism: The Advent of Community-Oriented Institutional FM Broadcasting in Canada, (Unpublished essay) 1991, p.8.

[2] Johannes Fabian, Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.) See in particular pages 110-140.

[3] Christopher Pinney, "The Quick and the Dead: Images, Time and Truth," in Society for Visual Anthropology Review, Volume 6, Number 2, Fall, 1990, p.53.

Andris Slapins, Latvian Filmmaker

A letter by William W. Fitzhugh, Arctic Studies Center, Smithsonian Institution.

Andris Slapins, 42, a filmmaker and photographer who contributed to the Smithsonian exhibition *Crossroads of Continents: Cultures of Siberia and Alaska;* was killed by Soviet "Black Beret" troops on 20 January in Riga, Latvia. Slapins, who was associated with the Riga Video Center, was filming the attack by Soviet Troops on the independence-seeking Latvian Interior Ministry when he and another film team member were killed. An ardent but non-militant Latvian nationalist, Slapins died in the arms of his mentor and friend, internationally-known filmmaker Yuris Podnieks, who was the only member of the three-man team to escape death. Official Soviet accounts claim the firing upon the film team was accidental, but observers say the group was not in the line of fire. Both United States officials and Russians have noted that journalists and cameramen appear to have been targeted. Slapins leaves his wife, Natasha, a four-year old daughter Anna, and thousands around the world mourning the loss of a superbly gifted cinematographer who spent his life documenting the customs, folklore, and history of northern peoples.

As noted by Murray Weston the British Universities Film and Video Council, "it is almost predictable that a man who was one of the first to benefit from the political changes which took place in the Soviet Union in 1986 would be one of the first to suffer when the expected backlash came about."

Ironically, Slapins began his career as an electronics technician on a Soviet mobile missile launcher. His film career began under Podnieks' tutelage as cameraman for the 1982 film, "The Constellation of Riflemen", about Lenin's last-surviving Red Latvian *straelki* (snipers) who, as octogenarians, did little to conceal their disappointment at the way the Soviet state had developed. Some think this film may have marked Podnieks and Slapins in the sights of a new generation of riflemen. Only a few days before the event, Slapins and Podnieks discussed the idea of filming the "Black Berets" in their Riga barracks. It was characteristic of Slapins to go boldly to the forefront, regardless of danger.

In the past few years easing of travel restrictions enabled Slapins to make contact with anthropologists, folklorists, filmmakers and peace organizers outside of Latvia. At the time of his death he was involved in filming projects in Paris, Japan (Kazuo Okada, Tokyo Cinema inc.), the United States, and Great Britain (British Universities Film and Video Council). His great drive and enthusiasm, his generous participation in projects lacking personal financial return, and his willingness to freely distribute his films and photography brought his talents as an anthropological cinematographer rapidly to international recognition. His death is all the more tragic as he was a quintessential victim of the policies of *Glasnost* that nurtured and gave public expression to his burst of artistic production.

Slapins is best known in North America for his contributions to *Crossroads of Continents: Cultures of Siberia and Alaska*, a travelling exhibition produced jointly by the Smithsonian together with the Institute of Ethnography of the USSR and Canadian and American museums. In addition to a film co-produced with Ted Timrek of Spofford Films, which is part of the exhibition, Slapins supplied two feature films for use with the show. *Chukotka: Coast of Memories*, now nearly twenty years old, is a cinematic masterpiece describing the lifeways and lands of the Chukchi and Eskimo peoples living on the Soviet shores of Bering Strait. Its sensitive humanistic portrayals of character and its blending of folklore, ancient cultural traditions, and landscapes produced a poetic masterpiece which to today's ear is marred only by the need for a more culturally-sensitive sound track. A second film, *Times of Dreams: Siberian Shamanism*, is also used with the exhibit. This technically unfinished "lifework" explores Evenki and Chukchi shamanism and incorporates archival footage shot in the Amur region by A. Litvinov in the 1920's with his own footage of contemporary Evenki shamans curing a "possessed" family member returning from Soviet military service in Afghanistan.

Both films document Slapins' cinematographic as well as his personal drive and courage in travelling and working, often alone or with only one assistant, in remote regions of the Soviet North and Far East. His ability to establish close bonds with native peoples and his instinct for homing in on deeply-rooted cultural traditions mark a unique humanistic style that combines sweeping,

elegant landscapes with village life and close-up character revelation. Slapins' technique is most poignantly revealed in his portrayal of elders and children performing rituals, games and songs. He was particularly absorbed in searching for ancient rituals and ceremonies which he documented using natural light in remarkably difficult and sometimes dangerous situations. When Andris was behind the camera his art dominated to the point that nothing else - crashing Bering Sea surf, roaring walruses, polar bears, and nervous "shaman-tenders" - concerning personal security intruded on his consciousness. His single-minded commitment to seeking and portraying truth no doubt was a factor leading to his death.

Andris' interest in filming native peoples in the Soviet arctic and Far East led to collaboration with Soviet anthropologists and folklorists and tradition-bearers. Some of his films were produced with the assistance of ethnologist Elena Novik of the Soviet Institute of Ethnography. His first exposure to anthropology came through his participation in a Soviet ethnographic expedition to Nepal. In addition to those noted above, he produced films dealing with the folklore of Khanti (*Gods and Heroes*); Latvian fishermen (*Songs of the Levonians*), Latvian culture heroes (*Christian Baron*), and children's calendrical songs (*Rosts*). Recently he produced a film titled Baltic Saga on the 20th century Latvian civil war and engaged in a joint Latvian-British production, *Fields of Hope*, exploring Celtic and Baltic folkloristic connections. Many of his early films were produced by agreement between Riga Film Studio and Moscow Sovinfilm. During the past two years Slapins worked largely as an independent associate of the Riga Video Center, seeking co-productions with foreign studios and organizations that offered him film stock, equipment, and processing in return for his services. At the time of his death Andris received very little, if any, compensation for any of these ventures but was rapidly learning how to find sponsors and operate in the independent western mode.

Slapins' major effort in North America were conducted with the Smithsonian Institution's Arctic Studies Center, first with *Crossroads* and later, in collaboration with Spofford Films, in preparing documentaries on comparative anthropology and historical themes in Siberia, Alaska and Labrador. Assisted by Anchorage anthropologist Anne Fienup-Riordan and filmmaker Larry Goldin, Slapins filmed among the Yupik peoples of southwest Alaska, making many friends among the Native peoples of Chevak while filming traditional life and Russian Christmas in 1989. This Alaskan work was complemented by filming winter reindeer herding and ritual life among the Kerek and Chukchi peoples of Chukotka in 1990. In 1989 Slapins accompanied the author on a Smithsonian exhibition in Labrador, filming archeological sites and native life. Andris' footage will be the core of our final films on these projects. Recently Slapins received expressions of interest from German public television for a documentary on Moravian church in Labrador and its role in the history of Labrador Inuit. Although his Alaska and Labrador excursions were brief, he is remembered well by those whom he met. Upon returning to Riga, he sent marvelous still photographs back to those he met and worked with.

During the course of these projects, Slapins met and shared ideas with North American anthropological filmmakers Leonard Kammerling, Sarah Elder, Asen Balikci, and Mark Badger. He had a strong and abiding interest in striking up permanent friendships with the Native peoples, especially with John Pingayuk in Chevak. His interests led in other directions as well. He became known to folklorists, world peace organizers and environmentalists on the West Coast and developed contacts within the North American Latvian community. With author-ecologist (and inter-species communicator) James Nollman (*Dolphin Dreamtime, Spiritual Ecology*) he planned to film Beluga whales in the Canadian arctic. Undoubtedly many other projects and acquaintances unknown to me blossomed as well.

Andris has been described as a figure "larger than life" by his *Crossroads* co-producer Ted Timreck. Slapins was a sensitive, creative artist who developed a gift for inter-cultural communication in anthropological and folkloristic film media. Although his international reputation was just beginning to develop, internationally he was known as the best ethnographic filmmaker in the USSR. To Latvians, because of his many films on Latvian or Baltic folkloristic and ethnic themes, he was a poet-philosopher who's films spoke eloquently of the power of Baltic cultural traditions. Undoubtably it was this strain in his work that created reactionary Soviet concern, not because of any political motive in Slapins' films but because they played to the aspirations of Baltic nationalism. However, though sharing hopes for an independent Latvia, Slapins was not a militant and always portrayed political issues, whether historically or modern, by showing

different points of view and concern for crosscurrents and complexities. Regarding Latvia and the Baltics, he hoped a just solution could be found that would accommodate the aspirations of Latvian people within an economic and political framework of Soviet life. Attuned to deep currents of history and tradition, Andris did not expect to find easy solutions to contemporary problems. But he believed that through truth and openness such problems could be solved. In this sense he was a true child of *Glasnost* who found the world rushing forward to greet him as he traveled about the globe sharing his vision of a new age. Armed only with his camera, his personal assets of courage and honesty, and a drive to improve the world and preserve knowledge and traditions of its peoples and cultures, he set out to know and portray. His contribution was unique and irreplaceable; the record he left shall inspire people for years to come.

Andris' ideals and works deserve wide note in these tender days of social and political upheaval. We hoe to preserve and expand his mission in visual anthropology and intercultural understanding through establishing an international prize to be given periodically in his name. Providing suitable arrangements can be made, we propose to administer the Slapins award through the Smithsonian's Human Studies Film Archive and Arctic Studies Program. Details will be announced in the *Anthropological Newsletter* and elsewhere. Contributions and suggestions as to sources of endowment funds should be sent to William W. Fitzhugh, Arctic Program, Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. 20560.

Acknowledgements: Unfortunately few details on Andris Slapins' life are available in North America. I thank Majorie Balzer and Valerie Chaussonnet for some of the information presented here.

A Letter from Carl Fleischhauer, American Memory, Library of Congress

Thank you for your letter regarding the status of the ethnologist as author in the age of hypermedia. I fear that lack of time forbids me from providing the article you seek. I cannot resist, however, making a few observations on the topic in this letter.

I sometimes wince when I hear hypermedia or multimedia. My jaundiced view is that the terms are generally used as buzzwords or neologisms; in any case, they are vague. But you put me in a more receptive mood by linking hypermedia with author, conjuring an image of an ethnologist communicating his or her findings by "computer" instead of by print. There are, of course, many examples of ethnologists reporting their findings by means of sound recordings and/or moving and still images (as well as in prose), although not often in the same report. We are all familiar with the books (including photographs) and films created by Mead and Bateson to report on their work in Bali in the late 1930s, the films and monographs created by Asch and Chagnon to report on their study of the Yanomami, or similar reports created by Asen Balikci and his colleagues from their project with the Inuits.

If there is something special about hypermedia, it can only be that the connections or links between prose text, images, and sounds are made in an automated or computerized way. I expect that any student who may have tried to compare and contrast the book *Balinese Character* with the film *Trance and Dance in Bali* would find the idea of automated connections to be very appealing.

The hypermedia package suggested in the preceding paragraph imagines a work created by the ethnologists; i.e., the ethnologists play the role of authors in the normal sense of the term. We might also imagine something slightly different but rather more interesting. This is the assembly of an archive of field materials in a computerized form for study by others. Many ethnologists (including Mead and Bateson in Bali) oversee the preparation of their archives, although at varying levels of success. Archives can as well be organized by third parties, as is often the case for manuscript collections. The point here is that new computerized media provides the power to publish an ethnologist's archive—the raw materials—as well as the ethnologist's conclusions or interpretations. We may note that the automation of raw materials may also provide the means for certain types of analysis that would otherwise not be possible.

The publication of an archive, of course, raises ethical issues. Many workers, for example, will work with their subjects to edit a collection so that the subjects'

privacy and human rights are protected. And a few ethnologists may prefer to withhold their field materials from the scrutiny of others. But I believe that there are many cases in which a published archive would be valuable and proper. The provision of raw materials for others to evaluate is in the best spirit of scientific inquiry.

A few years ago, we drafted an internal proposal here at the Library of Congress to prepare a computerized version of Mead and Bateson's field collection from Bali and the Iatmul in New Guinea. Mead's papers are at the Library and include the materials from Bali and the Iatmul: about 35,000 photographic negatives, about twenty hours of motion picture footage, voluminous fieldnotes, and other documentation. Alas, lack of funds have deferred this project indefinitely.

The Library of Congress had previously wrestled with publishing an ethnographic archive in another, more modest instance. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Library's American Folklife Center (where I worked at the time) carried out a team ethnographic project in a cattle-ranching community in northern Nevada. During the Nevada project, we assembled tens of thousands of still photographs, hundreds of hours of sound recordings (mostly interviews), and dozens of hours of moving- image materials.

Our entire Nevada-project archive was too large to fit on the single disc we could afford so, in 1982-1983, I edited the materials for presentation on a laser videodisc titled *The Ninety-Six: A Cattle Ranch in Northern Nevada*. The disc contains 2,400 photographs, one hour of sound recordings, and about eighty minutes of moving-image material. An accompanying eighty-page booklet provides an essay, notes for the moving-image and audio clips, and a complete index for the photographs. Thus, *The Ninety-Six* is as much an "interpretation" as an archive. The disc is for sale for $150, and readers who would like to purchase copies should write to the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540.

A person using the disc must refer to the booklet to identify materials of interest and then use a hand-held remote control to play the moving-image clip or to view the photograph they have selected. It is hard to remember now that personal computers were just coming on the scene when I was editing *The Ninety-Six*. Today, we would dispense with the booklet (or at least reduce it) and instead assemble a computerized program containing the texts, indexes, and commands to control the videodisc player. Although any computer can be used for such purposes, most producers have found that the Hypercard software that runs on the Apple Macintosh is the easiest to program. Your readers may be familiar with such projects as the interactive National Gallery of Art disc or the several current-events discs produced by ABC News. Each of these consists of a videodisc and what is called a "Hypercard front end."

The Library's interest in these matters continues and, since late 1989, I have been working on a program called American Memory. American Memory is designed to distribute electronic copies of selected archival collections and to blaze a trail to an online library of the future. We are creating cataloging or indexing information for the selected collections and associating this cataloging with a variety of reproductions of actual content: digital and analog images, digital audio, and searchable texts. Although most observers are fascinated by the computerized delivery of information, I can report that the hardest part of the job is the raw conversion of older paper, photographic, and recorded-sound materials into electronic form. It is a challenge to handle artifacts without damaging them and difficult to proceed in the face of conflicting (or non-existent) standards for electronic content.

I have enclosed some additional information on American Memory; at the moment, its content is not available for sale, although we are doing some prototype testing in schools and libraries in the United States. For more information on American Memory, write to me at Special Projects, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540.

Good luck in your endeavors and keep up the good work with the *Commission on Visual Anthropology Review.*

Carl Fleischhauer, Coordinator, American Memory

Self-Presentation to Majority Others - Toward Media Anthropology

Duncan Holaday, Ph. D.,Communications Arts & Sciences, Lyndon State College of Vermont and Department of Mass Communication, National University of Singapore

As recently as 1986, John and Malcolm Collier wrote that "Anthropologists as filmmakers should . . . retain their role as ethnographers and not surrender their film to media" (Collier and Collier, 1986). This betrays two assumptions which, coming from these longtime spokesmen for the field of visual anthropology, should, by now, be disturbing to anthropologists. The first assumption is that the media are divorced from the process of ethnography and that contact with media somehow perverts the purpose of anthropology. The second, which underlies the first, is that there exists the possibility of a sort of pure cultural description in which observational film and video strategies are mere tools.

I will argue that media are central to the process of ethnography. The basis for this argument was laid down by Sol Worth in his 1972 paper, "Toward an anthropological politics of symbolic forms." Worth was trying to prepare students of culture for the sort of problems they would be facing in the next ten to twenty years, and in doing this asked some challenging questions. Speaking in the context of the worldwide penetration of other cultures by Western media and Western anthropologists, he asked "Why should not others demand to learn the technology of film and television and to communicate with us as *they* wish, about what *they* wish, when they wish?" And, he asked, "Can we learn from the way others communicate themselves through film (and television) to think of the very term *other cultures* in new ways?" (Worth, 1981).

After about fifteen years, it is clear to me what direction the answers must take. I have found that when others (here I mean anyone other than anthropologists and professionals who normally have access to media) are given the opportunity to use the technology of film and TV, they prefer to use them in ways which ignore their importance to *us* as anthropologists. We tend to see our cameras and notebooks as descriptive devices, mnemonics for our analyses. For the people we are seeking to describe, there are more important things to do with these devices than to describe themselves to us. In my experience, these people wish to use the technology *as media* within their own national or other local or extra-local contexts. That is, they wish to use them to communicate within existing institutional structures to achieve desired effects, and these structures and effects have little to do with the presence of the anthropologist. A glance at the publications of *Cultural Survival* shows that today, thousands of marginal and marginalized communities, which were the traditional subjects of anthropological investigation, are trying to be heard by those who have direct power over their circumstances. For them, it is a matter of physical and cultural survival to be able to present themselves and their views to those whose decisions affect their environment, their lives and their cultures. The *others* to whom members of these communities wish to communicate are perceived by them as "majority others."

It follows that we, as anthropologists, can learn from this a new way to look at the term "other cultures." This new perspective has to do with the presentation by others to majority others through media. This amounts to more than simply the inclusion of the media within the domain of our cultural description. It means, really, a change in the subject of our descriptions and the descriptive models we use.

The case for moving beyond the descriptive model of observational cinema has been gaining strength for already nearly two decades. David MacDougall's statement in 1973 that "No ethnographic film is merely a record of another society: it is always a record of the meeting between a filmmaker and that society" was profoundly subversive of earlier models (Hocking, 1974:119). A deeper appreciation of the contextual importance of those meetings for any authentic interpretation of the film record may be the key to developing successful descriptive models.

I have argued elsewhere that the meetings between anthropologists and their *subjects* can be seen as negotiations about how the anthropologist's descriptive devices will be used (Holaday, 1989). Even the anthropologist's pencils and notebooks may be regarded by those being observed and described as tools for altering the structure and dynamics of power within which they act. That is, the political value of the anthropologist's technology, especially of their cameras, seldom escapes the attention of their *subjects*. As I began to review these encounters (which was largely a matter of reading between the lines), I found more and more evidence that the deals anthropologists made to secure their descriptions implicated not only their technology but the anthropologists themselves in the use of their technology as media. I would go so far, now, as to say that the very act of regarding others as subjects of description invites the political appropriation of the descriptive device by the *subject*. This is simply the other side of the deal, seldom disclosed and sometimes undiscovered by the anthropologist. If we accept this, then the very notion of equating the anthropologist's "subject" with the people and communities they describe is revealed as a mask, a curtain covering the back-stage work behind the anthropologist's presentation of others.

By 1978, according to James Roy MacBean's account of the Canberra International Ethnographic Film Conference, the participants were impatient to replace "apolitical" observational film strategies with ones that seek to express the positions of the anthropologist's "subjects" (MacBean, 1988:227). MacBean placed the term subjects in quotes, an act which suggests his sensitivity to the question of what the proper subject of ethnographic description is. But, this question was yet to be pursued to the point where it revealed the basic fallacy of observational cinema. This fallacy, in brief, stems from that fact that the representation of others is also a presentation and, as I will argue, always has a component of self-presentation. Presentation and self-presentation are ignored, by definition, in the descriptive mode of observational cinema, and with them a host of problems associated with the identity of the subject.

In trying to clarify this issue, I have found an anecdote from Howard Zinn's *The Twentieth Century : A People's History* to be most helpful. In Zinn's account, Native Americans fighting to retain fishing rights in the Pacific Northwest held "fish-ins" in the late 1960's. Police raided the fishing groups, Zinn tells us, and "destroyed boats, slashed nets, manhandled people, (and) arrested . . . Indians" (Zinn, 1980:227). Sid Mills, a Yakima, responded by saying" "Interestingly, the oldest human skeletal remains ever found in the Western Hemisphere were uncovered on the banks of the Columbia River — the remains of Indian fisherman. What kind of government or society," Mills says, "would spend millions of dollars to pick upon our bones, restore our ancestral life patterns, and protect our ancient remains from damage —while at the same time eating upon the flesh of our living people. . .?" Sid Mills' question should haunt anthropologists, especially those who continue to identify their subject of study as "the Yakima" or any other particular ethnic group. The underlying question, "Who are the Yakima?" always leaves open the possibility of ignoring the most salient issues by which people presently identify themselves. Indeed, defining the subject of study as such encourages members of a government or society to dismiss an issue such as fishing rights as "the Yakima problem." James Clifford's in-depth account of the trial in which the Mashpee were denied land rights because it was decided in court that they do not exist as a tribe shows the complexity and frequent absurdity of issues and actions surrounding questions of ethnic identity. (Clifford, 1988).

What these examples suggest to me is that if we are to be attuned to the shifting frontiers on which questions of ethnic identity are being decided, then the subject our descriptions should not be the Yakima or Mashpee, but, at minimum, the Yakima or Mashpee struggle for fishing rights or land rights. Any such struggle implies, at least, two communities or groups and, more likely, the conflict between a community and forces best understood as associated with a world system of production and trade.

The intellectual tradition in anthropology which supports this approach to culture and community has as one of its early expressions Gregory Bateson's *Naven*. Bateson demonstrated that cultural identity emerges as ethos in situations of contrast or conflict; he used the term *schismogenesis* to refer to this process as it occurs within closed cultural systems defined by gender and kinship. More recently, Eric Wolf applied the same principle in his book, *Europe and the People Without History,* when he said that "human populations construct their cultures in interaction with one another, not in isolation" (Wolf, 1982:ix). This approach stands in contrast to the one which assumes the existence of cultures as discrete units. It sees culture as process rather than cultures as things. Victor Turner attempted to extend this approach in *The Ritual Process* so that it could be applied to any number of levels of identity, from individuals in closed kinship systems, on the one hand, to classes in historical societies, on the other.

What, then, are some of the implications for anthropologists-filmmakers if they accept as the subject of their descriptions the sorts of cultural processes outlined by Bateson, Wolf, and Turner? It has been helpful for me to think of what such anthropologists would hang on museum walls and put into their film archives. A

museum wing entitled "North American Indians" might contain artifacts which reify a taxonomy of tribes.[1] But, if one were to entitle an exhibition "The Struggle for Fishing Rights in North America," what would it contain? Newspaper clippings might be a good place to begin. Photographs of a stand-off, a judge's written opinion, oral accounts of a statement by a tribal leader — these things would be relevant bits of evidence, pieces of text which emerged from particular cases of conflict. Notice that ethnic delineations in this exhibit would merely identify particular cases, and not provide the underlying structure of the display. But, what would that underlying structure be? What, in others words, would be the descriptive and analytic framework for the anthropologist-filmmaker?

The fact that all the contents of the exhibition would be symbolic forms taken from the media or implying an earlier use in the media suggests the answer. We have come to a point in the intellectual development of our field where the "crisis of representation," as it has been called by Marcus and Fisher, is no longer disputed. Post-colonial analyses of our written texts have left our former assumptions about description and ethnography in a shambles. It would begin to give some order to our descriptive models, both for written and visual text, if we could agree that the media are the primary focus of struggles for ethnic identity and that our descriptive devices are, and probably always were, appropriated for this use by those the anthropologist seeks to describe. For anthropologist-filmmakers, this means that our work is either engaged in and on one side of a conflict, or that it is a complex sort of picture of a picture along the lines proposed by Geertz in his essay "Thick Description" (Geertz, 1973). There is no need to argue here for or against the academic legitimization of either pursuit. What is clear is that we can no longer presume to record evidence of cultural process directly on film or video. This is wrong theoretically, and probably wrong ethically.

Our films are, and always have been *their* media, and as such have been implicated in the very cultural process we have sought to describe. Our descriptions, then, become far richer if we recognize the centrality of media to the process of ethnography.

At this point, I will illustrate and extend some of the points made above with examples from three case studies of media use for self-presentation which I initiated or helped to initiate.

The first, which became the subject of my dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania (Holaday, 1984), illustrates the process of appropriating *our* technology for use as *their* media. Villagers in West Java were taught to use a camera and were asked to make films about "development" in their villages. What I hope to make clear with this example is that the approach I am suggesting involves more than simply giving cameras to "natives." It requires microcultural observation within the context of an historical analysis of the relevant institutions. I believe that a summary of the findings of this West Javenese case makes these methodological requirements apparent.

I found that during a period of about sixteen hours — between the time my colleagues and I from the University of Indonesia arrived in the study village with equipment and the time film began to roll in the camera — several events occurred which determined into whose hands the equipment would fall and for what purpose it would be used. These events included a speech by the village head, a meal, a camera lesson, a portrait of potential filmmakers, and such microscopic events as a series of puns. I referred to these events, taken together, as a process of adjustment, because it was these events which adjusted the situations in which the technology could be used so as to serve a particular purpose within the village. It took more than a year of interviewing and study of local history to understand the nature of the adjustment that took place. In retrospect, it can be best characterized as the appropriation of the film technology by one faction of the village for the purpose of communicating its position on a long-standing dispute to extra-village authorities. Let me briefly explain.

The village had been the site of a Dutch plantation which was destroyed during WWII and subsequent wars of liberation and local rebellion. In the early Sixties, the vacated land was parcelled out to peasants as part of an agrarian reform carried out by the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). After the "Upheaval" in 1965 which decimated the PKI, children of the former plantation managers, themselves Indonesians, returned to the village with hoes of reestablishing the plantations. The World Bank provided money for loans to smallholders for tea growing. The loans were administered by an Indonesian bank which discriminated against villagers whose land rights had been attained through the PKI land reform. As a result, the sons of the plantation managers were in the process of setting themselves up as plantation owners, and the others, who could not get

loans, were in the process of becoming their laborers. The faction of villagers who saw themselves becoming laborers were not happy about this "development," and found ways to discredit the new plantation owners: they complained to the regional governor that the new tea growers were not paying their share of the taxes and were pressing other villagers unfairly into labor.

This is the point in time at which the research team from the university arrived in the village with their camera and offered the villagers the opportunity to make their own film showing their own views. I observed and recorded the events which followed immediately. What I saw was the process by which the would-be plantation owners seized this opportunity to make a film which they hoped would counter the complaints made against them.

This study made it clear to me that whatever agenda the purveyors of a communication technology may have in mind, the recipients will have their own. Also clear in this case is that the members of this West Javanese village did not respond as a unit to this invitation to speak to the world outside. The historical processes begun by the introduction of a plantation economy more than a century ago continued to polarize members of the village so that they vied for control of the newly introduced medium.

Once I saw these things in Java, I began to see similar things happening elsewhere. I saw the same kind of appropriation of media for the purpose of advancing factional disputes in cases of ethnographic filmmaking. It appears in accounts of the work of Flaherty and MacDougall; it is more obvious in Rouch and Worth than in Gardner and Mead, but, in ethnography, it seems to be present everywhere.

In a second project, I produced a film under the auspices of University Sains Malaysia which was scripted and shot by the Jah Hut people of West Malaysia.[2] The Jah Hut are a hill group who, like many such groups in Malaysia, are besieged if not already overrun by logging companies. This film was intended from the start for submission to the National Television Station, RTM 1. The Jah Hut made the film with these things in mind.

The salient point in this case concerns what the Jah Hut wished to present of themselves and the way they presented it. They chose to show simply how their religion works and that it is an effective means of curing disease. Their story goes as follows: A Jah Hut man, out hunting with his blowpipe, encounters a spirit and is startled. He becomes feverish and vomits. His friend finds him in this state, and enlists the help of a shaman. The shaman exorcises the spirit using techniques common to Southeast Asian animistic traditions. The result looks remarkably like the sort of ethnographic description I may seem to have been arguing against; that is, a film which simple says "This is who we (or they) are." But, once one understands some of the historical and political context in which this statement was made by the Jah Hut, and once one appreciates the standard of Jah Hut and Malaysian rhetoric which places emphasis on what is *not* said, it is clear that the Jah Hut are saying much more than "This is who we are."

In Malaysia, the assumption has been put forward that the cultures of the aboriginal peoples are religiously, linguistically and ethnically primitive forms of Malay Islamic society. This assumption has preempted the Jah Hut claim, and other hill people's claims, to the equivalent of "tribalness," in a manner similar to the case of the Mashpee, and with it any claim to the land and trees. The Jah Hut statement, seen in this context, reveals itself as no less than a struggle to survive, both physically and culturally.

Finally, I would like to briefly mention a video which I co-produced at the University of Pennsylvania entitled, "Sexual Harassment Series, no. 1."[3] As an anthropologist-filmmaker teaching in an American university in the late eighties, I looked around me to see what I, as a native, would make a film about if someone handed me a camera in the manner in which I handed cameras to the Jah Hut and Indonesian peasants. My response was to make a video drama in which a professor is seen harassing a student in his office. The story goes like this: A male professor has been seeing a female student out of class, and through innuendo suggests sexual attraction if not love. One day, the student comes to his office and says, "I know how I feel about you, and I think I know how you feel about me. Why don't we just come out and admit how we feel." The professor says, "I don't know what you're talking about. You are a student, and I am your teacher." The student says, "Oh yeah, let's see what other people think," and leaves. The student is hurt, angry and confused. The professor is threatened. The professor hides a video camera in his bookshelf. The next day the student returns to apologize. Before the professor opens the door to let the student in, he turns on

the camera. This is where my video begins, and it covers a ten minute interaction between the professor and student which follows.

The theme I wished to examine in my video concerns the capacity to deny, on the part of the professor (or anyone in the position of greater power in my culture) what the student (or anyone in a position of lesser power) knows to be true. I saw this happening around me, and I wanted to comment on the impact of that denial upon the person in the position of lesser power. The climax of the drama occurs when the student says, "...You're making me feel like I'm crazy. I don't know if I can trust what I think about the way people feel..."

The resulting video became a focus of controversy in forums within and outside the university. From the discussions it generated, I began to better understand some of the dynamics of self-presentation to majority others. The impulse to use the medium in this case, and in the others described above, originates from a frustration with the constraints imposed by existing channels of communication. People concerned about sexual harassment in the university had been locked into a legalistic, often dogmatic, dialogue which allowed little room to present and consider what some students saw as realities of harassment situations. In this case, the anthropologist as *subject* colluded with students and members of an *ad hoc* committee on sexual harassment by providing the conditions for circumventing these communicational constraints. That is, we went outside the existing official channels to express a frustration felt by some students. The result was greeted with enthusiasm by some viewers and with horror by others, with no easily predictable pattern as to who (faculty, students or others) would fit into which group. I believe that his work raised controversy and that the response to it was unpredictable precisely because it exceeded the boundaries of existing channels of communication. The general point to be made here is that this sort of unpredictable response can be expected in cases of self-presentation to majority others because of the nature of the problem under study.

It can be inferred from this last example that the practice of media anthropology, at least as it has begun to evolve from the approach suggested by Sol Worth, carries with it a responsibility to examine the potential consequences of its method. My attempt to apply this method to my own circumstances in my own culture has helped me to understand these potential consequences. Anthropologists should recognize, also, that although this case involved self-examination, it is not an example of "reflexivity" in the usual sense in which the term has been applied to anthropological filmmaking. That is, this case does not continue the designation of the other as the subject of study; nor does it perpetuate the conceit that if we, as anthropologists, are explicit about the assumptions we are making in describing others, then our descriptions will be somehow more ethical and accurate. I am suggesting, rather, that we entertain the possibility that we have not been fully aware of what we have been doing while believing to be describing others. By examining our use of media in the same way we intend to examine its use by others, we might better understand the centrality of media to the struggles of the others with whom we engage in our studies.

Notes

1. See Clifford "On Collecting Art and Culture" in *The Predicament of Culture* (op.cit.) for a critique of this sort of exhibiting.
2. The film, "Metos Jah Hut," is in the collection of the Human Studies Film Archive at the Smithsonian Institution. Also see: Holaday, Chin and Teoh, 1985.
3. This video is available on request for presentation by the producers, Kristen Stuart and Duncan Holaday.

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Ethnographic Film and Televised Anthropology: "Faces of Culture" Examined

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Introduction

After almost seven years of existence, the twenty-six part FACES OF CULTURE television series is now recognized as being the most widely viewed and successful anthropology telecourse made to date.[1] For that matter, it may also be one of the most widely viewed US anthropological television series being broadcast. For each year, in addition to the thousands of students who watch the series as a formal for-credit college level course in cultural anthropology, millions of non-student viewers tune in to the numerous FACES broadcasts that repeatedly take place throughout the US and Canada. To date, the series has been recognized through a number of prestigious awards, including an Emmy Award for Instructional Programming, and an Ohio State Award for Excellence, and has been shown so many times in both North American countries since its first release that it would be difficult to find many regular television viewers who have not yet stumbled across it at least once or twice.

The series has also been broadcast in Europe, on the Inuit Network in northern Canada, on the Armed Forces Network in Japan, and to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for human relations training.[2] The very remarkable degree of potential series exposure became instantly clear to me one day while I was walking through a busy department store in Los Angles. Entering a large TV show room, I noticed an uncommonly engrossed audience of intrigued shoppers and sales people watching the FACES episode on the Asmat. It was playing on every one of the screens in the room, and the audience was spellbound! Needless to say, the series has and continues to reach an incredible number of new students and general viewers each year.

Because the FACES series has been able to expose so many non-traditional students and members of the general public to cultural anthropology, it may be an appropriate time for me as the Series Producer/Writer of FACES to describe how the series came about, how it was produced, and how it has thus far been distributed and made available to so many. I hope that this information will provide a useful perspective for others who may also want to integrate film, video and anthropology for television broadcast. The telling should also shed some light on the intricacies of educational television and telecourse production in particular.

Genesis of the Series

The FACES series resulted from a partnership between a number of educational institutions interested in telecourse use and an educational book publisher interested in selling text books. It was the pilot series for a total of five courses that would include topics such as Marketing, Photography, Nutrition,etc. Initially, an approach had been made to the Annenberg/CPB Project for funding the anthropology series, but it was deemed that the subject of anthropology was not as central to core college curriculum requirements as other subjects, and it would not involve enough students to warrant Annenberg support. Had it received Annenberg support, the telecourse would have been offered nationally on public television and little money, if any, would have been made by anyone. Without the Annenberg support, the publishing tie-in funding was decided upon, and new ways of distribution and profitability became available.

One and a half million dollars was budgeted for the anthropology series, including research, development, instructional design, and actual production and post production at a public television station, KOCE-TV, owned by Coast Community College District, the organizing institution. A false start and a disastrous

pilot program many months later had used up almost half of the committed budget by the time I was recruited as series producer.

Clearly the series had needed a producer with a solid anthropological background and an extensive knowledge of the latest visual anthropology materials and ethnographic films that could be used to build each program. Without that, the project probably would not have succeeded as it did. There were only two weeks of time available for research before production began. This time constraint and severe budget limitations had much to do with the way the series was put together and the shape that it eventually took. I do not see these problems as particularly unusual, however, compared to the other television documentary ventures I have been involved with.

The publisher tie-in was with Holt, Reinehart and Winston, a division of CBS Professional Publications, which in turn was tied to CBS Broadcast International. Holt's interest in the series was obviously as a vehicle to sell its existing textbook, "Cultural Anthropology," along with a telecourse study guide and teacher's manual. It was the job of the instructional designer, Dr. Leslie Purdie, to insure the integration of the series with the text and supplemental materials. Holt's owner, CBS also expected to earn back money from international sales of the series.

The other educational collaborators/partners, the City Colleges of Chicago,the Dallas Community College District,the Miami-Dade Community College, the Southern California Consortium, and the State of Florida Department of Education all would have free use of the series as a telecourse, and would share in any revenues derived from the rental of the series to other institutions.

For its part, KOCE-TV would provide work for its permanent staff, pay much needed overhead expenses, and for this production would be acquiring new state of the art editing equipment. Later, I also came to learn they had another very lucrative way of making money from the series — by placing a short "book tag" at the end of each program (which mercilessly cut into end credits) they would advertise a glossy series Readers Guide for $10.95. That clever appendage earned the station a great deal of money. A prior book tag on a painting series they did and gave away brought in close to $1.5 million a year! PBS has since caught on and now asks for a commission on book tag sales.

The educational partners appointed individuals to serve on a series advisory board as well as to be content consultants, though having an anthropologist as the series producer most certainly lightened the load of the latter. These individuals, as well as the text author, William Haviland, and the instructional designer would read, comment on, and ultimately approve program scripts which I would provide to them. This turned out to actually be a very efficient and workable system because the series instructional designer, Leslie N. Purdy, had a strong sense narration and of how sparse it really needed to be if the material was to work.

The Structure of Production

At KOCE-TV I worked directly under the Vice President of the station, Sandra Harden. She was my ultimate boss, and provided very real production limits and specifications. Among these were the requirements that:

1. each program be able to stand on its own
2. male frontal nudity be avoided when possible
3. particularly bloody or gruesome moments be moderated
4. payment for acquired footage be limited to no more than $200 per minute
5. each program have a high level of production value
6. that each program be entertaining and of interest to non-students as well as students taking the course.
7. that every attempt be made to tie in to and support the structure of the text.
8. that twenty-six programs needed to be produced — so that two per week could be shown over a 13-week semester period
9. we should limit the use of subtitles
10. there had to be a celebrity narrator

As with any television production, there are always limits. It is said that productions can be good, cheap, or fast — but that they can only be two of these at the same time. For FACES we had to be cheap and fast. We hoped that we could also be good. Two of the twenty-six programs had to be completed each month to meet the air date upon which the series was funded. This meant that the following would have to be the case:

1. the series would be limited for the most part to acquired footage
2. post production would have to move ahead at a faster pace than normal

3. the staff would have to be paid very little
4. a number of productions would have to be taking place at the same time. Our solution to these challenges was to create a number of paired production teams of writers and editors who would develop and produce at least two programs a piece. Writers would come on 3-4 weeks ahead of the editors to do their research and come up with a treatment. I would provide them with visible time-coded film and video material I felt they would need to tell their story, and would give them a mini-lecture that outlined what they needed to cover and how I felt it could be done. Once approved, the editor would be brought on to work daily with the writer to come up with a series of cuts that they could talk me through. Scratch narrations were eventually married to the video cuts for approval of myself, the executive producer, instructional designer, text author, and publisher.

Although a temporary research library contained more than 200 hours of footage when I came on board, little of it could be used because of its either poor quality or inane subject matter. Non-anthropologists apparently look for very different things in film ("Pygmie Madness" was in the collection!). Nevertheless, a fine film researcher was crucial to our keeping on schedule and acquiring new material. Our researcher was kept busy day and night for most of the production period with this task.

As the time frame of the series was so short, and as few in charge completely trusted an anthropologist who also claimed to be a television producer — at that time I had only produced and directed "The Three Worlds of Bali" for television — the executive producer arranged for a seasoned pro, Arthur Barron, himself a sociologist, to serve as series creative consultant. Without his energies and wisdom, there is little way that staffing could have been completed on schedule nor that the series opening would been of such high quality. As film and TV is truly a collaborative art, such creative resources are always welcomed. There could have easily been two producers for the series, but Arthur was expensive, and his commitment was therefore only for a short time. It was also through Arthur that we got a commitment from David Carradine to narrate the series for next to nothing — a big enough reason to go with him although in the end he was cheap, fast and good.

Because the concept of story was as important to me as it was to the executive producer of the series in making an entertaining as well as pedagogically correct program, most of the editors I hired came from the world of film rather than video. At the time of this production, many top film editors realized that if they didn't catch up now, they would never be able to develop needed video editing skills for a changing commercial film world. As a result we were able to hire excellent editors for very little, for we would provide them with on the job training in video post-production of material that originally came from film. But we also needed to do something to dramatically speed up the process of editing — particularly with "green" video editors. We accomplished that buy building then revolutionary computerized off-line editing suites. With these systems, we could auto-assemble and ripple re-cuts — walking into the expensive on-line room with a program that we could auto assemble in record time — often in only 3-4 hours — rather than the two to three days that might normally be required. Using time-coded work tapes, our audio tracks were being continuously preassembled in another part of the studio, so that they could be simply laid down in on-line. In the end, our time-saving efforts worked, for we were able to produce two broadcast programs per week for an astonishingly low sum of $24,000 per program. Our last program — the first program in the series — was brilliantly put together by its production team in no more than one week!

To be able to make entertaining and interesting programs as well as pedagogically sound ones required some serious re-thinking of how not only telecourses were made, but of how to make ethnographic film and video available to large television audiences.[3] Roger Sandall once reviewed the Canberra Ethnographic Film Festival as being "more ethnic than graphic, and remarkably long!" That was *not* what we wanted. Consequently, it was decided to open each program with a strong "hook," to cut for energy and story, and to involve our audience with the people we were showing on a very personal level by having them speak directly to the audience as much as possible. We specifically sought out the types of films with that approach. Films that were reflexive also interested us, because they generally had a built-in story line we could exploit. Whenever possible we sought films done from the perspective of the event/sequence approach of Marshall and Asch, because such films were alive, human, and showed the viewer *process*, rather than making us tell them about it. The series consequently contains some of the finest ethnographic film shot up to that point — and that is

why, I think, that it has remained such an invaluable resource for those who teach anthropology.

As for satisfying KOCE's original requirements, we won on the issue of subtitles by making them large and clear. We lost more than not on the frontal nudity issue, but we also were allowed to spend more time than most would have on retaining the natural sounds of the field. Sound quality came to be an important and justifiable concern. Contrary to what most people would think, sound usually accounts for at least 70% of what an audience gets from a program.

Perhaps one of the most major accomplishments we achieved in structuring the series was to talk everyone involved into not making each and every program in the series line up directly with the text chapters. I proposed and had accepted the concept of using eight separate, single-culture/single-issue case studies in addition to the more omnibus-like programs that were needed to cover such chapter collections as "Marriage and the Family," "Age Sex, and Common Interest," and "Culture and Personality." Such an approach allowed us to not only not make many boring chapter films because we could combine them, but it let us hire talented anthropological filmmakers such as Hubert Smith and Napoleon Chagnon to help us re-make longer classics into 28-minute versions. In most cases the filmmakers agreed that the shorter versions were better than their originals because they were so highly focused; and in some cases their makers ended up strengthening their productions by developing a stronger sense of "story" — even if that "story" simply had to do with the making of the film itself, as it did in a couple of instances. We remade "A Man Called Bee" this way, as well as "Trobriand Cricket," "The Spirit Possession of Alejandro Mamani," "Wow," "Always For Pleasure," and used portions of such magnificent classics as Asen Balicki's "Netsilik Eskimo" series, David and Judith McDougal's "Lorang's Way" and "Wedding Camels," among others. I honestly feel that the inclusion of these classics in the series has given them new life and contextualized them in a way that could never have happened if they had been shown on their own.

If I have any regrets about the series, they are that in spite of the critical and priceless contribution these dedicated filmmakers made to the success of the series, they received so very little in the way of money for their contributions. Although I wish of course that I had received more compensation myself, as I see the ever-widening audience for the series, there is great satisfaction in knowing how many have seen and been influenced by knowing about this important view of the human condition. Had it been more of a commercial enterprise from the beginning, perhaps its form and content would not have been able to provide as much of a mirror for our world and its precious cultures as it has.

In the film and television industry, series like FACES are often called "acquired footage shows" or "clip shows." While programs made from previously existing material can save a producer a lot of production expenses, particularly if foreign travel and one-time historical events are involved, they are a very special and complicated endeavor, and must not be taken lightly. Its not easy to put clips from different films together, and only skilled writers and editors to do this well. I think that the difficulty of doing this type of program well is further testament to the success of the FACES series and the skills of the many creative people who worked on it.

Distribution

Distribution of the series in the US initially began outside of the PBS system. The owners of the telecourse determined that their distribution costs would be far less if they leased the series out themselves on a school by school basis rather than pay PBS the $15 per student they required. So, Coast Telecourses leased directly to colleges and universities who wanted to use the series, and let them arrange with local public television stations and quite often with local commercial stations for multiple broadcasts during their public service hours, though as time went on, the quality of the programs encouraged some public television stations to air the series during prime time slots. The leases to the schools also allowed for closed circuit transmission and classroom use of the series. [4]

This type of broadcast distribution differs from the normal "soft" and "hard" feed public TV broadcasting. When aired on PBS, most telecourses are broadcast on "soft" feed, where they are expected to be re-recorded at local stations for later airing, rather than on "hard" feed where all stations will re-broadcast programs as they come in from national PBS satellites.

Today, the series is handled by the Adult Learning Service of PBS as well as by direct lease, and in the '91 Winter/Spring term alone, 58 colleges in 17 states will air the telecourse. Additionally, each of the educational partners that co-produced

the series will use it at least once a year, adding at another 50-60 colleges per year to the list. Last year alone, Faces of Culture returned a gross revenue to Coast Telecourses of $100,000.[5] Determining the exact number of students that take the telecourse is difficult as these figures are not used to determine lease fees and are not therefore reported. But the number of telecourse study guides sold may be a good indicator of student enrollment levels. To date, Holt reports that 44,488 study guides have been sold. Holt also reports that re-sales of used texts usually account for one and a half to three and a half times original book sales.[6] That would mean that probably some 111,200 to 155,700 students have taken the FACES telecourse to date. That's a lot of anthropology students for a period of less than seven years. What is perhaps even more important, is that PBS also estimates that for every student who enrolls in a telecourse, some 400 non-student viewers watch each program, making for a general audience of between 44 and 62 million viewers in the US alone!

Other, non-telecourse students of cultural anthropology are also exposed to the series in direct classroom screenings. Not only are individual programs leased to colleges and universities for such purposes, but Holt offers up to five or six programs for classroom use to institutions that adopt a minimum order of 100 copies of the texts. It has been a very effective selling tool. [7]

An even more recent and exciting development has been the use of The College Video Corporation of Bethesda, Maryland to directly rent the series to students who cannot receive normal broadcasts or who wish to take the course as an independent study course for $60 for the semester. The entire series is provided on two long-play VHS cassettes. A student can arrange to rent the cassettes by calling a 1-800 number, or arranging for the school bookstore to rent them.[8] Among those taking advantage of this program have been the administrators of a CLEP-like program of the U.S. Army National Guard . [9]

In Canada, the series has been distributed by Magic Lantern Communications in Ontario, though many Canadians pull in signals from powerful US stations that also transmit the series.[10] While distance education by telecourse has not grown as much in Canada as it has in the US, the series has nonetheless been broadcast in Canada's larger provinces for a good number of years, on TV Ontario, The Knowledge Network in British Columbia, The Access Network in Alberta and through Concordia University in Montréal. As mentioned before, number of programs have been used by the Inuit Network, CBC North, and the RCMP. While there are no specific numbers on Canadian audiences, it is clear that the series has been aired a number of times nationally and large numbers of Canadians, both students and non-students, have seen the series. Estimates are that at least 300,000 Canadians have seen the series on Canadian originated broadcasts.[11]

What's Next

Today, more colleges and universities are offering video-based credit and noncredit courses than ever. With TV sets in most homes and cable service and VCRs in the majority of homes, people are encouraged to take telecourses as a method of earning college credit and enriching their lives. Coastline Community College, the initiator of the FACES series, enrolls more than 5,000 telecourse students each year and offers twenty or more telecourses each semester. Some institutions in Europe are also beginning to follow the trend in telecourse use. The series has just been purchased for use by the Television Academy of the Netherlands with either a Dutch translation or subtitles for use this coming fall. They expect more than 10,000 adults students to enroll in the course. The series is now also in the process of being sold to Greece — to Municipal TV in Thessalonika for broadcast over a two year period. Broadcasts are now being planned for Spain.[12]

Recent figures from the PBS Adult Learning Service indicate that 59% of all colleges and universities in the US are using telecourses, and last year's enrollments probably exceed a half-million students.[13] Today, more than 90% of the public television stations in the US broadcast college courses (Falk, nd.). The Wall Street Journal (Nov 14, 1990) states that —In the wake of the first defeat of a higher education bond issue, the governors of California's two-year colleges "have set up a panel to study offering courses electronically to homes and offices instead of building new facilities. Telecourses have already brought in over $1 million in income to De Anza College in California just during 1989-90.[14] There is obviously room for other successful anthropology telecourses. One of CPB/Annenberg's last offerings (that program is now terminated) is, in fact, a series on archaeology, "Time Travelers," which is produced jointly by Cambridge Studios and the University of Pennsylvania.

But the next generation of telecourses, when they are made, will no doubt be distributed on CD's for use on computers and be highly interactional. And there is no reason to believe that the FACES OF CULTURE series cannot be adapted as is to that format either. The costs for transforming and already produced series like FACES into an interactional format will be far less than developing one from scratch.

in 1985, Karen Field, who had used the course herself as a teacher, said that many of her students had:

......watched the programs 'with their whole families' - three generations sometimes watching together - and that this experience had prompted lively exchanges and reactions that the students found rewarding. As one student put it, 'My kids didn't know they were interested in anthropology till they started watching these programs with me - but now they do! (p.218)

A survey revealed that 100% of her students would recommend that the series be used again at their university and at others around the country. Field concluded:

Communications theorists have been telling us for years that electronic media are conditioned by the social milieux in which they are used - that they can be liberatory as well as alienating, that they can stimulate as well as lull. By bringing the cultures of the world into the student's living room, *Faces of Culture* makes a powerful argument for the educative potential of television, and provides an arresting and flexible teaching tool for any anthropologist who seeks to share the excitement of the discipline with others. (p.218)

A Post Script:

Last year, the Department of Anthropology at the State University of California at Northridge was burglarized, and a number of items were stolen. The thieves ignored the computers, typewriters and office equipment, and instead walked off with a few films and the department's latest purchase — the entire, and yet unused, 26-part FACES OF CULTURE telecourse.

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1. The Nature of Anthropology
2. The Nature of Culture
3. How Cultures are Studied
4. Patterns of Subsistence: Hunter-Gatherers and Pastoralists
5. Patterns of Subsistence: Food Producers and the Rise of Civilization
6. Language and Communication
7. Culture and Personality
8. Alejandro Mamani: A Case Study in Culture and Personality
9. Marriage and the Family
10. The Yucatec Maya: A Case Study in Marriage and the Family
11. Kinship and Descent, Part I
12. Kinship and Descent, Part II
13. Age, Common Interest, and Stratification
14. The Aymara: A Case Study in Social Stratification
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[1] Personal communication, James E. LeMay, Marketing Director, Coast Telecourses, Fountain Valley, California.

[2] Personal communication, Robert Leitch, Vice President Magic Lantern Communications, Ontario, Canada, and Debby Slavkin, IA Entertainment, Los Angeles, California.

[3] While little has been written about this subject, Martinez (1990) presents an excellent discussion of how a number of classic ethnographic films affected students in the classroom. In his analysis, Martinez evaluated one of my own films, "The Three Worlds of Bali," which was made in 1979 for public television's *Odyssey* series. I believe that this film and the lessons I learned from making it for television provided me with my most important model of how to approach the making of the "Faces of Culture" series. I discuss this process in the paper I delivered at the "Film As Ethnography" conference at the University of Manchester's Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology in September, 1990 (Abrams).

[4] The standard lease fee for a single institution for the course is $700 per semester. Course information may be obtained in the US by calling Coast Telecourses at (714) 241-6109.

[5] Personal communication, James E. Le May, Marketing Director, Coast Telecourses.

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[8] The toll free number in the US and Canada for information on The College Video Corporation's cassette rental program is 1-800-85-CLASS.

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[10] Those interested in obtaining information on Canadian distribution of the series may contact Magic Lantern at either (416) 827-1155 in Ontario, or (613) 267-3499 in Perth.

[11] Personal communication, Robert Leitch, Vice President Magic Lantern Communications, Ontario, Canada.

[12] Personal communication, Debby Slavkin, IA Entertainment, Los Angeles, California. IA Entertainment has recently begun to distribute the "Faces of Culture" series in international markets.

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Video y alfabetización: El uso "intermediario" del video en la cultura quichua del Ecuador

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La alfabetización indígena en el Ecuador

Entre 1980 y 1984 el gobierno del Ecuador implementó el Programa Nacional de Alfabetización, dentro del cual se desarrolló el Subprograma de Alfabetización en lengua quichua. Este se dirigió a la población indígena que habita en la región de la sierra y de la amazonía, en la cual se encontraban alrededor de 2 millones de personas.

El diseño del Programa, como de los métodos y materiales educativos fue desarrollado por el Centro de Investigaciones para la Educación Indígena (CIEI), dependiente del Instituto de Lenguas y Lingüística de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador. Este Centro inicialmente contaba con un número de 6 personas[1] y posteriormente se incorporaron alrededor de 40 indígenas de las diversas regiones del país. Esta incorporación fue progresiva, debido a las necesidades determinadas por el Programa[2] (para actividades de investigación, producción de materiales educativos, y formación de promotores y monitores indígenas de alfabetización). De otra parte, los miembros del CIEI, realizaron diversas reuniones con representantes de diversas organizaciones indígenas nacionales y regionales, donde se determinó la unificación del alfabeto para la lengua quichua, y la definición de un método único de alfabetización para todas las comunidades quichuas del país.

Los objetivos generales del Programa de Alfabetización en lengua quichua buscaron proponer una educación en la cual se estimule:

* La revalorización psicológica y cultural de la población indígena
* La revalorización y desarrollo de sus propias formas organizativas
* La identificación de problemas sociales y culturales, económicos y políticos, para encontrar soluciones que permitan resolverlos dentro del marco de la sociedad quichua; y,
* La revalorización de conocimientos y prácticas tradicionales benéficas, existentes en todos los campos de la vida comunitaria.

Lo oral y la ecritura: en que lenguaje nos comunicamos?

La propuesta educativa fue denominada Modelo Educativo Macac[3], la cual se sustenta en principios de una educación bilingue e intercultural. El bilinguismo, es considerado como una realidad impuesta por la dominación de la sociedad hispano-hablante, sobre las doce familias etnolingüísticas que existen en el Ecuador. El español es la única lengua oficial, por lo que la gran mayoría de la población índigena (que representa el 25% de la población del país) debe utilizar "gestores" o "tramitadores" mestizos para realizar los trámites oficiales. El contacto interétnico determinó la existencia de diversos grados de bilinguismo en la población indígena, mientras que por otra parte, en la población mestiza que tiene un mayor contacto con los indígenas, utiliza un español con interferencias del vocabulario y en la pronunciación, mientras que en la escritura se encuentran adaptaciones gramaticales del quichua.

El análisis de la condiciones de comunicación interétnica permitió señalar la presencia de una fuerte discriminación social, que es justificada etnocentricamente por el supuesto de que la población indígena "no entiende español y es incapaz de aprender", ésto es también evidenciado por la limitada accesibilidad a la escuela oficial y la alta tasa de fracaso y deserción escolar de los niños indígenas[4]. Esta situación es una expresión de las condiciones encontradas en las relaciones sociales en general, donde los indígenas han vivido históricamente una agresión territorial, con la perdida de la mayor parte de su tierra; la cultura fue subordinada a una posición de residuo histórico, a la cual se la ubica como un "atraso" u "obstáculo" frente a la modernización de la sociedad urbana, debido a la explotación del petróleo; la imposición de leyes, que no tuvieron en cuenta los valores de la sociedad indígena; la ausencia de representación política, en el modelo de organización del Estado; y, la condición subordinada de la economía campesina agrícola de subsistencia, frente al mercado nacional.

En base a éstos antecedentes, el modelo educativo definió a las lenguas vernáculas como lengua de alfabetización, y la lengua oficial fue considerada como segunda lengua o de comunicación intercultural. Los contenidos educativos en ésta última, fueron definidos sobre los aspectos que la sociedad indígena consideraba prioritarios en las relaciones interétnicas, entre otros, se citan: el aprendizaje instrumental del español sobre aspectos legales, como los trámites para obtención de documentos de identidad, contratos de trabajos, derechos sociales, etc.; los aspectos políticos, es decir la comprensión de la organización y función del Estado, autoridades, mecanismos electorales, etc.

Educación y Comunicación

La alfabetización fue definida esencialmente como un proceso de comunicación, además de ser un proceso de enseñanza de nuevos intrumentos de grafía de la expresión del pensamiento. Este pasaje de la lengua oral a la lengua escrita, implica también el pasaje de una modificación de la representación del pensamiento y de la gestación de nuevos procesos de conocimiento a partir de la decodificación y comprensión de la escritura; consecuentemente se establece un nuevo replanteo en las relaciones sociales tradicionales. En el caso de la culturas de tipo oral, que implica un contacto personal en la comunicación, la utilización de la lectura y escritura, presupone la eliminación de elementos concretos que acompañan la comunicación oral como los gestos, entonación, sentido y énfasis de los sonidos, tono de voz, etc., pero, especialmente incide en la transformación espacio-temporal del locutor, ya que implica una dificultad inicial para el neo-escritor/lector para poder representar las sensaciones que acompañan la comunicación oral (traducción de sensaciones ambientales y subjetivas; simultaneidad y modificación recíproca en la comprensión de diversos puntos de vista emergentes de un diálogo, etc.).

En el Modelo Educativo Macac, se estableció que la alfabetización parte de la definición de tres códigos básicos de comunicación: el código lingüístico, el código de imágenes, y el código matemático:

* Toda sociedad oral dispone de un sistema de simbolización del lenguaje, manifestado en la decoración de cerámicas, en los tejidos, y en otras expresiones como las modalidades de la música, etc.
* Toda sociedad oral dispone de un sistema de transmisión del conocimiento, por la propia enculturación, y en diversas modalidades como la analogía, el sentido de las metáforas, la instrucción verbal asociada a los valores de punición y recompensa.
* Toda sociedad oral dispone de un sistema de matemáticas que corresponde a una episteme particular derivada del valor simbólico (cualitativo o cuantitativo) de las cosas, y de su intercambio.

Con la identificación de éstas representaciones se elaboró el conjunto de símbolos básicos que permitió contruir las grafías (letras y números) como también, de los elementos representativos del tiempo y el espacio en los dibujos.

El video como sintaxis de un nuevo código

Dentro del contexto descrito, se desarrolló una experiencia del uso del video como apoyo de las actividades de alfabetización. Esta se inició como una actividad de apoyo a la investigación de campo, inicialmente se registraron rituales terapéuticos realizados por los curanderos, como también, las operaciones matemáticas que hacían los indígenas en los mercados, y fiestas populares.

Inicialmente no se pensó en una producción y uso sistemático de la radio, como del video, pues, ambos eran entendidos como un refuerzo de la oralidad que no contribuía al desarrollo del lenguaje escrito. No obstante, con el desarrollo del Programa, que adquirió un carácter masivo, (pues se formaron 1.100 monitores indígenas de educación, logrando una cobertura de alrededor de 150.000 indígenas) se desarrolló la siguiente producción de videos[5]:

* La realización de un documental sobre las matemáticas quichuas (sentido, métodos de operación, y ejemplos de enseñaza), y otro sobre la enseñanza de la lectura y escritura, dirigidos a los monitores de alfabetización, y que permitieran un refuerzo de los conocimientos adquiridos en los cursos de formación[6], ambos de 40 minutos, en lengua quichua.
* Simultáneamente se produjo un video de 40 minutos sobre la música indígena, grabado en una fiesta regional. En razón del desconocimiento de la decodificación de imágenes por parte de la población indígena, se evitó planear y realizar una edición completa del material, se respetó la cronología de los eventos, y sólo se estableció un límite total del tiempo del video.
* Se produjeron dos videos dirigidos a las autoridades del Ministerio de Educación, y hacia las organizaciones indígenas. El primero era una descripción del Modelo Educativo, en la cual se insertaron esquemas y gráficos sobre la propuesta educativa, con locución en español; y el segundo, fue la propuesta de educación infantil en el modelo educativo, también en español; ambos de 20 minutos cada uno.

Con el desarrollo del Programa, en diversas regiones del país (de la sierra y amazonía), se realizaron registros de diversas comunidades, y eventos sociales, que fueron pre-editados y mostradas en numerosas comunidades de la sierra y amazonía, en reuniones grupales en las cuales se realizaban discusiones sobre lo observado y comparado sobre la realidad local.

Si bién, la experiencia de video sólo se realizó en el período de dos años[7], aportó distintas reflexiones sobre la utilización de éste medio:

En primer lugar, representaba un desafío establecer un mensaje dirigido a la población indígena, sin conocer los códigos de imágenes en movimiento con sonido. Si bién, se alcanzó un importante conocimiento, sobre los códigos de imágenes dibujadas, en los cuales la representación del tiempo y el espacio difieren fundamentalmente de las grafías de la cultura occidental, era difícil establecer un registro en cuadro mediante el video, que mantuviese los elementos de significación simbólica. Esto llevó a la necesidad de la búsqueda de una nueva sintaxis de la imágen y a la estructuración de un lenguaje al cual no se pudo llegar. No obstante, los videos realizados aportaron importantes indicios en ésta dirección.

Por otro lado, el video se presentaba como un medio ideal para sintetizar y expresar representaciones, que permitieran reforzar actividades para alcanzar el conjunto de objetivos planteados por el Programa.

El abandono de la edición del material, llevó a la utilización de segmentos de grabaciones que adquirieron significancia y una mayor comprensión en la medida que:

* Se respetaba la cronología de los eventos originales;
* cuando las imágenes representaban elementos de experiencia personal y grupal de trascendencia, como la de los rituales terapéuticos;
* la eliminación de títulos o locución facilitaba una concentración en la lectura de la imágen;
* se evitaron elipses referentes a la convergencia de desenlaces o eventos futuros, o pasados[8], mostrándose eventos de breves períodos de tiempo;
* la representación de elementos de una mayor dimensión de lo ya conocido, como ejemplo el gran impacto de las imágenes de la foresta amazónica, o del río Napo (de aproximadamente un kilómetro de ancho);
* la resonancia sobre aspectos desconocidos, como la caza y cocción de monos de la amazonía dentro de la cultura Huorani[9].

Un aspecto fundamental, fue la presentación de las imágenes de la propia población, pues, de acuerdo a las diversas regiones geográficas con limitada o nula experiencia, como expectadores de televisión, su propia imágen constituyó un evento de comunicación participativa. Al igual que la imágen dibujada, las imágenes en movimiento en lengua nativa, suscitó diversas reacciones de tipo personal y grupal:

* Un estímulo inmediato a la comunicación oral, que deja de lado su papel pasivo de espectador de un filme, para transformarse en interlocutor entre la imágen representada y los demás asistentes.
* La movilización de emociones y reflexiones a partir de los elementos, o gestos de las imágenes representadas; usualmente el sonido del video fue anulado o quedó inaudible a partir de los comentarios, risas u otras manifestaciones a partir de los elementos observados en la pantalla.
* De otra parte los videos concebidos en el CIEI, fueron inicialmente producidos pensando en un público adulto, es decir se planteaban elementos conceptuales y de abstracción (a partir del pensamiento indígena), no obstante, en la comunidad todo evento es familiar, en la cual la mayor parte de asistentes son niños de todas las edades, lo que implica normalmente un diálogo con un trasfondo de juegos, risas y llantos.

Podemos establecer que el código de imágenes de video, fue subordinado a los códigos culturales de comunicación pre-existentes en la cultura, lo que orientó a su uso como insumo dentro de un proceso mayor o integral de comunicación educativa. En éste sentido la intervención de la técnica de video adquirió un carácter de "intermediario", o sea del registro de imágenes de una cultura, devueltas a la comunidad, que son decodificadas y reinterpretadas en un sentido del cual hoy todavía conocemos muy poco.

Dentro de éste proceso se evidenció la necesidad de una investigación sobre la elaboración de un nuevo lenguaje para la producción de videos, que permitieran una identidad y especificidad de comunicación por éste medio. Esta no se orienta hacia la construcción de una nueva estética, sino en la adaptación cultural de la sintaxis de la imágen en movimiento a partir de un sentido émico. Resulta más aún desafiante poder reconstruir una dimensión simbólica, a partir de las imágenes objetivas y discriminadas del ambiente.

Dentro del proceso de realización de videos, se entrenaron a indígenas quichuas y shuaras (6 personas) en técnicas de grabación y edición; no obstante se consideró que el problema fundamental, no solamente residía en la capacidad de producción y en el montaje de una red de difusión permanente en la comunidades, sino en el establecimiento de una política de comunicación por parte de las organizaciones indígenas, que son las únicos ámbitos de continuidad frente a la inestabilidad y precariedad de los programas externos dirigidos a ésta sociedad.

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[1] Desde un primer momento se contó con la participación de un indígena con formación en lingüística, y otros, que eran dirigentes de organizaciones locales, que centraron sus esfuerzos en el desarrollo de la estrategia del Programa. La contratación de indígenas en la Universidad se constituyó en un proceso complejo, debido a las normas administrativas existentes, y durante el cual fue necesario una reforma administrativa que permitiese establecer una nueva categoria de cargos y salarios, pues la mayoría de las personas tenían una escolaridad primaria o secundaria incompleta.

[2] No existió un criterio único para el ingreso de las personas, en general se encontraba asociado a la experiencia o al campo de dominio en la cual desarrollaban su trabajo, como por ejemplo: personas que tenían experiencia en salud animal, músicos, curanderos, etc.; otros, fueron delegados por las organizaciones indígenas locales y regionales (inclusive de otras familias

etnolingüísticas), finalmente 2 personas con aptitudes para el dibujo, trabajaron y profundizaron su experiencia en la representación gráfica.

[3] Macac es una plabra quichua y corresponde al nombre de la primera comunidad donde se realizó la experiencia de los materiales y métodos educativos; en español puede traducirse como "el que combate" o "guerrero".

[4] Hacia 1980, la tasa de deserción escolar era de 76% en el medio rural (las estadísticas disponibles no establecen cifras específicas de los niños indígenas)

[5] Estos fueron realizados por dos personas sin formación académica en cinematografía, con una cámara y una unidad editora de 3 1/4 pulgadas.

[6] Esto se constituyó como una necesidad estratégica, pues los cursos de formación fueron limitados en el tiempo, condicionados a su vez por los recursos financieros del Programa; y por razones de las características culturales del aprendizaje, era necesaria la repetición de cursos sobre el mismo sujeto de aprendizaje.

[7] Este fue entre 1982 y 1984, pues cuando se produjo el ascenso de las nuevas autoridades en el país, el Ministerio de Educación canceló los convenios para la continuidad de la alfabetización quichua, pues el nuevo gobierno de carácter neo-liberal "no estaba interesado en éste tipo de educación reflexiva - crítica, y menos aún participativa..." (según la expresión del Ministro de Educación).

[8] Etimologicamente la palabra quichua "ñaupa" tiene una significancia de pasado y futuro, cuya síntesis es el tiempo presente.

[9] Se realizó un registro de un grupo Huorani que habita en la amazonía, cerca de la frontera con el Perú, y que constituyen un grupo nómade de cazadores y recolectores que se encuentra en un proceso de transición hacia la horticultura.

Between Fiction and Reality: Representation of Culture in Film - Ethnosemiotic Approach to Hungarian Cinema

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1. An Ethnosemiotic Introduction

In a semiotic approach to culture, one of the basic premises is the statement that "the culture of every community is a totality of languages...(in other words) culture is characterized by a peculiar multilinguality." Consequently, the facts of culture are not merely signs, but peculiarly designated systems of signs - in other words, manifestations of a particular code or cultural idiom. We regard as the code of culture the mass of rules governing the arrangement of the material carriers of the message; while the message is the information transmitted by the sign-devices.

According to a pioneer of semiotic research, "the subject-matter of semiology is every sign-system, irrespective of its substance and limits: pictures, gestures, musical notes, objects and combinations of all these found in rituals and performances, elaborate public spectacles - which constitute, if not languages, significant systems." Semiotic researches carried out so far regarded as sign-systems, moreover, - to mention just a few of the countless examples - the following phenomena: dress, gestures, facial expressions, proxemics, comics, club insignias, uniforms, spoken language, music, etiquette, totem poles, poetry, novels, ballads, film, rites, proverbs, jokes, advertisements, prayers, sacrifice, carnival (...), pictures, intonation, road signs, colours etc. Some researchers term these cultural phenomena as *systems of signs*, others call them *codes*, and still others refer to them as *texts* or simply *languages*. Semiotic literature in Hungary uses these terms alternately.

However, one thing they all agree on is that the above phenomena are made suitable for carrying meanings precisely by this property, that they are all characterized by an internal order of the elements. It is the institutionalized arrangement (e.g. the order of sounds within words or the order of steps in a dance) that makes understanding possible. The code is a convention evolved by the collective - a convention functioning as a system of rules of transformation and used by members of the collective to arrange the elements when they wish to create a communication of some sort. The particular sets of coding rules are intended to produce only particular types of texts. The understanding of a given cultural text begins, in fact, with a knowledge, and with the use of these rules, the rules of coding. In ethnosemiotics, special importance adheres to the concepts of code and coding - that is the conclusion suggested by the works of some prominent semioticians.

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The complex cultural texts can only be understood with the help of several types of code. The matter is further complicated by the fact that any single type of text organized in this complicated way is still but a single code in the whole of a culture, in other words, it is but one sub-system among many. As Soviet semioticians have formulated it, culture, from the semiotic standpoint, can be regarded as a hierarchy of different sign-systems, the sum total of different texts and the mass of the related functions - a mechanism that generates these texts. This same outlook appears in Eco's work, when he speaks of "systems of code systems" and "a process of unlimited semiosis", which ultimately helps one understand the "logic of culture". It is in the endless processes of the production, the constant reproduction of codes, their building on one another, that we can understand culture, and that is the theoretical concept, too, that provides the foundation for an ethnosemiotic analysis of the phenomena of folklore.

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The beginning of ethnosemiotics dates from the early 1970s. Here we have to refer to the works of A.J. Greimas, Yu. Stepanov, V. Voigt. Factors which strongly influenced it in its appearance were, on the one hand, trends in French structuralism, namely Claude Lévi-Strauss, A.J. Greimas and the symbolic anthropology in England (E. Leach, V. Turner, M. Douglas); and on the other hand, the endeavours of the semioticians in the Soviet Union.

2. Culture as Collective Memory

The basic premise in this new approach is that the production, transmission and continued maintenance of culture are done with the help of sign-systems developed by the collective. Accordingly, culture denotes coded information, preserved in some orderly form, or, as the leading figure of Soviet cultural semioticians, Yu.M. Lotman has put it, "all non-hereditary information, the sum total of the modes of organizing and preserving information". According to this view, culture is the *collective memory* of mankind, and specifically the collective memory of a smaller or larger group of people. Culture is not biologically inherited, but through traditions, via the various sign-systems and principally the behavioural patterns developed through language, which the members of the collective acquire in the course of socialization and learning. "What memory is to the individual, culture is to the collective, to society", says Roland Posner, paraphrasing the Russian researchers. This mode of storing collective information presupposes

a real functioning of communication, without which there is neither the flow nor the transmission of information; that is why we consider the application of the theoretical model of information to be appropriate in describing the phenomena of culture.

One of the insights provided by the ethnosemiotic examination of culture is that there are always several kinds of sign-systems, as the totality of texts and the functions assigned to them, and as a definite mechanism generating these texts.

They imagine culture as a concentric system of sign-spheres, where it is possible to distinguish between the sign-systems and the non-semioticized sphere, between culture and non-culture (the area lying outside culture). Distinguishing between those opposites has characterized human cultures for a long time, for even the ancient Greeks disassociated themselves from the "barbarians", the cultures of the religious Middle Ages held themselves apart from the "heathens"; the Enlightenment despised "ignorance"; civilised Europe despised the so-called "primitive" peoples; in Germany, the Nazis persecuted "morbid" art; in the Soviet Union and China, the Communist cultural revolution persecuted the art of "bourgeois reaction" - the list is almost endless. That disavowal actually meant exclusion from the dominant culture, the ousting from the culture of all the phenomena regarded as non-culture. Another aspect of this process of semioticization is the relationship between the central and the peripheral areas of culture.

The code of the central area of culture is determined by several important factors - primarily by its widespread use in society and its high degree of sophistication. This elaborate structure also implies a high degree of constancy and coherence in the sign-systems, features combined with the automatism of the use of the codes. In other words, it is the frequent repetition of the words that ensures the safe transmission of information. The ultimate aim of this whole mechanism is to enable the collective (the society using the signs) to preserve its identity, which is what it uses the texts and the codes for. In other words, the essence of unlimited semiosis is the constant reproduction of culture, which also implies a reproduction of the codes, the texts, the world of objects, the social institution and the conceptual system. And here we have arrived at an important problem - namely, that to the collective using the cultural sign-systems the constancy of certain communications, texts, symbols and pictures is immensely important. This is ensured partly by the identity of the signs, but more by the constancy of the structure made up by the elements. While the elements of culture are continuously changing and are being replaced, certain structures show a fair degree of permanence. This applies particularly to certain parts of the individual ideological structures, religion, beliefs and the value system.

In other words, the central part of culture ensures the preservation of constancy, the development of homogeneity - in one word, the identity of the group. It is these permanent types of culture that we can consider to be national culture. While it does adjust to the tasks of the various ages, it also shows a high level of constancy and may maintain its character for extremely long periods of time. Visual anthropology analyzes the visual texts of culture, and ethnographic films belong to these cultural texts.

Cultures can be understood through the objects, facts and "texts" they create. The methods of ethnosemiotics or of cultural semiotics are eminently suited for analyzing "culturally coded" signs and sign-systems, and films may be regarded as such characteristic sign-events (cf. Ruby, 1982: 129 "film as sign-events"). Soviet researchers dealing with the theory of cultural texts also attach primary importance to continuous texts, as opposed to (linguistic) texts consisting of discrete signs:

> In the overall model of culture another type of text is also essential, one in which the concept of the text appears *not* as a secondary one derived from a chain signs, but as a primary one. A text of this type is not discrete and does not break down into signs. It represents a whole and is segmented not into separate signs but into distinctive features. In this sense we can detect a far-reaching similarity between the primacy of the text in such modern audio-visual systems of mass communication as the cinema and television, and the role of the text for systems in which ... language is understood as a certain set of texts. The fundamental distinction between these two cases of the primacy of the text consists, however, in the fact that for audio-visual systems of the transmission of information and for such comparatively earlier systems as painting, sculpture, the dance and pantomime, the continuous text may be primary and a sign appears as secondary. Semiotic theory is concerned

with the continuous (indiscrete) texts as primary datum...precisely at a time when in culture itself communication systems using predominantly continuous texts are acquiring increasingly greater significance (Uspenskij et al. 1973:6-7.).

The ethnographic film, as a cultural text, is a form of social consciousness. It performs two highly important functions in the life of the community. One is memory, and the other - following from the former - is maintaining the cultural identity.

Every culture has an inherent intention to ensure the transmission, the handing down of important information (the sort of information that characterizes the culture concerned); therefore it employs a plurality of channels and codes to ensure the coding of relevant messages, for instance, in the form of rites, myths, songs, dance and rituals. Film, and particularly ethnographic films, are just such a device in today's modern world, including Europe (cf. Worth, 1981:77; and on the problem of culture as memory see Posner, 1988:30).

> Culture as a collective memory is not only a storage mechanism but also a selective device...The chances of long survival for a piece of information are highest when there is a code which requires its renewed expression in each of its applications...They maintain the culture's identity...

3. Ethnographic Film in Hungary

Hungarian ethnographers (Béla Vikar and Béla Bartók) were among the first to use the phonograph for recording folk songs. Yet, it was not until 1927 that the first ethnographic film was made. It is attributable to Sándor Günyei, a researcher at the Ethnographic Museum (the old film strip has recently been restored, as a result of which a 15-minute programme of pictures taken in the land of the Palots is now available for screening).

It was also in these years (1924) that the professionals of the motion-picture industry launched the regular weekly newsreel, which, in addition to news and current events, recorded the characteristic festivals and collective rituals of popular life (such as the pilgrimage, local religious festivals and popular customs, folk costumes and folk dance). By the end of the '20s, the film material accumulated had grown so large as to call for the release of a catalogue (The Hungarian film...1930), listing the themes of the small pieces lasting for a few minutes (35-millimetre films, each of a length of 20 to 60 metres), as well as those of the longer, so-called cultural films. These latter films were specially commissioned by the state and were distributed round the country in 400 copies: that is, they reached practically all the cinemas in the country (Castiglione - Székely 1941:367). They included a film about Hungarian folk dances ("Genuine Hungarian Dances" 1927 -ms) and one about a horse festival in the Tiszántúl, the area east of the river Tisza (1928 - 35 ms).

In the 1930s, the making of ethnographic films in Hungary was given a boost, partly by the emergence of the Pearly Bouquet Movement (1931-1944), which brought popular culture - in particular, the colourful peasant costumes, showing fairly large variations from region to region, and popular dance - into the mainstream of interest. The other impetus was provided by the continued production, with significant financial assistance from the state, of the "cultural films", with the active participation of, among others, the director Béla Paulini, founder of the Pearly Bouquet Movement. Thus, a film was made about a pilgrimage in a Transdanubian Village (Szanyi búcsú, 1933 - Pilgrimage in a Hungarian Village); while the film "Magyar Falu" (Hungarian Village, 1935) is available in a version with English subtitles. "Amahyar falu művészete" (folk Art of Hungarian Villages, 1937) presents the decorative art of villages, with another film bearing the self-explanatory title of "Magyar táncok és népszokások" (Hungarian Folk Dances and Folk Customs, 1939). These films were compiled partly or entirely from short segments of contemporary newsreel footage. In 15 to 20 minutes, they touched upon a whole range of subjects, showing, therefore, only a few tantalizing pictures (e.g. of the techniques of embroidery or bone-lace making). Though they contain some highly illuminating ethnographic pictures of the life led by the peasantry in those days, these films - as regards their ideological contents and aims - served the propaganda of nationalism, which was then increasingly asserting itself. In the late '30s, such propagandistic uses of the genre could also be observed elsewhere in Europe (let us just think of Italy and Germany).

Apropos of the early history of Hungarian ethnographic filmmaking, two interesting episodes should be mentioned here. The first concerns a film by the Austrian-born Georges Höllering (Hortobágy, 1936 - 73 min.), which he shot in the Great Hungarian Plain in 1934-35. The result is over fifteen thousand metres

of film featuring the life of the shepherds of the Hortobágy, who appeared as characters in the film. (For reasons to do with distribution, a fictional frame was needed for the film which was duly provided by the author Zsigmond Móricz.) An invaluable visual document, it essentially contains all the important paraphernalia, the whole range of artefacts, of the ancient pastoral lifestyle. The other episode is associated with the name of Pál Fejós. Paul Fejós (1897-1963) was already a well-known Hollywood director when he returned home for a brief period, directing two films having the village as their subject-matter (in 1932, in Hungary). Then, from 1936 on, with a Swedish company financing his effort, he shot ethnographic documentaries in Peru, Madagascar, and Siam. Outstanding among these is his film "A Handful of Rice" (1938, 67 min.), which deserves to ranked among the best ethnographic films. Regrettably, his name is absent from most histories of ethnologic filmmaking, although, in his later years too, he continued to make a substantial contribution to the ethnological sciences; - indeed, he was the first director of the Wenner-Gren Foundation. Unfortunately, neither Paul Fejós nor Georges Hölering have exerted any major influence on ethnographic filmmaking in Hungary.

After the Second World War, the documentaries leaving the film production studio were marked by the political and ideological stereotypes of the period. But amateur methods were also used (László, Keszi-Kovács, of the Department of Ethnography at Budapest University, made descriptive films about popular fishing techniques). In addition, folk dance research, too, was given an impetus, producing tens of thousands of metres film (16 mm) intended to record the various dance dialects.

From the 1950s, the work of the director István Szduts and the filmmaker-anthropologist Anna Raffay represents a valuable contribution. Their film "Kövek, várak, emberek" (Stones, Castles, People -1955 - 32 min.) contains some extremely valuable documentary pictures of the life of two peasant villages in Northern Hungary. In spite of the situations being prearranged, the material is authentic, as, in the mid-50s, no reconstruction was yet needed for filming the traditional peasant lifestyle (for more information about the '50s see Hoppal 1972).

With the 1960s, a new generation of filmmakers entered the scene, some of whom acquired international fame, like Miklós Jancsó. Similarly to others, he too started his career with ethnographic documentaries, until his film "Szegénylegények" (The Roundup - 1965) orbited him to world fame. The film itself is freely interspersed with authentic ethnographic details (see Nemeskürthy 19744:199-203). One of the hallmarks of Jancsó's style is the use of long unbroken camera shots or "sequence shots", as they are called in modem ethnographic filmmaking (MacDougall 1978:420), a device now used extensively in feature films, but originally adopted from his arsenal. It is perhaps no accident that, as a young man, Jancsó studied ethnography, also taking part in collective trips. His grounding in ethnography had a formative effect on the style he was subsequently to evolve.

It was in the '60s that the first genuine anthropologist-filmmaker, Lajos Boglár, - then a researcher at Budapest's Museum of Ethnography - started making his films. Apart from the short films the made in Hungary, about peasant life in villages, his more important productions are those he made among the Ludians of South America (The World of the Piaroa - 1969; The Shaman's Necklace - 1985). In the 1960s and '70s, quite a few ethnographic films were made, partly thanks to the film production studios - a film studio for the production of educational films was set us - and partly thanks to the Hungarian Television, with the latter providing the finances for the ethnographic film series "Örökségünk" (Our Heritage - 1971-74; for a report on the series see Hoppál 1975). These films, though directed by professional filmmakers, invariably involved some input from an ethnographical expert, who, with his/her experience in the field, assisted the film crew in their work.

The cooperation of ethnographers and filmmakers has produced a host of good films; yet, these films still tend to cater for a mass audience, with ethnography proper (or "a description of the people", to take the original signification of the word) relegated to the background. The course to be followed in the future might lie in providing the younger generation simultaneously with a training in ethnography and filmmaking. A filmmaker who possesses these qualifications is Domokos Moldován, who, since the early '70s, has made more than ten highly valuable ethnographic films. The subjects include Hungarian native artists, Hungarian funeral rites (Halálnak halálával halsz - You will Die the Death of Deaths - 1970), love-spells (Hungarian Love-Spells - 1975), and two seers of the dead, who, according to popular beliefs, communicate with the dead (A halottlátó - The

seer of the Dead - 1977; Ha megyek látomásba - When I See Visions... - 1984-85). Moldován prepares his work very thoroughly, exploring the details in advance and carrying out some ethnographic fieldwork (Domokos 1986). His work has brought a new style to ethnographic filmmaking in Hungary, an approach that the present author deems highly important in pointing the way ahead. In this context, David MacDougall's dictum that, in the future, ethnographic films should be created in almost the same way as studies are written - sounds particularly valid ("Films are analogous in this sense to an anthropologist's public writings or to any other creative or scholarly productions." - MacDougall 1978:406).

4. National Culture and Cinema

Art has an advantage over science - namely, that science, though it may be telling the truth, is not sure to reach the masses of people. Art, by contrast, - even if it shows a simulacrum, rather than the real thing - if it does that well, is so convincing as to pass from reality. Art appeals to the emotions, while science appeals to reason, it is said, - and, sure enough, in our age, so proud of its rationality, it is true to say that outstanding works of art sometimes have an enormous impact on the masses.

We believe that precisely this may account for the success, both at home and abroad, of some significant Hungarian films in the early '60s. Putting it more exactly, these films contained some elements of tremendous emotional force. That impact was strong not only for the Hungarian observer, but for foreign audiences as well. It was primarily the use of the Hungarian landscape, the characteristic faces, the generally accepted national character traits, the customs and beliefs, forms of behaviour and symbols, all woven into the organic fabric of the films - it was a combination of all these that produced effect. As an Italian critic aptly wrote on the new Hungarian cinema at the end of the '60s: the boundless space and horizon of the Hungarian landscape, the black-and-white houses, the living folklore (taken in the sense of "popular wisdom" or "the knowledge of the people") - these elements can be found in the films of Jancsó, Kósa or Gaál, and indeed, already in those of István Szots, where they organize themselves into virtual visible syntagms, associations of images, *signs*, *symbols*, creating, as it were, a new kind of dictionary of images out of the arsenal of Hungarian visual forms...The same function was performed, in its day, by the emergence of Bartók's music; as today's Hungarian film idiom absorbs, with the joy of rediscovery, the various visual elements of folklore. Earlier, there were only a few films that could be said to draw on popular traditions - e.g. "Emberek a havason" (People on the Snow-Capped Mountain), "Talpalatnyi föld" (A foot of Ground) - and it is interesting to note that the generation of Jancsó, Gaál, Sára and Kósa regarded these films as the predecessors of their own works.

In Hungarian culture, in our own days too, the tradition of the entire people, the pure source is represented by the elements of peasant culture. That is the world, too, that was recorded in the films. Particular sequences of "Sodrás-ban" (Swept by the Current), "Tízezer nap" (Ten Thousand Days), "Földobott ko" (A Stone Thrown UP), "Oldás és kötés" (Loosening kand Binding), and Szegёdnylegények" (The Roundup) are the most successfully done segments.

By now, the "historical" films, as defined in an up-to-date meaning, is also inconceivable without the small and yet important facts of ethnographic authenticity. Let us remind the reader of several scenes in "Dózsa", by Kósa-Csoóri-Sára, - particularly of the one, seemingly incomprehensible in the first moments, where naked girls, yoked to a plough, turn up the soil with it round the church. In the Hungarian ethnographic literature there are well-known data on the power of nakedness to ward off evil. A description of the customs of ploughing to avert an epidemic can be found in the first major comprehensive work of ethnography.

Miklós Jancsó, the world-renowned film-director, would deserve a special chapter, or rather, a special study devoted to him, to examine the folklore roots of his films. Here we mention just one example: the secret of the success of his epoch-making film "Szegénylegények" (The Roundup) was the fact that he insisted on authenticity with regard to the folklore material. The historical veracity of the film is ensured by the genuineness of the elements used. In his "historical" films, the authentic setting, the Hungarian landscape and buildings render the often incredibly abstract events quite palpable; we could quote, as examples, images of "Csend és kiáltás" (Silence and a Cry), "Még kér a nép" (The People Are Still Asking) and "Égi bárány" (Celestial Lamb).

This latter film and especially "Szerelmem, Elektra" (My Love, Electra) also raise another folkloric aspect - namely, the question of the relationship between film and myth. In these two works of his - though we feel that "Technique and Rite", a film about Attila which has not been presented in Hungary, also belongs

etnolingüísticas), finalmente 2 personas con aptitudes para el dibujo, trabajaron y profundizaron su experiencia en la representación gráfica.

[3] Macac es una plabra quichua y corresponde al nombre de la primera comunidad donde se realizó la experiencia de los materiales y métodos educativos; en español puede traducirse como "el que combate" o "guerrero".

[4] Hacia 1980, la tasa de deserción escolar era de 76% en el medio rural (las estadísticas disponibles no establecen cifras específicas de los niños indígenas)

[5] Estos fueron realizados por dos personas sin formación académica en cinematografía, con una cámara y una unidad editora de 3 1/4 pulgadas.

[6] Esto se constituyó como una necesidad estratégica, pues los cursos de formación fueron limitados en el tiempo, condicionados a su vez por los recursos financieros del Programa; y por razones de las características culturales del aprendizaje, era necesaria la repetición de cursos sobre el mismo sujeto de aprendizaje.

[7] Este fue entre 1982 y 1984, pues cuando se produjo el ascenso de las nuevas autoridades en el país, el Ministerio de Educación canceló los convenios para la continuidad de la alfabetización quichua, pues el nuevo gobierno de carácter neo-liberal "no estaba interesado en éste tipo de educación reflexiva - crítica, y menos aún participativa..." (según la expresión del Ministro de Educación).

[8] Etimologicamente la palabra quichua "ñaupa" tiene una significancia de pasado y futuro, cuya síntesis es el tiempo presente.

[9] Se realizó un registro de un grupo Huorani que habita en la amazonía, cerca de la frontera con el Perú, y que constituyen un grupo nómade de cazadores y recolectores que se encuentra en un proceso de transición hacia la horticultura.

Between Fiction and Reality: Representation of Culture in Film - Ethnosemiotic Approach to Hungarian Cinema

Mihaly Hoppal, Ethnographic Institute, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest

1. An Ethnosemiotic Introduction

In a semiotic approach to culture, one of the basic premises is the statement that "the culture of every community is a totality of languages...(in other words) culture is characterized by a peculiar multilinguality." Consequently, the facts of culture are not merely signs, but peculiarly designated systems of signs - in other words, manifestations of a particular code or cultural idiom. We regard as the code of culture the mass of rules governing the arrangement of the material carriers of the message; while the message is the information transmitted by the sign-devices.

According to a pioneer of semiotic research, "the subject-matter of semiology is every sign-system, irrespective of its substance and limits: pictures, gestures, musical notes, objects and combinations of all these found in rituals and performances, elaborate public spectacles - which constitute, if not languages, significant systems." Semiotic researches carried out so far regarded as sign-systems, moreover, - to mention just a few of the countless examples - the following phenomena: dress, gestures, facial expressions, proxemics, comics, club insignias, uniforms, spoken language, music, etiquette, totem poles, poetry, novels, ballads, film, rites, proverbs, jokes, advertisements, prayers, sacrifice, carnival (...), pictures, intonation, road signs, colours etc. Some researchers term these cultural phenomena as *systems of signs*, others call them *codes*, and still others refer to them as *texts* or simply *languages*. Semiotic literature in Hungary uses these terms alternately.

However, one thing they all agree on is that the above phenomena are made suitable for carrying meanings precisely by this property, that they are all characterized by an internal order of the elements. It is the institutionalized arrangement (e.g. the order of sounds within words or the order of steps in a dance) that makes understanding possible. The code is a convention evolved by the collective - a convention functioning as a system of rules of transformation and used by members of the collective to arrange the elements when they wish to create a communication of some sort. The particular sets of coding rules are intended to produce only particular types of texts. The understanding of a given cultural text begins, in fact, with a knowledge, and with the use of these rules, the rules of coding. In ethnosemiotics, special importance adheres to the concepts of code and coding - that is the conclusion suggested by the works of some prominent semioticians.

It must be clearly seen that in culture it is not the individual signs, but always the plurality and juxtaposition of sign-systems and codes that carries the information. This pluricodality, i.e. the diversity of codes, serves the reliable transmission of the message. Thus, for instance, a folk song uses language and music, the singing voice, but it may also be accompanied by gestures. The parallel uses of the codes of culture, reinforcing one another, - recognition of which was one of the basic achievements of ethnosemiotics - increases to an incredible degree the reliability of the transmission of information, the communication, while at the same time making any analysis of cultural phenomena immensely difficult.

The complex cultural texts can only be understood with the help of several types of code. The matter is further complicated by the fact that any single type of text organized in this complicated way is still but a single code in the whole of a culture, in other words, it is but one sub-system among many. As Soviet semioticians have formulated it, culture, from the semiotic standpoint, can be regarded as a hierarchy of different sign-systems, the sum total of different texts and the mass of the related functions - a mechanism that generates these texts. This same outlook appears in Eco's work, when he speaks of "systems of code systems" and "a process of unlimited semiosis", which ultimately helps one understand the "logic of culture". It is in the endless processes of the production, the constant reproduction of codes, their building on one another, that we can understand culture, and that is the theoretical concept, too, that provides the foundation for an ethnosemiotic analysis of the phenomena of folklore.

Every academic discipline strives to formulate its own metalanguage, and every academic discipline must possess a metatheory to help it talk about its subject. Perhaps the foregoing has sufficiently demonstrated that semiotics seems to be a useful metatheory for the anthropological sciences. As semiotics is the science of semiosis, it is the branch of semiotics dealing with the culturally determined sign processes that we call ethnosemiotics. Ethnosemiotics devotes special attention to the ethnic background of the signs and sign-systems confirmed by traditions. That is suggested by the first constituent of the compound, "ethno"; that is, ethnosemiotics embraces an interdisciplinary area that is part of *ethno*graphy and *semiotics* as well; thus it also belongs to a general theory of signs. Its task is to provide an analytical understanding of the sign processes in the domain of ethnographic and folklore phenomena, but, construed more widely, it considers all phenomena of culture as being in the nature of signs *sub specie semioticae*, as a type of the communication of meanings. Hence ethnosemiotics is the "vorschule" of a more broadly defined cultural semiotics.

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in this category - Jancsó, following the rules of the building of myth, operates with systems of repetitions that bring the possible world of his films near that ancient form of expression of mankind.

An American philosopher wrote, in the early '50s, about the art of the motion picture in general: "...the film is essentially a form of dreaming...The perceiver of the motion picture sees with the help of the camera. He replaces the dreamer in a totally objectified dream." Miklós Jancsó's dreams, myths, allegories and endless and motion rites are objectified visions that come to life with the help of the props if national culture (eg. melodies and dance steps recognizable to everyone, as well as gestures, cockades, peacocks and pigeons,and, most of all, *horses*).

This is the place to mention that, of the socialist countries, only in the Soviet Union have there been made a few films which approach the national roots in a way similar to that seen in Hungarian films. A case in point is Yuriy Ilyenko's film "Black-Feathered White Bird", which won the grand prize at the Moscow Film Festival in 1971. (We note in parentheses that this film, full of beautiful images, is so authentic in presenting the life of the Sub-Carpathian ethnic group the Hustal that it could also be conceived of as a poetically inspired ethnographical document - for instance, in its representation of the interiors of houses or wedding customs or in its description of the belief myth of the goblin-chicken, a being bringing wealth, also known in Hungarian oral folklore.) Also belonging to this category are the Kirghiz films based on the novels of Chinghiz Aytmatov - namely "The First Teacher", Dzhamila" and "The White Boat", in that order. Finally, we must not forget about Tarkovsky's world-famous film "Andrey Rublyov", whose authentic scenes, precisely by their ruthless candour and bluntness, drew unjust charges from certain critics.

The aforementioned films attest that in every culture there is an internal mechanism at work aimed at ensuring the continuity of the system. Within the system it is the continuity of traditions that provides the "input" for the maintenance of similarity. According to the science of ethnography, it is the transmission and adoption of traditions, the phenomenon of "from father to son" and "from mouth to mouth", that ensures the continuity of cultures. In the whole of culture, particular cultural idioms may periodically come into prominence: in our own age, for instance, the film seems to be taking over the role of verbality.

By its very nature, culture is a continuous phenomenon. The periodic witchhunts or bookburnings are powerless to dam up a process that rolls between the banks of centuries, and which sometimes sweeps away those dams. The stream of culture is the vital element without which no single community can exist. It is no accident that precisely in our own days there is a revival of interest among many small peoples or collectives in the "roots" of their traditions - that is, a keenness to learn where the stream springs from.

Why this sudden and strong resurgence of interest? Because they have discovered that only traditions - and most of all, folklore - are capable of maintaining the community and the sense of belonging together. It is the common language, the common thoughts, the identical associations, the common symbols and meanings that give members of the group the sense of belong to the community, the consciousness of *identity*. The consciousness of 'Who I am and where I belong', - in other words, a sense of security without which it is impossible to live and work. Which is one of the reasons why traditions need to be maintained.

notes

1. Lotman, 1970:8 and 1970:24
2. Barthes, 1967:9. "Semiology therefore aims to take in any system of signs, whatever their substance and limits; images, gestures, musical sounds, objects,and the complex association of all these, which form the content of ritual, convention or public entertainment: these constitute, if not languages, at least systems of signification."
3. Eco 1979:VIII.
4. Hoppál 1983.
5. Greimas 1973.
6. Uspenskij et al. 1973:5.
7. Eco 1974:117, and Eco 1975.
8. Stepanov 1971.
9. Voigt 1971.
10. Bohannan 1972. /preprint p.24.
11. Lotman 1973:272
12. Posner 1988.
13. Uspenskij et al. 1973:17. "...Culture may be regarded as a hierarchy of

particular semiotic systems, as the sum of these texts and the set of functions correlated with them, or as a certain mechanism which generates these texts."
14. Lotman-Upsenskij 1971.
15. Yamaguehi 1988.
16. Ruby 1982:129.
17. Uspenskij et al. 1973:6-7.
18. Worth 1981:77. see Hojányi 1975.
19. Posner 1988. /in the preprint manuscript p.30./
20. Hoppál 1972,1975.
21. A Magyar Film Iroda R. Film és Fotókatalóguse /The Hungarian Film Office Limited/ A catalogue of films and photographs./ Budapest, 1930.
22. For more information about the fifties see Hoppál 1972.
23. Nemskürty 1974:199-203.
24. MacDougall 1978:406.
25. For a report on the series see Hoppál 1975.
26. Moldován 1986.
27. MacDougall 1978:406.
28. A magyarság Néprajza IV:325. Budapest, 1934.
29. Biró 1982. On the problem of mythology as a sign system see Hoppál 1977.

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Ethnography and the Politics of Interpretation

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1. A crisis of representation and a politics of interpretation.

Cultural anthropology's contribution to the study of communication in cross-cultural contexts needs to be re-assessed in light of recent debates within the discipline concerning the nature of the ethnographic record and its ways of constructing and organizing our knowledge of the Other. The following review and discussion of the literature represents a programmatic note on the significance of this debate for students of visual anthropology and ethnographers of communication practices. I will attempt to outline some of the key questions I see forming within anthropology and suggest how they might revise our understanding of the processes of contact and change among aboriginal cultures in Canada, especially the introduction and appropriation of new cultural forms and communication practices. At the culmination of at least two decades of internal critique and revision of anthropology's project in a post-colonial world, is the recognition of a crisis of representation and the need for a politics of interpretation. This politics would apply both to the practice of anthropology and its conception of its object. Much of the recent debate, part of an engagement with post-structuralism, revolves upon the question of cultural interpretation and ethnographic authority. A re-examination of the conditions of interpretation impinges upon the understanding of contemporary aboriginal cultures and cultural practices in two ways. In the first case, the whole history of the analysis, explication and 'translation' of non-Western cultures is made problematic by exposing the relations of domination within which the interpreting subject and passive cultural object have been embedded.

The second case in which a 'politics of interpretation' needs to be formulated involves the negotiation of meaning from specific cultural practices and texts in cross-cultural contexts. Ethnography, in situations of cultural contact and change, needs to explore the extent to which a shared material culture and symbolic vocabulary can produce radically divergent meanings for members of different cultures. The incorporation of imported technologies, artifacts and cultural products into aboriginal culture is often done in a way which sustains the internal coherence of that culture. An adequate politics of interpretation needs to look to the continuities and multiplicities of culturally produced meaning in situations of introduced change. These two related aspects of interpretive politics underpin much of the following discussion.

2. A deconstruction of ethnography

A review of major recent works in anthropology which deal with what has been called a 'crisis of representation' in the humanities and social sciences reveals the extent to which ethnographers have had to re-examine their representation and interpretation of non-Western cultures. This revision has been carried out in light of a trenchant post-structural critique of Enlightenment notions of a uniform and objective 'science of man', and of the global power networks within which the discursive practices of anthropology have been situated. Much of this critical work has been based on a re-reading and deconstruction of 'classical' ethnographies. This makes it imperative that any study of the cross-cultural meaning of images and texts first question the epistemic foundations upon which knowledge of that culture has been constructed. Representations of native culture from the authoritative positions of functionalist anthropology and social science need to be problematized and situated within the historical contexts of colonialism. This addresses the first aspect of a politics of interpretation mentioned above.

I have, through a selective reading of the literature, attempted to develop a perspective on the second sense in which I conceive of a politics of interpretation. Ethnography and cultural studies need to reformulate the object of their study, to understand aboriginal cultures as both contemporary and emergent and to see native identity as negotiated in the tension of tradition and transformation. Only then can it develop adequate models of how meaning is produced from media texts.

Perhaps some of the earliest significant critiques of ethnography (British social anthropology in particular) can be found in the 1973 collection edited by Talal Asad. The papers in this collection situate anthropology directly in its colonial context and all imply that the practice of functionalist ethnography depended on an unspoken power differential between the objective and disinterested 'observer' and his or her ethnographic subjects. Like a similar American anthology (Hymes, 1972), this critical intervention in anthropology must be situated in a general politicization of academics and the heightened awareness of neo-colonialism and imperialism characteristic of the period. Asad argues that anthropology has 'objectified' its knowledge of non-Western cultures in a way that is most easily accommodated to the conventional wisdom and rational biases of the West. In his paper in this collection Forster suggests that the disenchantment with functionalist ethnography stems from both political and theoretical shifts. The dismantling of the British empire, nationalist movements, modernization and 'development' in former colonies, and the exposure of links between anthropologists and the CIA, forced anthropologists to re-examine their methods. This was combined with a more general theoretical critique of functionalism and empiricism and their tendency to produce a behaviourist and normative focus, while ignoring potential conflicts and power relationships (Forster, 1973: 36) Feuchtwang develops this critique of functionalism further, relating it to participant observation; the privileging of the immediate experience of the fieldworker in cultural accounts. This, he suggests is the 'blindspot' of microsociological studies, the reconstruction of total social systems from small units, while in fact analytically ignoring the encompassing system of colonial administration. In anthropology's failure to analyze colonialism as a social structure, it reproduced the colonial hierarchy; "a colonial 'us' interpreting or representing a colonized 'them'." (Feuchtwang, 1973: 98) The authors in this anthology are relatively unanimous in rejecting functionalism's construction of an ahistorical 'essentialist synchrony' (Asad, 1973b: 113) in the description and interpretation of cultures. They suggest the possibility of an anthropology that is more relevant to the political realities of post-colonial peoples, while incorporating an analysis of the strategies of global domination and resistance.

More recent extensions of the theoretical revisions initiated in the seventies can be found in a representative collection of papers edited by James Clifford and George Marcus (1986). Focusing on the politics of ethnography, Clifford and his co-authors explore the implications of a crisis of representation for ethnography while taking up some of the more directly political concerns of Asad. Clifford suggests that ethnographic writing is determined in multiple ways; by context, rhetoric, institutional constraints, by the genre itself, politically and historically. To the extent that ethnography constitutes a Foucauldian 'regime of truth' it can no longer transparently speak for or represent other cultures in a timeless past, to see without being seen. This collection represents a move toward a situated or positioned ethnography and an emphasis on the conditions of its production. In this sense, culture is not a fixed entity to be definitively interpreted, but is 'contested, relational and emergent.'Ethnography must take its place in a multicultural world.

Marcus' paper in this volume is an attempt to illustrate how ethnography might help situate local cultures within global systems. Marcus points to the emphasis on the microsocial, the local and the everyday in several of the human sciences as evidence of ethnography's currency as method. He argues that ethnography is particularly adept at describing the imposition of macrosocial systems upon everyday life, though it has not traditionally done this. He cites Paul Willis' Learning to Labor as an example of the textual integration of macro and micro, but argues that Willis has not successfully shown that working class boys do articulate or act out an authentic critique of capitalism. Rather Marcus suggests that the critique is Willis' and his ethnographic material is used only when it supports that critique.

Paul Rabinow, in a paper that ties the current debates in ethnography to broader trends in social theory, locates the roots of the crisis of representation for anthropology in contemporary philosophy's (Wittgenstein, Heidegger and Dewey) rejection of epistemology and of a theory of representation. For Foucault this inspires a shift from the search for truth to an analysis of the conditions of truth and falsehood. Foucault treats epistemology and its concerns as social practices (power/knowledge). Rabinow argues that following Foucault, we need to anthropologize the West, to de-center its universal categories (epistemology and economy), to challenge philosophical and economic hegemony. Part of this process involves a conscious self-referentiality in the ethnographic text (or even in Clifford's meta-ethnographic text.) Rabinow is wary of the postmodern tendency to displace the social referent entirely in favour of pastiche. A crisis of representation cannot be solved by doing away with reference all together, the politics of interpretation in the discipline itself must be explored.

Rabinow points to attempts to shift discourse, like those of feminist anthropologists, as indicative of a self-referential, politically and ethically motivated movement. In this, Rabinow returns to a more politically motivated position like Asad's — discursive shifts derive from a shift in post-colonial political realities. A politically motivated position is a self-reflexive one that takes into account the imbalances between 'weak' and 'strong' languages and foregrounds the ideological and economic hegemonies within which the ethnographer is situated.

A recent attempt to undertake an explicit interpretive politics is Rosaldo's Culture and Truth. In his 'remaking of social analysis', Rosaldo argues that:

> The agenda for social analysis has shifted to include not only eternal verities and lawlike generalizations but also political processes, social changes, and human differences. Such terms as objectivity, neutrality and impartiality refer to subject positions once endowed with great institutional validity, but they are arguably neither more nor less valid than those of more engaged, yet equally perceptive, knowledgeable social actors. Social analysis must now grapple with the realization that its objects of analysis are also analysing subjects who critically interrogate ethnographers — their writings, their ethics and their politics. (1989, 21)

Through a critical re-reading of ethnographies, (his own and others) Rosaldo illustrates that a self-reflexive politics of interpretation explores not only how 'we see them', but also suggests how 'they see us'. For Rosaldo, as for Clifford, knowledge is relational; emanating not from one universal point of view but from the interaction of several different vantage points.

In The Predicament of Culture, Clifford presents a more focussed critique of the ethnographic 'position of authority' and attempts to situate ethnography within other literary and artistic discourses of the twentieth century. He raises crucial questions about the representation, translation and interpretation of cultures. The implication of the crisis of representation in Western human sciences for ethnography is displacement and off-centredness. Ethnography is uniquely situated between cultural meanings and is an intersubjective co-production of meaning between ethnographer and informant (Fabian, 1983.) Clifford argues that different cultures have been interpreted as deriving from traditions, which either 'resist or yield to the new, but cannot produce it'(1988: 5). Ethnography has to question this 'regime of authenticity', to rethink cultural identity as an inventive, as well as traditional, form. In arguing for non-essentialist forms of cultural politics, Clifford is also careful to emphasize the violent and degrading history of cultural contact between the West and its 'others'. Yet he insists that indigenous cultures are undergoing a process of transformation rather than extinction. His notion of 'emergent cultures' is similar to Rosaldo's conception of 'cultural borderlands', both ideas rest on the notion that indigenous cultures in a

post-colonial world are composites of traditional meanings and introduced practices.

For Clifford, the ethnographic mode of 'participant observation' represents a dialectic between experience and interpretation, with recent emphasis resting on the latter. Interpretive anthropology, as developed from the work of Geertz and Ricoeur, depends on the 'textualization' of culture. Unwritten behaviour, beliefs and traditions are separated out from an immediate situation, isolated and contextualized, taken as metonymic of the whole culture. This tendency has displaced ethnographic authority, to the extent that 'paradigms of experience and interpretation are yielding to discursive paradigms of dialogue and polyphony'(Clifford, 1988: 41). In the latter, informants are given names, intentions, 'autonomous textual space' (1988: 51).

Neither paradigm precludes the possibility of a variety of readings, both with and against the text. The fragmenting of the universal vantage point of 'objectivity' allows the recognition of a multiplicity of texts and voices within a text. The ethnographer's unifying voice is no longer the most dominant. Re-readings like Clifford's and Rosaldo's bring forward other submerged voices, create other possibilities for collected descriptions and quotations. The implications of this for ethnographic discourse is a 'socialization' of authority, the death of the sovereign individual author, the opening up of the text to a politically motivated interrogation.

Clifford is also critical of the traditional ethnographic construction of 'culture' founded on the notion of authenticity and on organic metaphors of survival, life and death. Such a construction tends to relegate non-Western people to the past of an increasingly homogeneous humanity. He explores the problem of representation and interpretation of the other in his documentation of the struggle for tribal identity in Mashpee. The Wampanoag's legal fight for tribal status is based on the same dichotomization of the other. It indicates the difficulty of defending a collective difference not based in costumes or props. The trial was an inquisition of cultural identity based on a notion of culture as having recognized boundaries and continuity, not as a product of revival and reinvention. Clifford rejects the organic conception of cultural identity in favour of one that allows contradictions, mutations or emergences. "Metaphors of continuity and 'survival ' do not account for complex historical processes of appropriation, compromise, subversion, masking, invention and revival" (1988: 339). In this sense Indian identity could be a real yet contested phenomenon, internally defined and redefined, not a continuously documented objective fact. The ability to comprehend and analyze these internal definitions requires a politics of interpretation that allows them to speak for themselves.

3. Issues for cross-cultural media studies.

From a reading of the literature reviewed above, I would draw several key components of an interpretive approach relevant to the cross-cultural study of communication. This approach has been characterized as post-modem ethnography (Tyler, 1986) where 'post-modern' implies a rejection of the Enlightenment notion of a fixed, uniform and objective analytic position. At the same time, I would argue that a properly post-modem social theory must adopt a self-reflexive politics rather than eschew politics completely.

i. The first key component of this framework is a notion of cultural difference, based not on essential, traditional, and static qualities but on emergent, modem and dynamic ones. In other words, a model that looks at the transformation of cultures rather than their extinction. This entails a clear rejection of an Enlightenment or humanist paradigm of cultural difference that is founded on an assumption of universal similarity: where narratives of difference depend on an abstract plane of similarity (Clifford), where the past is interpreted in terms of the present (Foucault), and where the other is always a reflection of the self/same (Spivak). This concept of cultural difference also depends on a recognition of the contradictions involved in the culture contact situation. It cannot be conceived as an integrated set of forces and processes, but as set of multiple and conflicting determinations. The conditions of cultural difference lie in multiple combinations of history, social structure, material conditions and ecological adaptations.

ii. A second and related aspect of the theoretical tenets explored above is the tension between authentic and emergent cultural forms. The emergent culture is synthetic, future-oriented, based in relative differences. The authentic culture is bounded, traditional, based in essential differences. Yet these categories need not be mutually exclusive. Cultural identity might be formed in the dialectical relation between them.

iii. The third theoretical element I would draw from the material reviewed here is a shift from a crisis of representation to a new politics of interpretation. Following Rabinow, I would argue that the post-modern tendency to deny the possibility of reference needs to be avoided in favor of a thorough critique of the epistemological categories and disciplinary modes of the human sciences. A politics of interpretation demands of the text; who speaks? from what discursive/ political position? from what cultural context? This implies that ethnographic authority is primarily social, not individual, and embedded in the discursive practices of colonialism/ capitalism. Boon might suggest that this requires the re-incorporation of anthropological irony, its shifting positions and contrasting points of view. (1982, 16)

iv. Finally, a politics of interpretation has methodological implications. The unwritten counterpart of postmodern ethnography is postmodern fieldwork — still largely terra incognita. Clearly, fieldwork must involve the recording of multiple voices and the possibility of multiple readings. A self-reflexive ethnography like Briggs' (1970) account of her stay with an Uktu Inuit family or Rabinow's Reflections on Field Work in Morocco (1977) consistently places the author's own interpretation of a situation in contrast to the imagined or voiced interpretation of her informants. A situated ethnography might be described as a coincidence of personal and social histories; the ethnographer's and her subjects' (Guillemin, 1975). It can only be put forth as a partial truth. Fieldwork tries to fix a point on a continuum, to capture the cultural, the semiotic, the synchronic, the structural, the relations of meaning, from a continuous flow of history (Foucault, 1984: 114.) In this respect, the ethnographic method must move beyond the experiential mode of participant observation and appropriate the interpretive devices of literary criticism, and the analytic tools of history.

4. Conclusion

I have attempted here to draw some tentative connections between a recent critical debate in anthropology and a particular set of issues in cultural politics. My discussion of this area of has suggested a critique of some of its foundations in post-structuralism, following those of Rabinow and those of critics like Said (1983) and Spivak. For Spivak, the limitation of post-structuralism lies in its failure to recognize how the humanist subject of Western discourse "belongs to the exploiter's side of the international division of labor" (1988b: 280). Even the insistence on a discursively constituted subject depends on the reproduction and exclusion of the 'Other of Europe'.

While the potential explanatory/interpretive power of these new directions in cultural anthropology is significant, they might further benefit from an integration with other approaches such as neo-marxist models of political economy and ideology (Nelson and Grossberg, 1988). Yet it is ethnography's focus on cultural specificity that makes it a comprehensive and flexible, if not definitive, theoretical tool for understanding the development of aboriginal culture and communication.

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New Challenges for Visual Anthropology

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With visual anthropology developing a professional profile in a number of academic institutions, questions of ethics and methods remain at the heart of its theory and practice. These questions have always defined the central concerns of visual anthropology though recently the answers have had to negotiate necessarily complex and sometimes difficult terrain. I consider this article to be a contribution to these debates and to offer some recognition of the challenging work in this field.

Part I: The Greater Perspective

Francis Kelly: Good Morning everyone. My name is Francis Jupurrurla Kelly from Yuendumu. I work at Warlpiri media. I have to introduce Grant Japananga. I have to put him on first to talk.

Grant Granites: Hello there. I am Grant Japananga Granites of the Warlpiri tribe. There are two sections of Warlpiri: The desert people and the hill people. My father is a desert (person) and my mother is a hill (person). There are two different names: Waneiga and Wamberal(Walmalla) - hill people and desert people. We do a lot things for kids. Keep the kids out of trouble. And...take old people out to the country...and we do video for kids - a kind of sesame street...and now I'll pass it back to Francis Kelly.

F. Kelly: Thank you Grant. Yesterday a lady mentioned that in our language Dharug, means "great, great grandmother. That's in our language - Dharug means land of our mother's mother. I have to say about Warlpiri Media's history - Well Warlpiri media's history started from their own people...because they're worried about their culture mainly kids concern about future. Warlpiri media started in 1983 probably same time as Emabella - that's South Australia. Ideas didn't come from Europeans, it came from themselves in the community.. because the satellite went up and that time if we been too light for our culture we wanted to say something against the satellite or against television in our territories. People gather up - they were really fair dinkum about this television and we

had no gear - meaning video camera and all that. We rang up ABC in Melbourne but they had only a black and white one which they didn't want so they sent it down to us. The bloke who worked with us - his name was Eric Michaels. He is no longer with us. He passed away. He worked for the Institute for Aboriginal Studies in Canberra. He supported us and we were working under a contract with the Institute for Aboriginal Studies. And for Warlpiri media we didn't get any money for it. The community decided to chuck in for it. Everybody put money towards it themselves. They made about 10 grand - everybody chucked in - the buildings were from their own money. The store allocated 3 grand as a donation. We finally got buildings up and the gear. We were thinking and saying on the language, culture, law and sharing. The language is the most important - whether it be English, French, Italian - they are important - not only our language. And the culture is the same - and the law - we have to obey the two laws - one is European law another is our law - we have to obey these two laws and join them sometimes. Another is about sharing things - Aboriginal people always share things and talk about those things and talk about which is the right way - the better way for the future. Another thing I have to talk about with the law - about media groups - the filmmakers. If filmmakers come to our community they have to obey our laws and rules and regulations. If he doesn't he has to leave the community. The law is about filmmaker's contract. He has to sit down with our media board members and discuss what he can shoot and what he cannot shoot. And the media person has to be with the film groups just in case. And if he finishes his contract, when he leaves he has to pay the contract. The contract for that media is about $200 to enter our community. Before the film goes to air we have to look at it first. If there is something we are not happy with we tell him to cut it off. If he refuses we take him to court. That is our policy.And last I have to talk about what Grant referred to : our sesame street. What we call in our language Manyuwana. - Children's Playground - We'll look at it. It's in our language.

(Shows videos) Thanks a lot for paying attention. Thanks a lot for everyone."[1]

Francis Jupurrurla's and Grant Japananga's address (quoted from a transcript above) was delivered at a community media conference held recently in Western Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. The substance of the presentation had its force in their video productions of which their verbal introductions were only a small part.

The emergence of Aboriginal media in Central Australia is now well documented (see F. Ginsburg's article, *Indigenous Media in Aboriginal Central Australia* in *CVA Review*, Fall, 1989). This emergence is part of a field of events, issues and contestations in and around the subject of *Aborigines* and the adjective, *Aboriginal*. The development or invention of Aboriginal media conveys within it the expression of contestation: the land and land rights, freedom of expression, human rights. In these claims nothing is stronger than the right to self-determination and its links to the demand that Aboriginal people should control the ways in which they are represented. Recently, for the most part, it means the control over the production and circulation of images. It implies that the practice of visual anthropology be closely aligned to the politics of representation. Indigenous representations suggest that visual anthropology must increasingly address questions of interpretation - to question and locate the means through which interpretations of indigenous media contribute to its goals of empowerment - and the repair of cultural identity.

A number of insights into current Aboriginal media production may be gleaned from these opening comments and their manner of presentation. First, the presentation is by *two* members of the Warlpiri Media Association. This conforms to Aboriginal protocols regarding performances. Two classes of performers are identified: *Kirda* and *Kurdungulu* roughly translated as owners and workers[2]. This complementary relationship guides the social organization and production of any performance. *Kirda* (related through the father) have the rights to perform (i.e. tell or dance a story) but only in the presence of *Kurdungulu* (related through the mother). The *Kurdungulu* have the responsibility to witness and authorize the telling, and to ensure its correct performance. When Francis Kelly says in reference to Grant Granites that "he has to put him on first to talk" which is then followed by a brief statement by Grant, the roles suggested by *Kirda* and *Kurdungulu* are being played out in that moment. One finds these same protocols guiding video production. In this way they offer a clue to the ensuing performance of their video production - that the social and cultural formations that authorize the video make its content subservient to these protocols.

That said, the extreme reluctance to offer verbal or other explanations of their work bespeaks an important feature of Aboriginal social and cultural life - that the intricate body of knowledge that would be explanatory of cultural practices is rarely made available in whole or in part. In point of fact, individuals can only

offer fragments of fragments of explanations - knowledge being a socially divisible commodity - distributed and shared according to laws which constrain the management of information in a predominantly orally based system of communication exchange. As within modern media systems, what is not said is more significant than what is. The difference is that the demarcations between the permissible and the taboo are fluid - you can subject television production to the general community laws (avoidance rules, kinship divisions of labour) but you must also devise strategies to cope with non-indigenous forms of intervention. This frequently takes the form of an interpretation by a non-Aboriginal person. A difficult bind ensues in which the offer of a counter interpretation by an Aboriginal person is necessarily lacking because of the strictures governing knowledge secrecy but nonetheless necessary to counter the authority of non-Aboriginal interpretations. The strategy then is to offer something - preferably an explanation (of a work of art or a cultural practice) that satisfies the preconceived ideas held by non-Aboriginal persons about Aboriginal art and culture - enough at least to mollify both the desire for knowledge and interpretative authority.

An example from the medium of painting exemplifies this point. "Bush-plum Dreaming" is a painting I purchased from Francis Jupurrurla Kelly. It is executed in the Warlpiri style of a "sloppy" dot painting - dot painting being a style from the Western Desert made famous at Papunya. Warlpiri painting is both derivative of and distinctive from Papunya painting. (See Michaels, E., *Bad Aboriginal Art*, Art and Text, 28, March-May, 1988.) Prior to its purchase, Francis gave a brief presentation to a gathering of a mainly white audience extrapolating the "meaning" of some of the graphic elements of the painting. Again the brevity and economy of his commentary suggests a reluctance to travel the length and breadth of his experience. Despite this, the explanations assigning meanings to various marks and patterns on the canvas carried much weight. It was especially revealing to discover that the artist's (Francis Jupurrurla) point-of-view was that of someone high above the ground. The appearance of flatness given by the painting orients the viewer to two rather than three dimensions. The markings in their abstractions were said to reflect features of a landscape, kinship groupings, and traditional (Warlpiri) stories about migrations and conflicts. As part of the artist's discourse about his own work these explanations were sufficient to satisfy the desire for an explanation that would in an important way detract from any tendency towards ethnocentrism in the interpretation of the painting. Questions regarding the meaning of the painting remained nonetheless and further attempts to explore these questions after I purchased the painting were unproductive.

My need to have these explanations were as much a part of the exchange protocol as they were a pursuit of knowledge about Aboriginal art and cultural practice. Eventually, understanding the limitations placed on the explanations offered about the painting replaced the desire for knowledge about the painting itself.

In the terms of analytical theorising, it suggests a move from looking at the substantial elements of a cultural practice to the conditions of its production, distribution and especially its recuperation by an interpretative community or communities — a kind of ethnography of communication. These conditions may then be read back into a renewed appreciation of the practice or problem under consideration.

The Aboriginal development of television in Central Australia focused attention on precisely this issue of interpretation. Francis Jupurrurla as a founding Warlpiri videomaker was and is an important figure for the bulk of the research executed at Yuendumu, a Warlpiri speaking community south of Alice Springs. This research frequently centred on the specific Warlpiri constraints on TV production: kinship and the land converged in *Jukurrpa* - sometimes translated as the Law - a body of traditional knowledge that encodes its cosmology in performance (dance, story, and song). The Law is a kind of communications network. Using time and space it binds communities and thereby sustains cultural inheritance. In Eric Michaels book, *For A Cultural Future*,[3] a section on *Restricted Expressions* suggests how the Law or *Jukurrpa* gets translated into certain conventions. These are worked upon, invented and altered in the process of video production to ensure that video is as much of the culture as it is representation for the cultural fabric.

The key questions regarding the understanding of Aboriginal video are addressed by Michaels as a transcultural problem. In an essay entitled, *Bad Aboriginal Art* the term, "bad art" is considered an ethnocentric value judgement - a tendency in the non-Warlpiri appreciation of paintings and video. This is generally expressed as an urge to see it purged of unnecessary detail. Michaels' response was to emphasize the social practices which produce and circulate these

works rather than attempt to evolve an "independent" aesthetic system that would, in any case, be highly problematic. The intersection of non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal discourses on Aboriginal media production also may produce a highly corrosive effect on indigenous authority in the interpretation of these documents for the communities in question. Competing interpretations of ceremonies or performances spawn contradictory systems of authority that would normally guarantee the authenticity of the performances. It can result in disastrous consequences when too many discourses can abrogate the Law. Indeed the whole point of supporting localized indigenous media practice is to protect the viability of the Law and to have it reproduced in all of its manifestations. The stakes are great enough to specify what might be called "Bad Aboriginal TV" - TV in which the terms of indigenousness are appropriated by individuals and institutions unsympathetic to the values they claim to represent.

There is a radicalization of this position implied by Michaels' occasional provocations based on exploitative versions of "Aboriginality" ("...It is Aboriginality that will destroy Aborigines..."[4]).

The management of information and knowledge in traditional cultures long struggling with and within dominant European societies suggests ethnographic approaches that would be informed by a history of communications - particularly in the manner suggested by the literature on emergent technologies and the epistemologies they invoke as both the objects and conditions of knowledge production[5] . Indigenous epistemologies embodied in art and texts are also in need of emergent methodologies. Aboriginal painting and television appear to mediate an old problem (semiotics of difference) and a new one (semiotics of authenticity). Visual anthropology must be a flexible discourse in the confrontation with these kinds of problems and practices. The initial reflections on Warlpiri media by Michaels were extensions of the Whorfian hypothesis - an approach rooted in earlier visual anthropological research by Worth and Adair. By the time *For A Cultural Future* is written the discourses of not only cultural anthropology, but art history, communications theory, and post-modern aesthetics are invoked - but not exhausted by the problems under consideration.

In Michaels' quest for an adequate interpretative model, the semiotics of difference and authenticity are collapsed: The features of Warlpiri TV designated as different are also unique and original. Nothing can really be compared to Warlpiri media (or other Aboriginal media). The differences are themselves the evidence for their uniqueness. Their uniqueness is the basis for their authenticity. But it is not a discourse of authenticity that Michaels is seeking to install.

Anticipating the tautology of this model, Michaels stresses an extreme localism in the interpretation of Warlpiri TV and a refusal to deal in the currency of "authenticity". Unique conventions are not meant to be generalized beyond their immediate use. Conditions of production present, instead, a determinate relation between text and context. In bridging the Law and the future ("historical time") Warlpiri media radicalizes the interpretative model because it implies a "direct" representation of the world - an equation between media institution and "content". The media studies canon cannot accept this kind of equation but in raising the example of Warlpiri media in this manner the question of interpretative values is linked to a profound skepticism of any attempt to administer the meaning of Aboriginality.

In the comments quoted earlier, Francis Jupurrurla Kelly suggests having to conform to two laws - Warlpiri and European. He then goes on to spell out the protocols governing the work of European filmmakers in Yuendumu.

The existence of protocols like these have been elaborated in a text compiled by Lester Bostock - an Aboriginal film and television producer and radio broadcaster living in Sydney. The text is titled *The Greater Perspective: A guideline for the production of film and television on Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders*.[6] Published by SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) an Australian government television network dedicated largely to "ethnic" programming, *The Greater Perspective* is a response to the many abuses exacted by white filmmakers and television producers on Aborigines in Australia. The guidelines are based on 5 principles:

1. Program makers should challenge their own prejudices and stereotyped beliefs about Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

2. An Aboriginal view of Aboriginal issues is preferable to a non-Aboriginal view.

3. Where non-Aborigines produce programs, they should do so in consultation with Aborigines; particularly those that are the subjects of the programs.

4. Dealings with the subjects of programs should be conducted with honesty and the subjects should be fully informed of the consequences of any proposed agreement.

5. No damage should be done to Aboriginal land or property, nor to the subjects of programs.

It is noteworthy that in both remote locales (Yuendumu) and densely populated areas Aborigines have insisted on the protection of indigenous rights and intellectual property and that a government broadcaster (albeit a marginal one) has supported this intervention as part of its explicitly anti-racist stance.

More recently, Michaels' provocations have been extended by John Von Sturmer's review of image production of and for Aborigines in an article entitled: *Aborigines, Representation, Necrophilia* in *Art and Text*, (32, Autumn, 1989). Von Sturmer is skeptical of projects that take up the interest of "control" despite the good ideological intentions that are implicit in the process. In this case, the example he refers to is the book, *After 200 Years: Photographs of Aboriginal and Islander Australia Today*, Penny Taylor, editor, (Canberra:Aboriginal Studies Press, 1988). Assuming control of the image production process on the one hand and limiting the harm that may ensue on the other are, for Von Sturmer, two very different matters. No amount of consultation and community input can decide the consequences that arise out of the circulation of photographic meaning. Here, the politics of representation may mislead - may disguise the absence of engagement with the external world by the images themselves in exchange for a strict protocol regarding their production. By comparison, Von Sturmer embraces a photographic project, *Portraits From An Uninhabited Land*, Nicholas Adler (Sydney, Bantam Press, 1988) that on first appearances would seem to be reproducing the worst elements of colonial voyeurism. These photographs place the subject against a black backdrop. No sense of the subject's social world is contained within the frame. The subject is made to submit to the camera's eye while directly addressing it. Von Sturmer's assessment of this project values the reflexivity of the relationship between subject and camera eye in which the viewer of the photograph is met and acknowledged by the subject. Despite the individualism these images appear to promote, Von Sturmer sees them as embracing a "permanent presentness" differentiating them from the romantic pasts and futures suggested by similar photographic projects of an earlier period. In a claim that bears close similarity to the photographic project of German photographer August Sander, Von Sturmer suggests that the individuation of a person in this manner of presentification invokes the categorization of the personality as against the cult of personality - a distinction which Sander communicated through his photographs and which the Nazis, in their condemnation of his work, understood all too well. Von Sturmer's "review" moves on to the social-psychoanalytical terrain that desires to reconstruct Aboriginality - a project which he sees as doomed to compulsively repeat the specularization of Aborigines in terms that can only be destructive to Aboriginal society. Here, for Von Sturmer, representation and interpretation have no *place* — no function and certainly no *being*. Because it is precisely a refusal - a resistance that is the impossibility of apprehending Aboriginal "communitas"; that is, in turn, the condition for its representation.

Confronted with this radicalization, the interpretive tools that are constitutive of visual anthropology appear to be sorely lacking. What are some of the possible alternatives?

With indigenous peoples taking responsibility for the repair of the broken lines of their cultural identities, the debates concerning an adequate interpretative model may seem to have been bypassed by more pressing needs. Visual anthropology it would seem, must engage with the philosophical moment that calls into question its positivism.[7] If invention is a theme that more adequately describes the media representation of and by Aborigines, it may well be the only term that is feasible for reconceptualizing visual anthropology today.

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Part II: Brecht In Bangkok

"One can say with total security that there is nothing fortuitous about the fact that the critique of ethnocentrism-the very condition of ethnology-should be systematically and historically contemporaneous with the destruction of the history of metaphysics."

- Jacques Derrida

Though Dennis O'Rourke has consistently rejected the label of visual anthropologist or ethnographic filmmaker, his films frequently pertain to persons and groups regarded as the subjects of these kind of films. His inventions frequently comment on the European Imaginary - and in this way suggest an alternative to the idealization of objects that so saturates the ethnographic model. Like Michaels, O'Rourke does not resist the ethnocentrism that forms the objective bias guiding all filmmaking by Europeans of ethnographic Others. To the extent that many of O'Rourke's films were implicit soliloquies and (inverted) self-portraits, it would not be surprising then to find himself explicitly as a subject - immersed in a tourism of his own design; a tour that visits the inner reaches of the self and through various modalities of communication contributes to the explanation of human history.

Notes

1 Jupurrurla, Francis & Japananga, Grant, *Warlpiri Video Today*, Changing Channels: Western Sydney Community Media Conference, University of Westrem Sydney, Nepean July 16-18, 1990.

[2] Maddock suggests that many misunderstandings arise in relation to these terms, derived as they are from European social organization and prone to be taken too literally. Maddock, K., Your Land is Our Land, (Penguin, Ringwood: 1983), p. 51, 52.

[3] Michaels, E., For A Cultural Future: Francis Jupurrurla Makes TV At Yuendumu, Art and Criticism Monograph Series, Juan Davila and Paul Foss, eds, vol 3, Artspace, 1987.

[4] Michaels, E., Aboriginal Content: Who Got It? Who Needs It? Ethnographic Film Panel, Australian Screen Studies Association, (New South Wales Institute of Technology, Sydney, December, 1986.)

[5] See Cohen, H., Margins At the Centre: An Application of H. A. Innis' Theory of Bias to Aboriginal Media, *Continuum* (Forthcoming).

[6] Bostock, Lester, The Greater Perspective, (SBS, Redfern: 1990.)

[7]"One can say with total security that there is nothing fortuitous about the fact that the critique of ethnocentrism-the very condition of ethnology-should be systematically and historically contemporaneous with the destruction of the history of metaphysics."
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"Hot Technologies" and Canadian Inuit: An Ethnographic Overview from Clyde River, NWT

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Introduction

Probably no man-made feature of northern community topography is as striking to a first-time arctic visitor as are the satellite receiver dishes that dominate the outskirts of every Inuit settlement. In fact, probably no non-Native import, with the possible exception of the snowmobile, has provoked so much debate about its symbolic, if not actual, meaning for Inuit culture as has this new species of "arctic poppy".

It requires a bit of effort, therefore, to recall that less than twenty years have passed since the launch of Canada's ANIK satellite into geosynchronous orbit over the North introduced Inuit to what most of us consider the hallmark of the modern electronic era - television. Certainly for social scientists and commentators, the introduction of television into the North has provided as lively a topic of discussion as it ever has in the South, but with an added twist - namely what and how large are its acculturative effects.

This paper does not pretend to offer any definitive answer to such questions. Instead, its intent is to place television in its historical and social context in one community and, especially, to discern how it "fits" within the larger inventory of communications media that have become available to and are used by Eastern Arctic Inuit during the same period. Therefore, the body of this overview will focus on the experience of Clyde River, Baffin Island, where, since 1971, I have had the opportunity to watch Inuit access to electronic channels of communication grow in parallel to socio-cultural developments in the settlement. My approach will be decidedly historical and ethnographic, but the result, I hope, will: 1) place television within the context of all the "tools" that comprise the electronic era in the North; 2) provide a rationale for broadening investigations related to northern communications questions.

The Electronic North

While the development of electronic communications within the Canadian North, primarily for military and government use, long predates the 1971-1991 period discussed here, interest in the effect of publically accessible media is a post-1970 phenomenon. And, to judge by the body of literature that has been devoted to media communications in the North, the dominant theme has very much been the socio-cultural and political benefits and costs of television for Inuit (see, for instance, O'Connell 1975; Charron and Valaskakis 1982).

With regard to these cost-benefits, the communications literature is virtually unanimous - television, because of its southern cultural content presented in a predominently non-Native voice, represents a direct threat to Inuit cultural stability. Graburn (1982: 7) makes this point in the most explicit words,

In the final analysis, television in the Artic (sic) not only reinforces the use of English as a first language, but also has become an instrument for slow assimilation and hence for cultural ethnocide.

In like manner, Valaskakis (1982) notes that the electronic media in the North has generally served the needs of change agencies and, thus, heightened non-Native political-cultural control.

Not surprisingly, therefore, most northern media studies agree with Stenbaek-Lafon's (1982) conclusion that if Inuit are to be masters of their own fate, they must first master their own media. When positive effects are attributed to northern media by outside observers, it is almost always with regard to advances, great or small, in Native broadcasting (see Stenbaek 1987: 304).

There is much to be said about the way indigenous organizations, like the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (IBC), Targramiut Nipingat (TNI) and the communications societies in Labrador and the Inuvialuit area, are gradually expanding an Inuit influence over the programing that enters northern homes. However, to limit any analysis to this single medium is to overlook the ways Inuit have adapted a spectrum of communication forms to their needs. ANIK I's appearance in 1972 and, hence, the availability of live television to the North is just one reference point in understanding the adaptive relationship that has developed between Inuit and hot electronic media.

Clyde River, N.W.T. - An Overview

Clyde River (*Kangiqllugaapik*) is populated by some 530 predominently *Iglulingmiut*-speaking Inuit and is located on the east-central coast of Baffin Island (70°27"N,68°36"W). Although local Inuit contact with Europeans can be traced to the early years of the last century (Parry 1821), Clyde settlement history differs only in a few particulars from that of most Eastern Arctic communities. In broad outline, modern Clyde exists because of two non-Inuit initiatives: 1) the presence of a Hudson's Bay Company post at Patricia Bay since 1923; and, 2) Canada's post-war (ca. 1950-1965) policy of Inuit relocation (Duffy 1988).

Additionally, several events peculiar to Clyde are of note. The first is that in 1942 the United States Army Air Corps chose to site a weather station adjacent to the HBC post. The U.S. presence, continued in the postwar by the Canadian Ministry of Transport, introduced two-way radio communications to the region. And, in the mid-1950s, the U.S. Coast Guard built a navigation post at Cape Christian, roughly 14 km distant from Clyde, allowing relatively reliable year-round air access. Before these installations, communication to and from Clyde was by sled-transported mail and the annual visit of the resupply ship.

The 1960s brought the first major change in the local communications situation. It was during these years that Clyde Inuit first acquired battery-powered shortwave radio receivers and, until the late 1970s, the main means by which they heard word of the outside world. During this period, Clyde also, as part of its basic government infrastructure, had limited radiotelephone (GNWT) and telex (M.O.T.) service.

Radiotelephone (two one-half hour daily transmissions), telex (reserved for M.O.T. and GNWT use), and problematic monthly airborne mail delivery formed all the means of two-way communications at Clyde until 1978 when satellite-assisted, direct dial telephone service became available. In 1980, satellite television was voted upon locally and introduced to the community. Internal communications experienced an important pre-telephone development when, circa 1975, a community-based FM radio transmitter came on-line, allowing, for the first time, direct access by Clyde residents to local information and opinion in Inuktitut.

Two other post-1980 communications developments which have had local significance should also be noted in this overview. The first is the appearance of self-contained video recorders and cameras in Clyde around 1982-3. The other is the use of single-side band short wave transmitter-receivers. Both of these, but especially the latter, have markedly improved local communications among Clyde Inuit.

Clyde Inuit and the Media: 1971-1991

The Early 1970s:

Before I ever arrived in Clyde River in 1971, I was made aware of the limits of the regional communications system when I tried to contact the community by mail concerning my research. Despite having written to the settlement manager six weeks in advance, my letter and I arrived in Clyde on the same airplane.

Postal service, both incoming and outgoing, was sporadic, with several months often elapsing between "scheduled" aircraft. However, while *Qallunaat* were essentially dependent on the regular post for all but emergency or government contact, when the radiophone or telex were used, Inuit maintained frequent written contact between Clyde and Aqviqtiuq, the other community in the region, and with Pond Inlet and Broughton Island, the next nearest settlements on the coast, via hand-carried letters.

These notes, usually sent to relations, allowed Clyde Inuit to stay reasonably abreast of developments among the settlements. News was most often exchanged about the availability of food products - for instance, after one large kill of narwhal, the Inuit at Aqviqtiuq sent word by note to their kinsmen in Clyde River to come north for *maktaaq*, while another time, relatives in Iglulik sent word to Clyde that a supply of *igunaaq* had been dispatched. Other information communicated by letter while I lived at Aqviqtiuq concerned the willingness of the new HBC manager to extend credit, the comparative merits between myself and another anthropologists residing near Pond Inlet, birth and death announcements, and, on one occasion, a note in Inuktitut to the HBC store manager to apply surplus funds accumulated by the Aqviqtiuq people toward the purchase of a new outboard engine.

This informal mail system was often enhanced through the use of home tape recordings. It was generally felt at Clyde that taped messages were a superior means of learning "Inuit news", but written letters far outnumbered tape record-

ings as the main means of communicating between Aqviqtiuq and Clyde River. This was to no small account due to the relative scarcity and brief lifespan of batteries in the camp environment. While it would be an overstatement to say that written and taped letters played a crucial role in Clyde intersettlement communication in the 1970s, the degree to which mail was used in the region was surprising.

While this modest, irregular postal system worked relatively well for local news, shortwave radio receivers allowed Inuit at Clyde River and in camp to keep some track of the wider world. Especially important were announcements, broadcast by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Northern Service, about the scheduled arrival of the summer supply ship, or sea lift. This was because absence from the community at this time meant being unable to assist in the unloading and, thus, the loss of potential wages. While individuals generally earned about $50.00 during the two to four days of the vessal's stop, the money earned by a household could easily be the equivalent of several weeks of land activities.

CBC and shortwave service from Greenland, either Kalaaliit Nunaata Radioa or U.S. Armed Forces Radio, also filled a need for wider news. In Clyde River, where a number of younger Inuit spoke and understood English, CBC was a popular source. More generally, the several times daily Inuktitut summaries of news and events allowed non-English speakers, the majority of Clyde and Aqviqtiuq Inuit, to have touch with wider events. Radio Greenland's Sunday broadcasts of church services were avidly listened to at Aqviqtiuq in the absence of a local missionary.

The import of shortwave radio on local Inuit external perception is attested to by an occurance in 1974. I returned to Clyde that year to conduct interviews for the Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project (Freeman 1976). Clyde had received little information about the purpose and goals of the project and I was concerned about the level the community would be prepared to participate.

I embarked on my interviews by explaining how the ILUOP might advance land claims in the N.W.T. To my surprise, the first two elders I visited spontaneously related the need for recording such information to events then occurring in James Bay between the Government of Quebec and Nouveau-Quebec Inuit. According to them, they had learned of events to the south through radio and saw potential parallels in the situation of Inuit in the Territories. Ultimately, no further introduction to the project was needed for the duration of the research.

The Arrival of Television and Telephone:

As noted earlier, telephone service began in Clyde River in 1978, followed two years later by television. While the second is usually the focus of communications technology and acculturation research, my experience at Clyde suggests that telephone, at least as much as television, has had a distinct social impact in the community. Again, I will use a descriptive approach to support this contention.

While the telephone and television arrived in Clyde at almost the same time, the importance of the telephone to Inuit has to no small degree been obscured by our own closely-held image of T.V. as the "hot medium". While it is true that television, since its introduction, has become a ubiquitous furnishing in Clyde homes and that it is "on" virtually every hour of the day and night, the amount of attention given to what appears on the screen seems, in general, to have noticeably declined over the last ten years.

A. Television:

When television made its debut in the settlement, the fear expressed by some observers in other parts of the North (Gardner 1977, Personal Communication) that T.V. meant the demise of community radio seemed well-taken. Even the prediction that television spelled the end of inter-household visiting seemed not far off the mark. In Clyde, the first Inuit owners of sets certainly became the foci of all community visiting; a condition that was short-lived as more households came to possess a T.V. Within a year or so, television's presence in the village was 99% complete.

To say that television viewing in Clyde was indiscriminant in its early days, given the availability of just one channel (today there are two), would be a gross understatement. Nevertheless, and despite a lack of demographic data, there are ethnographic characteristics of Inuit T.V. viewing that must be considered before the strict acculturation perspective presented in the topical literature (as in Graburn

1982; Valaskakis 1982) can be accepted. It is in this spirit that the following is offered.

At Clyde, there has been a clear change in the programs Inuit "watch" on television and the way these are viewed. From 1980 through, roughly, 1983 or 1984, television was a constant accompaniment to virtually all household activities. People of all ages, unless away from the settlement, seemed to be "glued" to their T.V.'s. Only at midnight, when CBC's programming ended, were sets shut off. More importantly, most people, young and old, appeared to be attentive to the images that appeared on the screen.

Finally, as the number of sets proliferated across the village, there seemed to be a marked decline in inter-household visiting, previously the main form of largescale social interaction. In these years, reality in Clyde very much appeared to approximate the worst case acculturation scenario often defined in northern communications research.

Since 1984, perhaps because my own research has kept me more village-bound, it appears that there have been subtle, but important, changes in the pattern of Clyde Inuit television viewing. The foremost is that there seems to have been a local melding of two communication forms, satellite television and community radio, that have appeared since 1975. While the T.V. still glows in village homes, more and more the images on-screen compete with CBC's Inuktitut language radio broadcasts from Iqaluit and Clyde's own FM station for Inuit attention.

If anything, it would appear that community radio has regained it former place as the central medium that draws Inuit attention in Clyde River. Indeed, it is rare to find Inuit listening to the audio portions of most of the programs that flit across the television screen and, in the course of a day, it is mainly children who take pause to see what action is in progress. Every adult knows what is occurring in the village, region, and world via the radio; only a few can relate the latest event from "Dallas" or "The Beachcombers".

This is not to say that Clyde's Inuit have stopped watching television. The nightly one to one and one-half hour Inuktitut presentations of the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (IBC) are avidly watched and listened to. The fact that IBC offers what is to us low intensity chat-type programs, community profiles, and an eclectic *melange* of Inuit games, music and oral history from around Nunavut belies the fact that Inuit, to judge by their behavior to IBC versus English language programs, seem to be more affected by the "cool" of IBC rather than the heat of mainstream northern television.

There do appear to be exceptions. The soap opera "All My Children" definitely draws a daytime adult audience, young and middle age, male and female, in Clyde. Here again audio seems unimportant. Rather it is the social interaction between characters, notably the intense facial and hand gestures, that Inuit watchers note.

B. Telephone:

As a visitor who has observed social relations in Clyde River for twenty years, I have been repeatedly struck by the degree to which the telephone has affected certain aspects of "traditional" social life in Clyde River. Until the last decade, no feature of daily routine in an Inuit village was as striking to an outsider as the seemingly constant round of visiting that occurred between households. From almost the first moment I arrived in the settlement, it seemed to me that Clyde Inuit were in constant motion. In order to locate any person in a day, it was as important to know where parents and older siblings lived as where the house of the individual I sought was located. Visiting seemed to be as "traditional" a part of Clyde life as hunting.

How much this aspect of tradition has changed in recent years was brought home to me in 1984, when I returned for four months of intensive "in-the-village" research. During that time, I principally lived in a tent located 2km from the settlement. Since my work was focussed on activities in a sample of households, I visited each family on a daily basis, timing my visits to the "schedule" that I understood to govern community routine in earlier years. For instance, since it was summer, I expected peak activity among adults to only begin from mid-afternoon through to early morning.

Unfortunately, I had not counted on how overall village growth (between 1971 and 1984, Clyde's population and household size expanded from 245 Inuit to roughly 500 and 42 households to 82), coupled with residence movement within the enlarged community, would aggrevate my day to day ability to locate members of my sample. I prescheduled household interviews, only to find key participants absent from home at the appointed time. My only recourse was to wander through the settlement until I located the person(s) I sought.

After several weeks of semi-frustration, concern for my anticipated database, and fatigue, I explained to several members the sample how missed contacts could ultimately damage any results. All were sympathetic to my plight and all pointed out how my frustration and fatigue could be alleviated by the simple act of telephoning first to make sure where a person was. Although I had never had any need to "prelocate" anyone in Clyde, I saw the obvious merit of this suggestion, but pointed out that my tent had no phone. The Inuit, in their turn, were surprised by this - so much so that one Inuk wondered how I could get by "cut-off" from other people.

While it might not be fair to say that the telephone has had a disruptive effect on social communication in Clyde, it has certainly changed the basic pattern of intra-village communication. Visiting, particularly among the core members of *ilagiit* (extended families), remains a central facet of Inuit social life, but in non-*ilagiit* contexts, and especially where social structural concomitants such as respect for elders demands personal contact, the telephone has become a significant substitute for "traditional" local visiting.

The telephone, along with affecting local social interaction, has also revolutionized intersettlement communication. Clyde people have close kinship ties to Inuit living in Pond Inlet, Broughton Island, Pangnirtung, and Igloolik, with whom visits and letters were the main means of contact before 1978. At best, because of the vagaries of travel between communities, these relations were limited to a few instances each year.

The degree of influence the telephone has had on distant communication is simply attested to by the size of individual's monthly long distance bills. Two Inuit with whom I maintain close contact regularly have billing charges that average $250 per month. Another indicator is the frequency that Clyde Inuit have their telephones disconnected for failure to pay these costs. And, while these "indices" may appear to suggest only profligate use, the telephone has also provided Inuit with a means of retaining contact with family members away in Iqaluit and Montreal for medical care.

Recently, Clyde Inuit have began to combine the services of several of these mediums in order to involve the widest segment of the community in public interest questions. Local FM and the telephone are routinely combined every day to pass messages across the village and make announcements, but also offer a means for enrolling virtually everyone in what amounts to an "electronic town meeting".

In the past several years, FM and the telephone have been used to elicit local Clyde opinion on tourism development and government plans to reduce the regional polar bear quota. In this way, the basic details of a topic can be disseminated to people in their homes and then followed-up via telephone call-ins to the radio station. Often several programs are devoted to an issue. Also, in 1985, I used the combined services of Clyde's FM, telephone, and television facilities to stimulate a village-wide discussion on the international sealskin controversy. This was done by "detaching", with the community's permission, the local satellite uplink and using the transmitter to broadcast an Inuktitut-dubbed videotape on the problem into homes, followed up with two one-hour radio call-in programs.

The HTA Radio Net and Home Movies:

A communications problem that has always confronted Inuit is how to maintain links to camp or village while travelling on the land. Especially important and useful are emergency and hunting information, the former to save lives and equipment and the latter to take maximum advantage of the appearance of animals in any Clyde sub-locale. Until recently, the passage of such information depended on encounters with other hunters or concern stimulated by prolonged absence.

About 1980, the GNWT's Department of Renewable Resources began to provide a limited number of single-side band short wave radios so its officers could maintain contact with outpost camps and field researchers. Clyde Inuit, for whom extended local travel is a normal occurance, immediately saw the advantages that a radio network could offer and the Hunters and Trappers Association (HTA) obtained several sets which it loaned to its members. The relatively high

cost of these compact radios ($2500) seemingly prohibited wide-scale adoption by individuals.

By the mid-1980s, however, several privately owned sets appeared in the village. These were invariably sited in the homes of older hunters who headed extended families and were, in fact, purchased cooperatively by *ilagiit* members. Today, virtually every Clyde *ilagiit* intensively involved in harvesting possesses at least one such radio. As a result, an informal hunters' radio net has been created that can be monitored on a twenty-four hour basis.

The obvious advantage of this relates to the swift transmission of assistance calls and information on game. But it also pinpoints an important cultural aspect of Inuit society and resource harvesting. The first is the continuing critical role of elders within the *ilagiit* and the dominent nature of the extended family cooperation in villages like Clyde River (see Wenzel 1981). The other is the way this new item in Clyde's communications inventory reinforces the normative relational concomitents of Clyde Inuit society.

A much more recent addition to the communications catalogue is the video camera. Although several Clyde residents received formal training in hand-held video camera use through IBC in the early 1980s and VCRs have proliferated throughout the community in the last decade, no one put video to use in service to the village.

Today this is changing. One young man has purchased a small camera and makes it a practice to film local cultural developments. To date, these range from Clyde's Christmas celebration and sports events to several hour-long films which detail the building of a semi-subterranean *qangmaq* and the preparation and sewing of a sealskin tent. His particular hope is that these tapes will become part of the culture curriculum in the local school and an archive for Clyde's youths.

Conclusions

This has been an attempt to provide a systematic ethnography of the developing role of electronic media in one Baffin Inuit community. In terms of general outline, Clyde River's experience with these technologies parallels that of most settlements.

This overview also provides a perspective on media developments among Inuit that is not always found in what has become something of a new northern research genre. My central thesis is simply that to limit our analysis to one or another medium is to lose potential sight of innovative and adaptive efforts being exerted by Inuit with regard to electronic media. Carpenter (1972: 65-6) has written,

"TV is the psychic leap of our time. It's a trip far more potent than LSD...For TV addicts, reality seems stale, messy. They find daily life heartlessly indifferent to the needs of their imaginative life."

As regards Carpenter's statement, this review of electronic media use at Clyde River is a cautionary tale. It is too easy to have our research addiction cloud our understanding of another peoples' trip.

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Who is it for? - Pictures are Special, and so are the People in them: About Filming *Mammy Water: In Search of the Water Spirits in Nigeria* [1]

Sabine Jell-Bahlsen

At a recent film festival, a fellow film maker asked me, why had I decided to work with a Nigerian film crew in Nigeria. Was it to save money? Financial considerations were not my original rationale for working with a Nigerian team; funding did play a part in this decision, but quite a different one, from what might be expected. Moreover, I found the lens of the Nigerian cinematographer, Yusufu Mohammed, to be particularly suited to portraying his countrymen and -women and facets of their culture. Let me explain my reasons for working with this team, and some of the results.

Ironically, it is almost impossible to raise money, when planning to film with a local crew. Funding agencies in the USA in general do not support the idea of working in a foreign country with a local team. In the scholar's mind, the anthropologist in the field would ideally do everything by himself; and visual data would be gathered just as an addition to other field materials. Today, video may provide a unique opportunity to doing so; but 16mm film, because of its prohibitive production costs, requires trained personnel for handling equipment and materials. Professional cameras and recorders also distract the field researcher from important observations and from communicating with the people he is studying. To me, this is reason enough to work with a professional crew, when attempting to transfer some of one's field experiences to film. But, in addition, a cameraman from the country whose culture is being portrayed can reveal subtleties that might escape the outsider.

I decided to work with a local crew at an early stage of planning my film. I felt that, in the absence of tourism and of local people being used to seeing foreigners, bringing an outside film crew into the village of my field research would simply be too much. I also do sympathize with labor restrictions for foreigners in the hard pressed economies of developing countries. Most importantly, I discovered, that some Nigerian film professionals are as well trained and perhaps better equipped to document aspects of their culture, than a crew brought in from abroad.

Choice of Subject

My interest in the subject of *Mammy Water* developed during the early days of my fieldwork among the riverine Igbo, in 1978/9. I discovered a strand of women's ritual activities, complementary and parallel to the better known men's world; these rituals focus on the worship of certain water deities, commonly referred to as *Mammy Water*. Because of their visual strength and the importance of movement and sound, I decided to attempt portraying *Mammy Water* priestesses and their followers on film.

When proposing a film on the subject of *Mammy Water* to various funding agencies in the USA, I was confronted with distrust, disbelief and rejection. The subject, I was told, would not appeal to general audiences. Moreover, established European-American scholarly interpretations also differ from my attempt to relate *Mammy Water* to local traditions; they commonly stress foreign origins [2] of the cult —a view strongly rejected in Nigeria. [3]

Upon my return to Nigeria in 1987, the reactions to my proposed subject were diametrically opposed to those in the USA. I found encouragement, interest, support and guidance on all levels: locally, from academics and professionals, from the department of culture and from national television. People from all these different strands of society confirmed my approach, agreed that the subject was significant, and enthusiastically supported the idea of documenting this part of their culture on film. They also contributed immensely to the shaping of the idea and its final expression. My choice of subject originated from local field experiences in Nigeria; there, I also found an audience who shared my interest.

The choice of subject, then, is the crucial point, where we decide for whom we are making a film — this, in turn, determines not only the style of a film, but also its chances of getting funded [4].

Choice of Audience

When we publish the results of our field research, we usually do so in scientific journals and books aimed at our own peer group — fellow teachers and students in the field. Very rarely do the subjects of our research, the people we are writing about, read our publications. Either they cannot read, or they are not used to academic discourse, or they do not share our interest in a particular topic. If our reports are at all shared in the country about which we write, then they are usually read by academics —often trained here—, or by administrative officials. Rarely do our findings return to the source.

Film, because of its visual and acoustic qualities, can expand our horizon in many ways; here researchers are chanced to analyse visual and acoustic information unavailable in written data; moreover, a film's images and sound might reach beyond the academic peer group; and most importantly, these pictures can be made accessible to the people depicted in the film/research, even if they are unable to read and write English.

Why is it important to show the film to the people who are depicted in it? — In many instances, they are the *only ones* who can check the accuracy of the images and of the original soundtrack. Moreover, their world is continuously flooded with foreign images and models — to a point where they are deprived of their sense of self-esteem, their identity and culture. Thus, some local and national TV stations in Africa and elsewhere are trying to include favourable images of their own peoples and their cultures on their programmes, despite the onslaught of commercial foreign entertainment and its appeal to mass audiences and advertisers.

It certainly is important to educate our students and audiences here, about the dignity and richness of the pre-colonial and non- industrialized cultures of this world. But we cannot disregard the subjects of our films. While we are enlightening our audiences here, the cultures we are talking about are rapidly destroyed by the agents of our churches, banks, and power brokers. The culture bearers themselves are torn apart. While our students learn about the richness and creativity of African hairstyles and costumes, African women wear plastic shower caps in broad sunlight to straighten their hair, and ragged second hand clothing from Europe and the USA. They give their children sugar cubes to chew, instead of fresh fruit, because they are told, sugar comes from Europe and is "superior". Is it enough to celebrate the "disappearing world" for ourselves? If we think highly of African cultures, we should let her people know, because they are constantly told otherwise. Even if what they see on film is not "new" to them, what matters to them is that their own creations may appear on film/TV as *equally valuable* as foreign images and ideologies.

African Images

Manthia Diawara, in a recent evaluation of the "return to the source" theme in some contemporary African films wrote: "All of these films define their styles by casting a *new gaze* upon ancient African traditions, their modes of existence and their magic. ... These films are characterized by the way the director looks at tradition. It is a look that is intent on positing religion where anthropologists only see idolatry, history where they see primitivism, and humanism where they see savage acts. ... the close-ups in these films like most narrative devices, serve to inscribe the beauty of the character and their tradition. Pointing to their aesthetic appeal ... Similarly, the old woman (Soumba Traore) who plays Niankoro's mother is beautiful, thoughtful and resourceful. In Western films, such a woman would have looked repulsive with her bare breasts and ugly with holes in her nose and ears."[5]

What makes the western gaze demeaning? What makes its non-western sub-jects appear ugly? Even though some of our images of Africans might be of scholarly interest to us, these images might not find the approval of audiences there. Why? How do we look at them differently from how they look at themselves?

The idea of creating images of human beings is not new in Nigeria, but, people there have very specific ideas of how persons should be portrayed. What is perhaps new is the two-dimensional medium of photography vs. three-dimensional sculpture [6]. Yet, I have noticed differences in the uses and perceptions of photographic images of people in Igboland, as opposed to the USA, from the first time I have taken pictures in the field and brought them back there. Here are some examples:

When returning to Nigeria, I gave to an elder a photograph I had taken of him some years earlier. He expressed delight about my contribution to his funeral. I did not immediately understand; but later, I found out that he had thereby given his approval of my photograph. Pictures are used in funeral ceremonies, especially for important personalities and at second burials, when the memory of the deceased is celebrated and perpetuated, a most important part of Igbo culture. People generally do not approve of casual picture taking. They do not share our taste for snap-shots. Pictures are special — as are the people in them. This may have something to do with the expense and scarcity of photographs in rural communities; but it also points beyond these obvious restrictions, to a more general idea of an appropriate representation of a person. This does not mean that the people there do not have photo albums; they do, if they can afford it; but they are picky about which pictures are included in the album, and which ones are just piled up. Family albums are cherished and presented to visitors for viewing as a prestigious form of entertainment. Native doctors also keep albums of their patients, as a record of their achievements, because some clients from the city who feel ashamed of their culture later deny having consulted a traditional healer. In a similar vein, the priest of a ritual settlement in the Niger delta now requires photographs *of his visitors*, before allowing anybody ashore.

Choice of Team

Fiction films differ from documentaries. Yet, some contemporary African films, for example, can be considered as valuable ethnographic films.[7] While fiction films normally have directors, some authors argue that documentary and ethnographic films should not be directed, because they should not be staged. This is naive and an illusion. Somebody must tell the crew what to do. This is particularly crucial in ethnographic films attempting to portray and communicate aspects of one culture to members of another. A member of the culture being portrayed, or an anthropologist who has spent substantial time in it, can point out what to film. The director's position is so crucial that, in my view, an anthropologist, or a local film maker, is in a better position to do justice to the subject, than a foreign film producer merely assisted by an anthropologist. Most importantly, the director decides not only what to film, but also how to film it — *whose gaze* will be imprinted on the negative.

Being aware of the many implications of taking pictures of people in the villages of Southeastern Nigeria, I had decided to work with a Nigerian cameraman, when filming there. But, when officials of the Nigerian TV Authority in Lagos urged me to work with Alhaji Yusufu Mohammed, I first felt uneasy about working in the East with a cameraman from the North — given Nigeria's history of the Biafran civil war. However, Alhaji's character and personality is so well-balanced, peace loving, kind and at the same time powerful, that all suspicions were immediately dropped. History was not an issue, as we strived together to achieve our goal on film. Alhaji invisibly controlled his crew, yet also maintained very cordial relations with the people in front of his camera. They all loved him. The crew members spoke Haussa, Yoruba, Igbo and Bini. We used English to communicate among ourselves, and with the Igbo, Ibibio and Ijaw speaking people who appear in the film. The African crew generated a good feeling and working relationship during the film production, one that could hardly be duplicated by a foreign crew.

In addition, Alhaji, although not an Igbo, demonstrated intuition and sensibility for this culture to such an extent, a foreign cinematographer could hardly match. Rituals, by their very nature, take a fixed and to some extent predictable course; however, there is a lot of spontaneous action that cannot be anticipated. Alhaji always knew a split second before something happened, what was going to take place. He is always at the right place at the right time. To give two examples: When we were filming a ritual gathering and dance at the priestess', Eze Mmiri's house, Alhaji had his camera on the tripod. But when one dancer, a young woman

suddenly became possessed, staggered and fell down, he had already removed the tripod and could follow the woman's movements with his camera on the shoulder grip. In another instance, we had followed a group of water worshippers to a remote shrine by the waterside, where a new member was initiated. The shrine itself is located on top of a steep river bank. This is where the group assembles, prays and dances. But at some point, the new initiate goes down to the waterside with the priestess, to take a ritual bath. Alhaji knew by intuition, when this was going to happen. He had left the group, just in time, and positioned himself and his camera in a canoe parked on the beach; from there, he could ideally cover the initiate coming down and into the water.

Alhaji knows when and how to move with his moving subjects. Yet, he also has a keen eye for their beauty, not only in their movements, but also in their faces, costumes, details and composures. He kept pointing out these details to me, which he saw through his lens; these details are not always immediately recognizable to the —foreign— eye. I now regret not having followed all of his suggestions all the time, because of my ethnocentric bias for long shots — recommended in our textbooks on ethnographic film—, my concerns about rationing film stock, and my reluctance to "play with the images" as he suggested.

We collaborated on this film in many ways: I would explain to him what I had researched and what I wanted to show. Alhaji carefully composed every single take for a well-balanced and aesthetic presentation of human beings and their culture. Each picture is in itself special in terms of its composition of shapes and colors. Many of his takes are short, as are the sculptor's many strokes. Other scenes keep running, as the camera follows the flow of movement. The emerging image is not too close; Alhaji keeps a respectful distance; yet, his close-ups are well chosen, informative and revealing beauty. The people in his pictures always appear composed; they are not caught off-guard; they are aware, yet comfortable about being filmed; and they communicate with us in their own ways.

African Aesthetics

African visual expressions, art and aesthetics have long been neglected by anthropologists who tended to focus more on functional, political and structural aspects of African society, leaving the field of African art largely to art historians. It is nearly impossible, and also often misleading, to make generalizations about African art; but the French anthropologist, Jaques Maquet, in an early attempt to contextualise African sculpture, has pointed out some significant aesthetic elements he found in the sculpted images of humans in the Guinea Coast and in the Kongo Basin: "Forest farmers are amazing sculptors. ... they have created statues ... representing men and women in an abstract but lifelike style, with proportions strange to us but integrated into a coherent whole, motionless, but always ready to move. ... The faces do not have individual features... . the expression of the face is never smiling, it is most often very stern. The sculpture is *not anecdotal*, it does not describe a definite action ... These features put the individuals at the level of abstraction: they are primarily the three-dimensional expressions of the idea of man or woman. ... The round and angular shapes which contrast with and balance one another ... suggest ... the essence of womanhood or manhood. ... *rhythmic and balanced shapes in which masses and planes form perfectly integrated wholes*. It is therefore not in the least surprising that the aesthetic value of African art was discovered by Western artists before anthropologists."[4]

Sculpture and cinematography are, of course, entirely different art forms. However, both are visual expressions shaped by one's cultural background. Thus, some of the aesthetic norms of African sculpture might be recognized in African photography/ cinematography.

When presenting the film, *Mammy Water*, to different audiences, I have noted significant difference in their responses: European and American audiences tend to perceive the film's characters as impersonal and somewhat distant, while African audiences emphasize their authenticity and closeness. This perceptional difference may have something to do with the way in which the African camera gazes at African people, as opposed to a Western camera and audience. Surprisingly, this difference escaped a reviewer who was aware of the Nigerian crew — when comparing my film to another film on the same subject, photographed by a European student in Togo.[9]

Verbal Information on Film

Some audiences judge both, documentary and ethnographic films by the amount and type of verbal information added to the images. This, in my view is a misjudgment; there is so much visual information in one picture — let alone in a sequence of pictures — that it would take up much more time to convey this information verbally, than absorbing the images. Any type of verbal information added to film therefore remains *partial and incomplete*. In addition, while minimal explanation may be necessary, too much narration can actually distract the viewer from the perception of valuable visual and non-verbal acoustic information — available to him nowhere but on film.

Unfortunately, some teachers attempt to substitute films —that is the narrated commentaries of film— for their lectures. That cannot work. It defeats the purpose of both, visual anthropology and talk. What is interesting in a film is often not what is said *in it*, but rather, what is said and written *about it* (and about the many subjects touched upon in a film). Thus, ethnographic films should be shown with a teacher's guidance; study guides and accompanying texts are still irreplaceable for the serious student. It would be naive to rely only on one film's commentary for an in-depth analysis. [10]

There are more reasons, why I prefer written interpretations to film commentaries: film commentaries, irrespective of their appropriateness, gain a certain weight from their accompanying pictures; they tend to exercise authority over the viewer in shaping his opinion; moreover, theories may be challenged and are — by their very nature— part of a continuous debate. This is not so on film. Film commentaries cannot simply be equated with academic discourse; the latter is constantly growing, and in a state of flux, where opinions and theories are constantly written, challenged and re-written. This is impossible in film, because of the mere cost factor. Once a —verbal— statement is made about a culture *on film*, it is likely to outlast all revisions and controversies about the subject in the literature. Films by different authors about the same culture, or phenomenon, are rarely available for comparison. There will never be as many films on a subject, as there are articles or books written about it. Thus, there may be an ongoing controversy on a subject, but it threatens to be totally ignored, if we rely entirely on film commentary. To give an example: in a recent award winning film [11] from the British TV series, "*Disappearing World*", it was *said* about Trobriand women while they were *shown* preparing certain types of bark cloth pieces, that they "are making money". Because of the abstract nature of money, such an equation would be at the center of a debate, if made in writing. But in film, especially if televised, this view will last forever; other notions of "money" are not discussed in the film; the film's interpretation of money can only be challenged in writing; this is another medium and, in addition, geared towards a different audience.

Some viewers have missed an analytical commentary in my film, *Mammy Water*; others have suggested that African audiences approved of the film, because they knew the background and did not need explanations. However, the background of both, *Mammy Water* itself, and of our explanations is complex. I have refrained from loading my film with this type of information for several reasons; if I would include my analysis on film verbally, then, I should at least mention and discuss the explanations others have given. My view of *Mammy Water*, differs from that of other analysts, who see in *Mammy Water* a cult of "the white woman"[12], a European or foreign import [13], Indian influences [14], a suppressed desire for one's mother resulting in psychological problems [15], or a desire for unattainable foreign goods [16]. The commentary of another film on "Mami Wata: the Spirit of the White Women" [17], follows the same track.

My field research and discussions in Nigeria, as well as the Nigerian literature [18] point in the opposite direction, namely to the "cult's" African roots. In the film, I have therefore related *Mammy Water* rituals to the context of traditional religious beliefs and to the complementary ritual expressions of women and men. This is actually one of the rare instances, where films on the same subject by different authors of diverging views exist — although filmed in different countries, which may account for some of their differences. Yet, this escaped the reviewer when comparing the two films.[19] A full analysis and contextualization of *Mammy Water* cannot be squeezed in a film; it also goes beyond the scope of this paper and I will address the subject elsewhere.

Film Language

Film informs the audience not only through words, but also through images and their combination. It is quite possible that highly literate, western audiences are so much geared to verbal information that they are not equally well trained in decoding images.

There are two basic traditions in documentary film: one is "cinema verité", developed by Jean Rouch in France and related to "direct cinema", in the USA;

another theory of documentary film was developed in the Soviet Union, by Dziga Vertov [20]. He argued for the importance of conscientious editing and for "montage" as a "film language". Ethnographic film, equating "participant camera" with "participant observation", has often embraced cinema verite* and direct cinema, while rejecting montage.[21] There is, however, no objective reason for this bias; participant observation differs from both, film and written statements; but scientists, because of their pre-occupation with language, may not find it easy to transfer the idea of a grammar and syntax of words, to a grammar and syntax of pictures, as suggested by Vertov. There is no reason, why structured and edited images could not be used to transmit certain types of ethnographic information. One very long take with a constantly moving camera —video style— simply does not contain more truth than an assembly of many short shots; picture taking always involves *choices*: when you move your camera to the left, you are not taking what happens on the right — even if there is no cut.

When filming *Mammy Water*, Yusufu Mohammed and I decided on many short takes in some instances, and on longer ones in other cases. Our choices where determined by the respective situation; we did not follow a strict rule for ethnographic film making [22]; on the whole, our film is more of a montage —it has over 400 individual scenes—, than the film from Togo; the latter is much closer to the ideal of cinema verité* with its long-shots and uninterrupted, flowing takes. Yet, I don't think the images of one film are "truer" than those of the other. None of these differences occurred to the comparative reviewer.[23]

Conclusion

Mammy Water: In Search of the Water Spirits in Nigeria breaks with many rules of ethnographic film. Its intended audience is neither academic peer group, nor students alone, but also African. General audiences here and there are spared an in depth discussion of academic interest. The film's commentaries are sparse. Some rudimentary basic information is provided, because the majority of the funding was provided by television. These commentaries are not intended to substitute for academic discourse. *Mammy Water* is presented within its African context; the only references to foreign influences are to the neighborhood of Christianity and Islam, the story of a bridge, two popular posters, and some objects used in *Mammy Water* rituals. *Mammy Water: In Search of the Water Spirits in Nigeria* was photographed by the Nigerian cinematographer, Yusufu Mohammed, whose sensitivity and aesthetic awareness not only reveal African aesthetic values, but also contribute immensely to accurately and appropriately portraying visual expressions of African culture.

Notes

1) *Mammy Water: In Search of the Water Spirits in Nigeria*, a film by Sabine Jell-Bahlsen, 1989, distributed by the author and Ogbuide Corp. 451 Broome St.# PHW, New York, NY 10013
This film was reviewed by Simon Ottenberg in: *American Anthropologist* vol.93, 1991 pp.254-255 and by Jean-Claude Muller in: *Commission on Visual Anthropology Review*, Fall 1990, pp.47/8
2) Della Jenkins, "Mammy Water" in: H.M.Cole and Aniakor (eds), *Igbo Arts: Community and Cosmos*, Museum of Cultural History, University of California, Los Angeles 1984, p.75
3) Mrs. Uyah, Nigerian Department of Culture, personal communication
4) On the issue of funding see: Sabine Jell-Bahlsen, "Funding Anthropological Film and Video Productions: Practical Points, Funding Politics, Ethnocentrism and the Direction of Visual Communication: Where Does Visual Anthropology Fit Into Existing Funding Structures? in: *CVA Review*, Montreal October 1988 and in: *Dialectical Anthropology* vol.13, 1988 283-289; revised and expanded version in: Paul Hockings (ed), *Principles of Visual Anthropology* (new and revised edition), Mouton, The Hague 1991
5) Manthia Diawara, "African Cinema Today" in: *Society for Visual Anthropology Review*, vol.6 no.1, pp.72/2, Spring 1990; emphasis mine.
6) Even though three-dimensional African sculpture is more widely known, two-dimensional drawings and paintings are most likely the oldest art form on the continent; stunning examples of ancient rock paintings have been found in the Sahara desert and in Southern Africa. See for instance: Frank Willet, *African Art*, Praeger, New York 1971, p.28; and Basil Davidson, *African Kingdoms*, Time/ Life, New York 1967, pp.43-49
Remarkable pre-colonial wall-paintings have also been found among the Igbo. See for instance: G.I. Jones, *Igbo Art*, Shire Ethnography, Shire, Bucks, England 1989; and Cole/Aniakor, *op.cit.*

7) Paolo Chiozzi, "Reflections on Ethnographic Film with a general Bibliography" in: *Visual Anthropology*, vol.2, no.1, p.11, 1989
8) Jaques Maquet, *Civilizations of Africa*, Oxford University Press, London/New York/Toronto 1972; pp.69-72; original French edition, Paris 1962; emphasis mine.
9) Jean-Claude Muller, *op.cit.*
10) see for instance: Timothy Ash, "Using Film in Teaching Anthropology: One Pedagogical Approach" in: Paul Hockings (ed), *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, Mouton, Den Hague, 1975 and Chiozzi, *op.cit.*
11) *Trobriand Islanders*, by David Wason; anthropologist Anette Weiner; "Disappearing World" series, Granada Television, Great Britain 1990
12) *Mami Wata: The Spirit of the White Woman*, a film by Tobias Wendl/ Daniela Wiese, distributed by Institut fuer wissenschaftlichen Film, Goettingen, W.Germany
13) Jill Salmons, "Mammy Wata" in: *African Art*, vol 3,pp.8-15, April 1977; see also: Della Jenkins, *op.cit.*
14) Henry Drewal, "The Impact of Printed Media on Mami Wata Art and Ritual", presented at the African Studies Association Conference, in Los Angeles, 1979
15) Wintrob, Ronald, M., M.D., "Mammy Water: Folk Beliefs and Psychotic Elaborations in Liberia" in: *Canadian Psychiatric Association Journal*, vol.15, no.2 pp.143-157, April 1970
16) Fabian, Johannes, "Popular Culture in Africa: Findings and Conjectures" in: *Africa*, vol 48, pp.315-334, 1978
17) Wendl/Wiese, *op.cit.*
18) Chinwe Achebe, *The World of the Ogbanje*, Fourth Dimension Publishers, Enugu/ Nigeria & New Haven 1986
Flora Nwapa, *Mammywater*, Tana Press, Enugu/ Nigeria 1979
——————, *Efuru*, Heinemann African Writers Series # 26, London
19) Muller, *op.cit.*
20) Michelson, Anette (ed), *Kino Eye: The Writings of Dziga Vertov*,University of California Press, Berkeley, 1984
21) Chiozzi, *op.cit.*, p.8
22) rules for a standardization of ethnographic filming have been suggested by Alan Lomax, "Urgent Anthropology: Cinema, Science and Culture Revival" in: *Current Anthropology*, vol. 14, no.4, p.477, Oct.1973; see also: Chiozzi, *op.cit.*p.22/3
23) Muller, *op.cit.*

Filming Culture: Interpretation and Representation in *Trance and Dance in Bali* (1951), *A Balinese Trance Seance* (1980), and *Jero on Jero: A Balinese Trance Seance Observed* (1980)*

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INTRODUCTION

Despite continuing debate on a wide range of issues, critical discussion across a number of disciplines generally grounds what has been termed the "postmodern condition" in the post-World War II global political economy. The most salient features of this period include the proliferation of multinational consumer capitalism and mass communication technologies, of independence movements in former European colonies, and radical social movements in the West. An important consequence of these developments for anthropologists is the growing recognition that cultures and societies are increasingly interdependent and mutually influencing (see Marcus and Fischer, 1986, Ortner, 1984, Clifford, 1986, 1988).

Anthropology, crucially concerned with the representation of cultural others, has not gone untouched by these historical pressures and related theoretical currents. In the wake of anti-colonial independence movements, new restrictions

have been placed on fieldwork by national and local governments (Clifford, 1986). These changing power relations, along with the emergence of "indigenous ethnographers" studying their own cultures, have contributed to the reformulation of standards for cultural representation. It is no longer automatically assumed that the West alone wields the knowledge and authority to speak about the Rest. Indeed, it is increasingly the case that diverse indigenous voices are speaking for themselves—*about* themselves, about "Us", and about the complex relations of political and cultural dominance in which we are all historically entwined (see Clifford, 1986). These concerns have prompted an experimental trend in the writing of ethnographies, along with a critical tendency to examine and deconstruct ethnographies as texts[1]. This work seeks to acknowledge and incorporate a critical world system perspective in novel textual forms. In written ethnographies, these formal innovations have focused on laying bare the processes through which written accounts are constructed—the dialogic give and take of ethnographic "data"-gathering, and the interpretive and analytical transformations of "informants" words into published texts (see Tyler, 1986 for a detailed discussion of the features of such "post-modern ethnography").

This preoccupation with "dialogue" often results in the inclusion of lengthy stretches of directly transcribed (and translated—sometimes juxtaposed on the same or facing page) speech. It also entails a fundamentally new treatment of the writer her/himself, formerly a dominant but unacknowledged presence in written presentations. Unlike ethnographies of the "classic" period, narrated in an *impersonal* third person, current work tends to focus on the subjectivity of the writer as the consciousness through which the Other is interpreted and in turn represented. This approach refuses traditional conventions of authorial dominance, portraying the other-cultural representatives as interactive agents—speaking subjects—and in turn enjoining the reader to participate in the work of analysis.

Like ethnographic writings, ethnographic films are produced within the "industrial" context of the discipline of anthropology, and hence, at least to varying degrees, reflect and respond to the theoretical concerns current at the time of their production (see below). At the same time, film as a medium offers somewhat different possibilities for representation than does the printed page (which, of course, change over time as new technologies are developed). The inclusion of unedited chunks of indigenous discourse in written works, accompanied rather than replaced by translations, may be mirrored in film by a focus on speaking subjects whose words are subtitled, rather than aurally effaced in English voice-over translation, or silenced entirely in favor of a narrator's explanatory commentary.

Like ethnographers who become "characters" in their own texts, films may highlight the interactive filmmaking process itself, by framing shots and recording sound such that filmmaker and/or anthropologist are included with their "subjects" in the finished product. Or films may present long, unedited and unnarrated shots (analogous to unedited, unanalyzed transcribed discourse) for fresh examination and analysis by viewers themselves (see Macdougall, 1985 [1975]). These techniques, like the written ones described above, tend to focus on the *processes* of "data"-generation and, secondarily, analysis, rather than presenting the viewer/reader with a prepackaged product for ready, uncritical consumption. In these ways, ethnographic films, like their written counterparts, reflect and enact current theoretical concerns with the ethnographic encounter and the resulting representations of cultural others, which themselves are embedded within changing world political-economic conditions.

Recent theoretical work focusing on the interplay of ideological, industrial, and material factors in the production of Hollywood films suggests a framework for considering the impact of anthropological theory on the production of ethnographic films. In an analysis of the "determinants" and "conditions" which interacted to shape the production of the James Bond film, *The Spy Who Loved Me*, Bennett and Woollacott (1987) draw on Macherey's model for the creative transformation of existing ideologies in the process of forging literary works, to suggest an analogous model for film production. This framework views the production team's ideological concerns neither as eclipsed by larger-scale "determinants" (financial, economic, social, ideological), nor as isomorphically represented in the film text, but rather as "a part of the 'diversity of elements' which give a film text substance" (p. 189): "[T]he work of production of a film is...fundamental in reformulating and making visible and watchable both a number of ideological components and a particular articulation of them...An examination of the process of working on the film actually informs us both about the existing ideologies and textual systems with which [the production team] were

concerned and tells us something about the way they were transformed" (p. 190) in the production process.

While a thorough examination of these factors is clearly beyond the scope of the present paper, Bennett and Woollacott's assumptions inform the following discussion, which links particular features of the ethnographic films *Trance and Dance in Bali* (1951), *A Balinese Trance Seance* (1980), and *Jero on Jero: A Balinese Trance Seance Observed* (1980) both to ambient "ideologies" (theories of "culture" and of the representation of cultural others) within the discipline of anthropology, as well as to the filmmakers' formulations of these theories. There can be no perfect fit among these elements, because there is no theoretical consensus within the discipline itself (always enlivened by competing paradigms), nor among the members of any production team, nor even within any individual, whose perspective may change radically in the course of her or his career. Nevertheless, specific textual features may be traced to technical factors on the one hand, and to particular theoretical and methodological factors on the other, to elucidate at least some of the principle "conditions of production" and demonstrate that ethnographic films, like written texts, are not spontaneously generated, but are rather products of the interaction of complex contextual factors.

The discussion which follows will examine textual aspects of the three films in relation to both technical constraints (and enabling factors) and their "industrial" contexts of production (the central theoretical problems within anthropology during their respective periods), using statements by the filmmakers about their objectives, as well as more general discussions of ethnographic method and strategies for representing cultural others.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF PRODUCTION: TWO RESEARCH PROJECTS

Mead and Bateson in Bali, 1936-38

Trance and Dance in Bali, a twenty-minute film depicting the ceremonial Kris Dance, was shot in the course of a two-year research expedition (1936-38) led by Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson. Financed by the Committee for the Study of Dementia Praecox, with the aim of investigating the etiology of schizophrenia, Mead and Bateson's work focused on exploring aspects of Balinese "ethos"—"a culturally standardized system of organization of the instincts and emotions of individuals" (Bateson and Mead, 1942: xi). In earlier work, each had sought to describe features of ethos in other cultures (Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* [1928], *Growing Up in New Guinea* [1930], and *Sex and Temperament* [1935], and Bateson's innovative *Naven* [1936]), relying on written observations as the raw data on which analyses were based. The ethnographic method of participant-observation, as detailed in Malinowski's now-classic statement, required intensive periods of fieldwork, recorded in (ideally, copious, accurate, and systematic) field notes, with the goal of grasping "the native's point of view, his relation to life, to realise *his* vision of *his* world" (Malinowski, 1961 [1922]: 25).

Yet Marvin Harris (cited in de Brigard, 1975) notes that Mead had been criticized for a lack of rigor in her "'soft,' unverifiable data," and Mead herself discusses the drawbacks of using "English words...with all their weight of culturally limited connotations, in an attempt to describe the way in which the emotional life of these various South Sea peoples was organized in culturally standardized forms." This method, she maintained, "was far too dependent upon idiosyncratic factors of style and literary skill; it was difficult to duplicate; and it was difficult to evaluate" (Bateson and Mead, 1942: xi). For his part, Bateson had experimented with the possibilities and problems presented by analyzing a particular ritual from three different theoretical points of view, and had subsequently been accused of being "too analytical—as neglecting the phenomena of a culture in order to intellectualize and schematize it" (*ibid*, xii). Both were prepared to try something new, and the Bali expedition was regarded from the first as an opportunity for methodological innovation.

They set off for Bali in March of 1936, armed with still and moving-picture cameras and seventy-five rolls of Leica film, which they had assumed would suffice for the two-year stay. They quickly decided that much more film would be required to carry out the sort of meticulous documentation which they were attempting. By the time they left the field, they had amassed over 25,000 stills and 22,000 feet of 16 mm. footage of everyday activities, particularly those related to child-rearing, and of ceremonial dances and other rituals. Of course still and moving-picture photography had been used before in ethnographic work (see de Brigard, 1975 for details of this early history, and Rouch, 1975 on early

experiments with time-sequence photography to study bodily movements), but never for the sorts of research purposes elaborated on this expedition:

> We tried to use the still and the moving-picture cameras to get a record of Balinese behavior, and this is a very different matter from the preparation of 'documentary' film or photographs. We tried to shoot what happened normally and spontaneously, rather than to decide upon the norms and then get Balinese to go through these behaviors in suitable lighting. We treated the cameras in the field as recording instruments, not as devices for illustrating our theses (Bateson and Mead, 1942: 49).

Implicit in Mead's discussion is her view of the camera as an impartial eye which could be used to record behavior "objectively"--to gather raw "data" rather than to illustrate a preconceived thesis. To this end, with characteristic rigor, Bateson shot an unprecedented amount of film.

The written documentation that accompanied the filmed material was similarly innovative and meticulous. Increasing the volume of film used meant that Mead's written notes "were similarly multiplied by a factor of ten," in addition to the supplementary notes taken by their Balinese secretary Made Kaler; innumerable details were carefully cross-referenced, prompting Mead to claim that "With this kind of record, thirty years later, I can place each moment or write captions that include the identification of a child's foot in the corner of a picture" (Mead, 1972: 257).

The decision to collect visual materials on such a grand scale was directly tied to the subject matter of their research. Gesture and physical postures, regarded as bodily manifestations of ethos, were a central focus: "We have accumulated a mass of photographic material, stills and Cine, on everyday activities and on the more stylized ones, such as dancing, cockfighting, prayer and trance gestures, and so on" (Mead, 1977: 212; from a letter to Franz Boas, March 29, 1938). One important product of all this material was the book *Balinese Character* (1942), for which they culled 759 photographs from the mass of 25,000, and arranged them in a set of captioned plates, thematically juxtaposing related details without "violating the context and the integrity of any one event" (Mead, 1972: 235). Another, of course, was the set of films cut from the Cine footage, including *Trance and Dance in Bali*, all released in 1952 in the Character Formation in Different Cultures Series. In addition to the research goals specific to the book and to each film, all of these materials were also intended to demonstrate the value of visual media as tools for rigorous anthropological research, and to legitimate their systematic use for future studies of human behavior.

Mead's enthusiasm for photography and film (always treated as analogous; see de Brigard, 1975: 27) seems to have stemmed from two related concerns. The first of these was the systematic documentation of observable behaviors for which there was as yet no precise, scientific vocabulary (Bateson and Mead, 1942: xi), and the potential for such materials to contribute to developing new methods of cultural analysis. This task took on a special urgency in light of the second concern—the continuation of her teacher Boas' project of "salvage ethnography":

> All over the world, on every continent and island, in the hidden recesses of modern industrial cities as well as in the hidden valleys that can be reached only by helicopter, precious, totally irreplaceable, and forever irreproducible behaviors are disappearing, while departments of anthropology continue to send fieldworkers out with no equipment beyond a pencil and a notebook...Department after department and research project after research project fail to include filming and insist on continuing the hopelessly inadequate note-taking of an earlier age, while the behavior that film could have caught and preserved for centuries (preserved for the joy of the descendants of those who dance a ritual for the last time and for the illumination of future generations of human scientists) disappears—disappears right in front of everybody's eyes (Mead, 1975: 4-5).

The signs that global war was imminent, with its implications for cross-cultural contact and the spread of Western influence, must have only increased her concern that the time for engaging in this sort of work was fast running out.

In later years, Mead proved a tireless advocate of the use of visual materials in anthropological research, for a variety of purposes: "as a notetaking tool, as a record of behavior for which there is as yet no vocabulary, for establishing new kinds of reliability by preserving materials intact for subsequent analysis, for the presentation of juxtaposed significances without doing violence to the behavior,

and as a teaching device to develop the ability to see in new ways" (Mead, 1963: 166). Mead's insistence that the camera could provide an immediate, unmediated record found enthusiastic support in the observational filmmaking movement of the 1960's and '70's (see below for a contrasting point of view; see also Nichols, 1985 [1975] and Macdougall, 1985 [1975] for critical discussion of the observational perspective). Film alone could record the temporal rhythms of disappearing cultural practices.

Mead and Bateson's earlier work, the goals and circumstances of the Bali expedition, the growing concern with reliable data-gathering methods for anthropological research, and the then-dubious status of photography and film within the discipline, all formed part of the backdrop against which the footage for *Trance and Dance in Bali* was shot. The textual form of this film, and its relation to then-current conventions for representing cultural others, will be addressed following a discussion of the research context for the more recent films, and of the changing technical possibilities which helped to shape all of these films in particular ways.

Connor, Asch and Asch in Bali: 1978, 1980

Over forty years after Mead and Bateson had recorded their material, filmmaker Timothy Asch joined anthropologist Linda Connor in Bali and filmed a trance seance with the spirit medium who had been one of Connor's principal informants during two previous years of research. They returned to Bali in 1980, to show the spirit medium Jero Tapakan the film they had made of her, *A Balinese Trance Seance*, and decided to film her reactions and commentary as she viewed the film for the first time. This footage was eventually used to cut a companion film, *Jero on Jero: A Balinese Trance Seance Observed*, which explores Jero's responses to the filmed representation of herself.[2]

In the introductory section of the monograph which is intended to complement the films, Timothy Asch describes the background and course of this project. Unlike Mead and Bateson's planned expedition, Asch's collaboration with Connor began with their fortuitous co-presence in Bali in July, 1978. Connor had been immersed in the study of Balinese magic, possession, and healing for past two years, while Asch was waiting for another anthropologist to join him en route to eastern Indonesia for a collaborative project already in the works. In the meantime, Connor and Asch decided to work together and film Jero, as much "to test my recently repaired camera and some old film stock" as to gather material for any eventual product:

> We decided to film Jero treating two patients with massage, in order to test my old film stock, and to "film a seance with new stock to be sure the camera was working properly. From the Sydney laboratory report we learned that two of our three rolls on massage were too old and the third was marginal, but the seance footage, from which we edited *A Balinese Trance Seance*, was fine (Connor, Asch, and Asch, 1986: 44-5).

The eventual production of the second film, *Jero on Jero*, was similarly unplanned. The group had already intended to return to Bali in 1980 with a rough cut videotape of the seance film to show to the participants. But while showing this footage to a visual anthropology class in Australia, T. Asch hit upon the idea of actually filming Jero's reactions and later editing them into a companion film:

> I suddenly realized that a film of Jero's reactions to seeing herself in the seance film would reveal her attitude toward the project. Furthermore, Jero's reactions might be the best way to answer some of the many difficult questions raised among Western audiences when the watched the seance film...Such a film also would demonstrate the value of showing participants a film of themselves as a way of eliciting additional information and interpretations of past events. For these and other reasons, we made *Jero on Jero* (*ibid*, p. 46).

While such footage had sometimes been shown to its own subjects in the past (e.g., Flaherty showing Nanook to himself in a makeshift screening room in a cabin on Hudson Bay, or Rouch projecting *Horendi*, a film on the initiation rites of possessed dancers in Niger, to the priests who had participated; Rouch, 1975), no previous film had been made which systematically focused on filmed "feedback" of this kind (for discussion of the epistemological effects of this practice, see below).

Another goal of the *Jero* project, emphasized by the research team, was to demonstrate the value of integrating film with written materials. As editor Patsy Asch explains:

[W]e conceive of the monograph and films as a model of one way to balance what film can do best—present visual, sound-synchronous, ethnographic data of particular events involving specific people—with the powerful, analytical, generalizing capabilities of print, which permit one to bridge temporal and spatial constraints in order to juxtapose and interpret with flexibility (*ibid*, p. 5).

While Mead emphasized the inadequacy of written recording methods, in order to justify the serious use of film, the Jero group shifts the focus of the argument to assert the complementarity of different media. Despite the decades which had passed since Mead and Bateson's early attempts to legitimize the use of visual materials in ethnographic work, this goal remained a salient one for the Jero project as well:

This project attempts to provide one such example [of film's potential as a tool for research and teaching] to serve as a model for other anthropologists. We hope this book and the four related films will stimulate interest among ethnographic filmmakers, researchers, and teachers of anthropology (as well as related disciplines) and generate a dialogue that will promote broader and more scholarly use of film in anthropology (T. Asch, *ibid*, p. 39).

But while Mead and Bateson often treat their visual "data" as somehow more "objective" than written accounts, the Asches both highlight the selective, interpretive nature of film, and the techniques they employed to try and minimize the constructive, authorial hand of the filmmaker (the implications of this perspective are discussed at length below).

TECHNICAL FACTORS

Trance and Dance in Bali

As noted above, Mead and Bateson brought both still and moving-picture cameras with them to Bali. When the decision was made to increase the scale of visually recorded materials, Bateson "wrote home for the newly invented rapid winder, which made it possible to take pictures in very rapid succession," and ordered bulk film "which he would have to cut and put in cassettes himself," and a developing tank which allowed them "to develop some 1600 exposures in an evening" (Mead, 1972: 256). In the Technical Notes section of *Balinese Character*, Bateson also discusses the variety of lenses (including wide-angle and telephoto) and film stocks used (Bateson and Mead, 1942: 52). The Cine equipment—a 16 mm. Movikon camera with fixed 25 mm. lens— offered less flexibility in focal length, but provided a more detailed, continuous record of activities in motion. Bateson describes his complementary use of the two cameras:

We were compelled to economize on motion-picture film, and disregarding the future difficulties of exposition, we assumed that the still photography and the motion- picture film *together* would constitute our record of behavior. We therefore reserved the motion-picture camera for the more active and interesting moments, and recorded the slower and less significant behaviors with the still camera (*ibid*, p. 50).

In the course of filming, Bateson and Mead cooperated closely, he "moving around in and out of the scene with the two cameras," she calling his attention to film-worthy details, and taking notes on the entire activity filmed, and on the time elapsed and the position of the photographer within the larger scene of the event.

An important restriction on filming was the lack of artificial lighting equipment, which compelled the researchers to rely on daylight to illuminate the activities filmed. The dance performance depicted in *Trance and Dance in Bali* was specially scheduled to accommodate the camera:

One of our most successful films was made when we ordered a group to play in the daytime that ordinarily performed only late at night. We had no movie lights and we wanted to film the different ways in which men and women handled their razor-sharp krises in the trance dances when they turned the kris, in mock self- destruction, against their own bodies. The man who made the arrangements decided to substitute young beautiful women for the withered old women who performed at night, and we could record how women who had never before been in trance flawlessly replicated the customary behavior they had watched all their lives (Mead, 1972: 252).

These significant departures from indigenous tradition, if admitted as "data" at all, would be discussed in careful detail in today's climate of intense documen-

tary scrutiny, but Mead only treats them as matter-of-fact support for her hypotheses about Balinese "ethos": if dance movements are part of "culturally standardized" emotional behavior, then these women who had never danced in trance before can "flawlessly replicate the customary behavior," thus justifying the changes required by filming.

The other important constraint on their black--and-white footage was the lack of synchronized sound, and indeed the lack of any means for recording sound (de Brigard, 1975: 27). This technical restriction reinforced the theoretical emphasis on gesture and movement described in their written accounts, further focusing the film(s) on observable bodily behavior, as indicative of the "ethos" of a culture. *Trance and Dance in Bali* depicts a single dance performance, and so was edited chronologically,[3] beginning with a pan of the orchestra preparing to accompany the dancers, and ending with shots of the dancers being "brought back to themselves" with the aid of holy water and incense. The sound track consists of short stretches of narration by Mead, and recorded Balinese music which attempts to simulate the actual sound of the performance (it is nowhere noted when, and by whom, this music was recorded, but their collaborators in the field included Colin McPhee, who studied Balinese music, and Katherane Mershon, researching Balinese dance). The spoken narration is supplemented by blocks of written text as the film opens, and following the actual performance.

A Balinese Trance Seance; Jero on Jero

The technical differences in the recent films are immediately apparent: color film, sharper images, the use of a zoom lens, synchronized sound. Like Mead and Bateson, the crew faced lighting difficulties, since the shrine house where Jero held her seances was too dark to allow for filming. Rather than moving outside or otherwise radically changing the setting to facilitate shooting, however, T. Asch with Jero's permission, "removed the front door and opened the shutter, but it was still too dark. To light the back of the room, the shelves of medicines and holy water, and Jero's face, I used a 100-watt, 12-volt lamp in a standard sun-gun housing powered by a 12-volt car battery (there was no electricity in Jero's village" (Connor, Asch, and Asch, 1986: 50-51).

A limited amount of film stock (35 minutes' worth, for a three-hour series of seances) forced the selective, rather than continuous, filming of the event (*ibid*, p. 51). Despite its greater clarity than the Mead and Bateson footage, T. Asch was less than satisfied with the technical quality of the film: "[T]he footage is very grainy, the contrast is high, at times the exposure is incorrect, some of the footage is jiggly or out of focus, and I have not always had the camera pointed at the right place" (*ibid*, p. 51; see T. Asch's description in this section of the camera, lenses, and films used). The capacity to vary focal length allowed for a variety of perspectives to be filmed, but cameraman Asch treats this flexibility not as a contributor to "objective" accuracy, but as a mixed blessing for the goal of non-intrusive ethnographic documentation: "Subtle gestures often are visible only in a close-up or from a particular angle. The danger is that the more one moves around the more one introduces one's own biases, but bias is inevitable because film is the product of a particular person" (*ibid*, p. 50).

The most significant technical difference, however, was the availability of synchronized sound which provided a simultaneous verbal record as rich as the visual one. In addition to the piecemeal verbal material recorded on the limited film footage, a complete aural record of the seances was kept by anthropologist Connor with a Nagra 4.2 tape recorder. Connor and Asch cooperated during the filming to synchronize the taped record with the film:

Sometimes we had to identify each shot visually; at the head or tail of the shot I would film Linda as she struck the end of the microphone shield...At other times we used a radio signal from the camera to the tape recorder that put a beep on our sound track whenever the camera was turned on and at the same time flashed a light on the film, producing a clear frame that later could be synchronized with the beep (*ibid*, p. 50).

Nevertheless, there were difficulties with the sound-recording "because the tiny shrine house was cramped; only one person besides Jero could maneuver within. Linda had to stand outside, to the left of the door; I [T. Asch] could not see her to get any clues about when and when not to film or to learn whether she had to change tape rolls" (*ibid*, 51).

The resulting sound and visual record, though, in addition to the more verbal than visual emphasis of the trance seance as compared to the trance-inspired dancing, enabled the *Jero* team to edit their films by different principles than were possible for Mead and Bateson. As editor Patsy Asch explains:

In editing these four films we have frequently sacrificed image quality for continuity in dialogue, but we have not included everything said. We have cut scenes when we felt the conversation was represented fairly without including all the dialogue. We began by editing the sound track and worrying only marginally about the images. Where we felt that to cut the sound, even though we did not have synchronized picture, would violate the meaning of the dialogue, we used cutaways (*ibid*, p. 5).

T. Asch, too, finds it "no longer sufficient to edit miscellaneous images into a general montage when it is possible for the subjects to speak for themselves...It is the dialogue rather than the beauty of the images that should dictate the filming and editing of a scene" (*ibid*, p. 40). This emphasis on subjects' verbatim discourse parallels the current focus within cultural anthropology on language as the locus for determining (or better, interpreting) the "native's point of view" (see Marcus and Fischer, 1986, and Clifford and Marcus, 1986).

Accompanying this interest in "dialogue" is a critical perspective on the extent to which even carefully translated native discourse truly represents the speaker's point of view (*ibid*, p. 9). This concern with the limits of "objectivity," explicitly elaborated at several points throughout the monograph, will be explored in greater detail in the following section. It should be emphasized, however, that the production team's decision to edit the sound track first and to worry only secondarily about the images, was dictated by their determination "to enable Jero, in talking about the central concerns of her work and life, to speak for herself" (*ibid*, p. 53).

THE EFFECTS OF THE 'INDUSTRIAL CONTEXT' OF ANTHROPOLOGY ON CHANGING REPRESENTATIONS OF 'OTHERS'

The technical and theoretical factors noted above, then, combined to form the continually changing "industrial" context of anthropology within which all of the films discussed here were made. Each "production team," following the personal proclivities of its members (cf. Bennett and Woollacott, 1987), and responding to the vicissitudes and contingencies of the shooting situation, drew upon and transformed aspects of this context and contributed to the resulting representations of Balinese "others" in each of the films.

In the case of *Trance and Dance in Bali*, the result is a visual record of a single performance of the Kris Dance, accompanied by only enough written and voice-over narration to orient the viewer to the unfamiliar images, and to identify the characters depicted in the ceremony. The film begins with a short paragraph identifying the Kris Dance as one "spectacular" sort of trance behavior in Bali, followed by a written synopsis of the storyline of the performance to follow. The music accompanying the written information continues as the camera cuts first to the orchestra, then to the dancers themselves. Mead's periodic voice-over narration clarifies otherwise incomprehensible or imperceptible details in the course of the performance (telling us, for example, that the witch and dragon characters argue with one another in "ecclesiastical Javanese," or that the witch laughs "an eerie, high-pitched laugh" from the sidelines). Another brief paragraph of written information signals the end of the performance and prefaces the final section of the film, which pictures the dancers being brought out of their trance, and the ritual offerings which complete the ceremony. There is no study guide to supplement the film, but the final credits list a number of publications which may be consulted for further information.

This film departed from the conventions then common to ethnographic films, both by focusing on a particular ritual performance (instead of trying to portray an entire "culture" in a half-hour or hour-long film), and by restricting its narration to scattered, spare descriptions of the actions on screen (instead of presenting long and complicated analyses). In these ways, it pioneered new ground and came to be regarded as a classic of sorts in ethnographic film: "[T]he film remains an evocative and striking presentation of the way in which multiple meanings are condensed within a centrally significant cultural form" (Geertz, 1976: 726).

Nevertheless, certain textual features mark the film as a product of its time. Most obviously, there is no attempt to enable the participants to "speak for themselves" (of course, even had Mead and Bateson favored such an approach, the lack of auditory recording devices would have sharply constrained the possibilities for exploring it). The dancers are treated as representatives of Balinese "culture," never as unique individuals; a Balinese voice is never heard, nor even any quoted material used which could attribute descriptions or explanations to a Balinese source. Rather, we must rely on written text and Mead's voice-over narration, which inevitably takes on the character of "scientific" authority (Marcus and Fischer, 1986). Neither is there any attempt to include the researchers in the picture; indeed, one imagines Mead taking care to keep out of the way of the camera, so as not to obstruct Bateson's view and record of the proceedings. The observant viewer might spot a brief shot of a Balinese man on the sidelines, writing furiously on a notepad (one assumes that this is their secretary, Made Kaler), but his presence is never acknowledged, and certainly not highlighted, or made the focus of reflexive commentary.

The textual form of *Trance and Dance in Bali* is a product of Mead and Bateson's collaboration on a particular project at a particular time: shot just before, edited during[4], and released after (1952) the war. The continuing Boasian project of salvage ethnography took on a special urgency on the eve of World War II; the fiction of cultures "untouched" by the "outside world," already wearing thin by this time, could no longer be plausibly maintained after the contact that came with a war that extended from Europe to Japan, and from North Africa to the South Pacific. If physical behaviors were regarded as visible features of cultural "ethos," and film could help to capture and preserve these observable aspects of fast-disappearing ways of life, then Mead and Bateson's emphasis on visual "records" is readily understandable, almost predictable. A more difficult question, in fact, is why other anthropologists at that time did not join them in calling for the systematic compilation of analogous visual materials. More than forty years later, the Asches and their associates are still crucially concerned with legitimating and popularizing the use of film for anthropological research and education.

As explicated above, *A Balinese Trance Seance* and *Jero on Jero* were produced under rather different technical and theoretical circumstances. The first was cut, like the Mead and Bateson film, to depict a single ritual activity in a relatively unanalyzed way, which could stimulate questions and analysis by viewers in the classroom. In the course of the project, however, their experiments with screening material to participants to elicit "feedback" led to the exploration of new possibilities for exploiting such processual footage. After Jero had seen herself on videotape, for example, T. Asch notes how she adjusted "her performance to a new awareness of her audience and of how she appears on film" (Connor, *et al*, 1986: 47). The crew's own awareness of current concerns within anthropology regarding standards of authority and the "poetics and politics" (Clifford and Marcus, 1986) of ethnographic representation, results in a pair of films quite different in textual form and effect from Mead and Bateson's earlier effort to create this sort of ethnographic research and education film.

A Balinese Trance Seance opens with a shot of Jero speaking about the trance experience, then beginning a chant to the ancestral spirits and deities which will presently possess her. All of her speech is subtitled, as is that of the family of petitioners who have arranged for the seance depicted in the rest of the film. This establishing sequence, "included before the narration begins to give the viewer a sense of how a seance looks" (Connor, *et al*, 1986: 88), uses the strengths of the film medium to show, rather than tell (in voice-over or written narration) what the rest of the film will be about. It is followed by a series of stills, the first overlain by the title, the rest accompanied by Connor's voice-over narration describing the circumstances of her fieldwork, and providing some minimal ethnographic background material to contextualize the film which follows. Like *Trance and Dance*, the rest of the film is presented chronologically, with periodic stretches of English narration meant to clarify the unfamiliar images. The added dimension of synchronized sound, however, allows the viewer to hear the activities pictured, the subtitled speech lessening the need for third-party narration and hence permitting the subjects depicted, at least to some degree, to speak for themselves. Like the older film, this one includes footage of post-trance activities (prayer, blessings with holy water, disposition of offerings), then closes with the clients' departure.

Jero on Jero marks a more evident departure from earlier conventions. After a short stretch of narration to orient the viewer, the rest of the film focuses on Jero and Linda's conversation while Jero watches *A Balinese Trance Seance* for the first time. Their audible comments are subtitled, and interwoven with pieces of the soundtrack from the film they are watching; the camera shifts between views of one or both of the watchers, and periodic shots of the television screen they themselves are watching. As the *Trance Seance* credits roll, Jero makes out her own name, and Connor's, on the screen. Connor remarks to T. and P. Asch, in English, on the success of the screening, then continues her conversation with Jero through the rest of the credits and beyond, underscoring the ongoing dialogic nature of an ethnographic encounter which cannot be bounded or contained by a length of film or the covers of a book.

The circumstances leading to filming, and the details of the editing process, are explicitly presented in the monograph which accompanies the films. For the two films discussed here, the researchers provide a detailed shot list (see Appendix) "in which the subtitles and narration of that film [*Trance Seance*] are juxtaposed with the comments Jero and Linda made as Jero watched the seance film for the first time; it was from this dialogue that we editied *Jero on Jero*." P. Asch goes on to note, in her introduction to the contents of the volume, that "also included are comments about the content and significance of each shot as well as notations about our editorial decisions. The chapter concludes with excerpts from the discussion Jero and Linda had after viewing the seance film" (Connor, *et al*, 1986: 4). Finally, Connor provides an annotated translation of the entire recording of the seance, including the segments which did not appear in the film. This sort of careful documentation of the steps leading to textual (filmic and written) products, including unedited translated transcripts (the Balinese transcripts themselves are not provided), reflect the current concern, discussed above, with documenting and scrutinizing the interpretive process. In this sense, the monograph is a sort of "experimental" text, as discussed in Marcus and Fischer (1986) and Clifford and Marcus (1986).

This emphasis on the dialogic process of ethnographic work increasingly entails including the ethnographer along with her subject(s) in written or filmic textual products, as in *Jero on Jero*. Not only is Connor pictured throughout the film, interacting with Jero, but both T. and P. Asch find their way into the frame in the establishing and closing sequences, wielding camera and tape recorder, setting up equipment and checking sound levels, and following the proceedings with interest. In the monograph, T. Asch explains that the filmmakers failed to depict their own presence in *A Balinese Trance Seance* because "seances are formal events, and we did not feel it appropriate to participate" (Connor, *et al*, 1986: 46). The perceived need to include such an explanation illustrates the current self-consciousness about representational strategies. The long shots, subtitled dialogue, minimal narration, presence of the researchers in the texts, and depiction of the ongoing dialogue between Jero and Connor all contribute to the "post-modern" effect of the films and monograph (particularly the *Jero* film).

The use of such reflexive techniques in ethnographic film is not without precedent (Ruby, 1988 [1977]). Rouch (1975) advocated a more reciprocal relationship between ethnographer and "informants" which he called "'shared anthropology'. The observer is finally coming down from his ivory tower; his camera, his tape recorder, and his projector have led him...to the very heart of knowledge and, for the first time, his work is not being judged by a thesis committee but by the very people he came to observe...the only morally and scientifically possible anthropological attitude today" (Rouch, 1975: 100). *Jero* is the first film, however, to focus systematically on the response of an ethnographic subject to the filmed representation of herself. The production team had intended by this technique "to enable Jero...to speak for herself," but at several points throughout the monograph, they acknowledge and wrestle with the limits of this possibility:

[B]ut do the films present Jero's perspective? Every frame and every word spoken were selected by us, either consciously or unconsciously, so the films represent *our interpretation* of Jero's perspective. We assume that if we maintain temporal continuity (particularly in our translations of recorded dialogue) and use long shots, and if we include Jero's comments as she watches the film, the resulting materials will present her perspective more accurately than if we were to make films composed of short shots with no attempt to maintain spatial or temporal continuity or to present Jero's comments about the film. But the differences remain relative; films and books are only interpretations (*ibid*, p. 9).

This assertion of the interpretive nature of the ethnographic encounter, and the textual products that may result from it, represents a widespread perspective within contemporary cultural anthropology (see Ortner, 1984; Marcus and Fischer, 1986; Clifford, 1988). As noted above, current textual "experiments" are attempts to refigure the ethnographer/informant relation and to displace the conventions of authorial dominance which characterized earlier ethnographic texts. The *Jero* book and films, in the ways described above, are, to varying degrees, examples of such experiments.

CONCLUSION: OTHER REPRESENTATIONAL POSSIBILITIES

The *Jero* films do not exhaust the filmic possibilities for representing cultural others, however. Recent work by Worth and Adair, and by Trinh T. Minh-ha,

illustrate other possible directions such films might take. Rather than aiming the camera at the Navajo, Worth and Adair "undertook to teach a group of Navaho (sic) men and women to make their own motion pictures, on any subject they wanted, in order to elicit a 'visual flow' that could be analyzed semiotically, i.e. 'in terms of the structure of images and the cognitive processes or rules used in making those images'" (de Brigard, 1975: 31). The Navajo filmmakers eventually produced several short exercises and seven silent films, which were shown to the Navajo community as well as analyzed by the researchers. A set of films based on this model, which could include a variety of filmmaker/subject configurations pairing various cultural "Us-s" with different cultural "Them-s" might provide interesting material for investigating inter-cultural interpretive and representational processes.

In her film *Reassemblage*, Trinh Minh-ha experiments with a radically different approach to the problem of representing cultural others. Her innovative editing (unusual juxtapositions, transitions, shot angles, lengths, foci, and iconoclastic use of voice-over and music—all described in Penley and Ross, 1985) makes a film ostensibly about the lives of Senegalese village women "just as much about the act of *looking* at the village women as it is about their lives" (*ibid*, p. 87). All of these strategies, she asserts, "question the anthropological knowledge of the 'other,' the way anthropologists look at and present foreign cultures through media, here film" (*ibid*, p. 93). Rather than attempting to minimize the authorial control of the filmmaker, like the *Jero* group, Trinh foregrounds those very processes—framing, editing, transformation of subjects' discourse—to alert the audience to their otherwise largely invisible operation. Her intention is to subvert the anthropological enterprise entirely: "to suspend utterance—neither affirm nor negate—in other words, the refusal as I said in my film, to speak about the other" (*ibid*, p. 97).[5]

The dangers of misrepresenting cultural others, of skewing, containing, domesticating "the native's point of view" even while attempting to let others "speak for themselves," have recently been noted within anthropology as well:

[S]ome ethnographers have tamed the savage, not with the pen, but with the tape recorder, reducing him to a 'straight man,' as in the script of some obscure comic routine, for even as they think to have returned to 'oral performance' or 'dialogue,' in order that the native have a place in the text, they exercise total control over her discourse and steal the only thing she has left—her voice (Tyler, 1986: 128).

In a recent article in the feminist journal *Signs*, Mascia-Lees, Sharpe, and Cohen (1989) argue that the decentering of discursive authority which characterizes many "postmodern" texts may mask real power differentials among participants in the "dialogue." They question a theoretical stance which deconstructs the concept of individual subjectivity, just when long-suppressed subjects are beginning to articulate their perspectives: "When Western white males—who traditionally have controlled the production of knowledge—can no longer define the truth, their response is to conclude that there is not a truth to be discovered" (p. 15). They caution that the desire for "collaborative" ethnography is contradicted by the fact that the research product is ultimately that of the researcher. A "polyphonic" or "dialogic" textual form which suggests a sort of equality among voices may merely distort the fact that the researcher/author/editor is still speaking *for* the Other; indeed, in some cases "dialogue" may not be in the interests of exploited Others, who intentionally refuse it. In view of these dangers, the authors propose the notion of "situated truth," which takes account of actual power relations among participants in the ethnographic encounter.

Current work within linguistic anthropology, focused on the problems of "decentering discourse"—appropriating and re-contextualizing others' discourse-as-texts—may shed further light on the political dynamics of discursive representations, filmic and written (Bauman, 1987). Future ethnographic films must incorporate such understandings, if they are to develop new representational strategies which keep pace with changing practices and standards for ethnographic writings.

Although the *Jero* films were informed by such concerns, an exploration of the problems of filmic representation was not their primary goal. Rather, the production team aimed at producing films which could "for purposes of pedagogy" be treated "as empirical data"—a next-best-thing to fieldwork—along with a monograph to be used "as a reference book to try to answer some of these questions" (Connor, *et al*, 1986: 8). These combined materials, as noted above, were also meant to "stimulate interest...[and] promote broader and more scholarly use of film in anthropology" (*ibid*, 1986: 39).

Following upon the theoretical currents developed above, it is possible to imagine new sorts of ethnographic film practice which will seek ways to incorporate a multiplicity of voices in dialogue, contradiction, and conflict, rather than forced resolution. Such films will acknowledge and address the dynamics of particular neo-colonial/postmodern inter-cultural encounters, rather than treating "cultures" as internally coherent and the relations among them (if treated at all) as apolitical.

As Walter Benjamin argued before Mead and Bateson ever ventured to Bali, there is no aesthetic solution for rendering a work politically progressive if its own relations of production are not themselves revolutionary (Benjamin, 1984 [1934]). Rouch outlined the seeds of such a practice in his notion of a participant camera and of a shared cinema-anthropology, but the sort of technology which could make such an idea practicable-- largely automatic, inexpensive portable video camcorders—had not yet been developed. Today, we have the technology, and there is no reason why Rouch's predictions should not be enacted: "[T]he anthropologist will no longer monopolize the observation of things. Instead, both he (sic) and his culture will be observed and recorded. In this way ethnographic film will help us 'share' anthropology" (Rouch, 1975).

NOTES

[1] See Clifford, 1988; Clifford and Marcus, 1986; Marcus and Cushman (1982), "Ethnographies as Texts," *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 11: 25-69; Marcus and Fischer, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986) for detailed discussions of the theoretical bases of such work, and of the novel textual strategies currently being explored.

[2] In fact, four films were eventually made from all of this footage, and the monograph *Jero Tapakan: Balinese Healer* (1986) is meant to accompany all of them. The present paper, however, deals only with *A Balinese Trance Seance* and *Jero on Jero: A Balinese Trance Seance Observed.*

[3] I was not able to find any material analogous to the discussions of how the photographs were chosen in *Balinese Character,* which documented the details of the editing process for *Trance and Dance in Bali,* but it is possible that such information could be found in M. Mead and R. Metraux (1953), *The Study of Culture at a Distance.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press; this volume was unavailable during the preparation of this paper.

[4] I have found no explicit statement detailing when and how the film was edited, but Mead does mention that they "cut a few films" in the two years following their return from the field (Mead, 1972: 261).

[5] See also her *Woman, Native, Other* (1989) for an extensive critique of Western anthropology's historic monopoly on other- cultural representation.

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Culture and Technology in Education: The *Yugtarvik Museum Videodisc Project* and *Yupik for Non-Speakers*

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The proliferation and cost-effectiveness of educational media such as the computer, audiotape, videotape and videodisc have enabled researchers to record, interpret and display information in ways that were barely imaginable only a generation ago. A combination of these technologies, often referred to as *multimedia*, can provide a powerful simulation of an experience as well as an opportunity for learners to manipulate information through decisions based upon their own interests and prerequisite knowledge. This form of *interactive* instruction is made possible through the use of simple-to-operate computer programs such as Hypercard© for the Macintosh or Linkway©, for MSDOS machines, that allow people with limited computer experience to perform sophisticated programming operations. By far, the most popular form of *interactive multimedia* is the computer/videodisc tandem that has led to many innovative programs including the *Yugtarvik Museum Project*©, a blend of culture and technology described in this article.

Videodisc

Many educators and anthropologists are using the videodisc, an increasingly affordable technology, as a tool for recording visual and audio data and then disseminating their work through universities, museums, libraries or public schools. A videodisc combines the features of videotape and laser technologies, making it *perhaps the perfect medium for a postmodernist, reflexive, involved age, breaking down part of the gap between author and reader* (Macfarlane, 1990).

Storing images such as slides, maps, documents and motion sequences on a videodisc is a better alternative than placing the material on videotape because a disc is made of more durable wear-resistent material. The videodisc machine can play continuous motion video or can be paused to show an individual picture for many hours. Another advantage of videodisc is that laser technology allows for almost instantaneous access of either a still frame or a motion picture sequence— the same precise search and pause functions are unavailable with a videotape recorder. Additionally, the videodisc machine can be controlled by a computer, a bar code reader or by a remote control unit, allowing the learner the flexibility to determine the flow and display of both video and textual information. Using a computer, text can be placed and altered over videodisc screen images permitting any disc to be customized for a specific audience. Students can then decide the format and sequence of information, enabling them to have greater control over their instructional tools than ever before (see Macfarlane, 1990, or Sponder & Schall, 1990, for more details about videodisc technology).

The videodisc has proven to be an effective educational technology that is helping to restructure the learning environment of many public schools and universities (Sheingold & Tucker, 1990; Lawrence & Price, 1987; Soled, Schare, Clark, Dunn & Gilman, 1989; Char & Tally, 1989). In fact, since 1990 the state of Texas has allowed selected videodisc programs to be used in place of traditional science textbooks, providing educational opportunities that are appropriate for both an information-oriented economy and a culturally diverse multilingual population. Other states such as Florida and California have adopted similar policies toward videodisc instruction and more states are expected to follow their example.

Technology and Visual Anthropology

Anthropologists have also turned to the videodisc medium to store film, video, documents and pictures of artifacts found in public and private collections or at inaccessible locations. Consequently, videodisc presentations of ethnographic films are becoming an important feature of many museums, governmental agencies and universities (Macfarlane, 1990; Scheinman, 1990). While there may be an ongoing debate over the function of video in anthropology (Raymond, 1991),

our experience with videodisc, computers and multimedia at the University of Alaska Fairbanks offers some evidence that visual and electronically recorded data can be an effective way to portray important cultural information within an educational setting, allowing members of a particular culture to present their activities and beliefs in a non-traditional but effective multimedia format.

Culture and Media

The significance of using educational technologies to present traditional lifestyles is that issues of cultural preservation, social status and survival are addressed in a powerful and unique way. The public medium of communication in western Alaska is usually English, although the dominant language and culture of the region are Yupik Eskimo. Not surprisingly, with the occasional exception of public broadcasting, both television and radio are oriented towards the mainstream middle-class America. The English language electronic media combined with an absence of Yupik educational materials tends to reinforce the status of English and non-Native culture as the most visible and therefore most desirable. As a result, in many Alaska Native villages there is great concern about the continued use of the Yupik language and the encroachment of western culture on the traditional subsistence lifestyle (Alaska Federation of Natives, 1989). One of our goals was to develop culturally-appropriate multimedia programs so that students, teachers and community members could bring elements of traditional Yupik culture into the public arena and into the classroom, using a *high status format*. While various groups have utilized videotape and audiotape to record their language and culture (Turner, 1990), it is still uncommon for multimedia to be utilized as an anthropological tool in the public school classroom.

The Yugtarvik Museum Project

During the Spring of 1989 a team of University of Alaska Fairbanks faculty and students collaborated with staff from the Yugtarvik Regional Museum and the Lower Kuskokwim School District to design and develop a videodisc display based upon the contents of the Yugtarvik museum. The idea behind the project was to create an interactive computer/videodisc program that Alaska Native students could use to present information about their culture in an exciting and dynamic format. We wanted to extend Wigginton's *Foxfire* (1967) metaphor so that students could not only write about their culture but also enhance their presentations with audio and video information. Students would be able to interview their parents and Yupik elders and then present their stories, in their way, within a multimedia format.

Our Yugtarvik Museum Videodisc contains hundreds of pictures of Yupik objects, artifacts and crafts in addition to sequences demonstrating traditional skills such as dancing, mask making and skin sewing. We added graphics and titles to many of the pictures and subsequently developed a Hypercard computer program that calls up a blank computer screen and a corresponding videodisc picture. Students then added pictures, graphics, animation and information gathered from original and secondary sources about the various objects pictured on the disc such as drums, dance masks, baskets and hunting tools (Sponder & Schall, 1990). The computer program simulates a tour through the museum, and clicking on any individual object, such as a basket, lets the visitor see a picture of the basket on an external color monitor (from the videodisc) and pictures of baskets and text (on the computer screen).

Cross-Cultural Considerations

Putting the multimedia presentation together also helped us to focus on differences in cross-cultural communication. For example, we consistently used the computer term *icon* in our written and audio directions. An icon is a small picture on the computer screen that is used as a symbol—a small basket on a computer menu will, when activated, lead to pages of information about how baskets are made. We translated *icon* into Yupik and when students activated the *help* button the computer told them, in Yupik, to *touch the basket icon for information about baskets*. We didn't realize that the Yupik term was the same one used by the Russian Orthodox Church to mean a *religious icon* and discovered that using the word in our program was culturally inappropriate. Slowly, the Yupik members of our team and our Yupik students have been helping the rest of us to portray Yupik culture in a correct and appropriate manner.

Where is the Museum Really Located?

Eventually, we hope that enough work and revision will be done on the multimedia program to make sure that it is a valid representation of many aspects of traditional Yupik culture. We also want the program to serve as an easy-to-use

educational tool for Alaska Native children. The Yugtarvik Regional Museum we filmed is now closed, but due to reopen in 1993 as part of a new *Yupik Cultural Center* in Bethel, Alaska. Although the original museum is only a memory it still exists on videodisc in many Alaskan classrooms. The effectiveness and success of our multimedia program rest on the cooperation and partnership among the school, the family and the community.

Yupik for Non-Speakers

Another use of technology that quickly developed an anthropological focus was *Yupik for Non-Speakers© (YNS)*, a Hypercard program that we designed to assist formal Yupik language instruction. Through the simulation of a classroom language lesson, complete with sounds, animations and activities, we were able to provide a powerful independent study system for our students. YNS also has an audio dictionary and a self-testing mechanism that allow students to work through the program at their own pace while practicing Yupik on many cognitive levels. Although mainstream computer programs have been used with Native American students for some time (Strickland, 1987), the easy programmability of Hypercard makes it a natural tool for educators to develop culture-specific and even classroom-specific applications.

Before 1985, Yupik language instruction at the Kuskokwim Campus was primarily text-based and focused upon teaching students to read and write the language rather than speak it. While students were usually enthusiastic about studying Yupik not many of them actually succeeded in learning more than a few words. In 1985 the KUC faculty who taught Yupik went to a new system of language instruction, Total Physical Response (TPR) (Asher, 1977), which eschews textbooks in favor of an oral approach to language learning. The method has students following commands given in Yupik until they can understand and eventually speak the language. Although there is no attempt to learn to read or write Yupik for almost a year, students often leave class physically tired but obviously satisfied and laughing out loud. While the classes have become very popular students clamored for supplementary materials to help them study outside of class.

Slap the Cup With Tea?

The early work on the program was done by non-Native technologists who took the college course and developed the computer program to assist their learning. The Yupik staff reviewed the program and discovered to their chagrin that when they pressed a button entitled *a cup of tea*, the program told them to *(slap) the cup with tea*. The program was filled with many such strange constructions which led to repeated belly laughs by the Yupik-speaking audience. As the YNS program developed the language constructions were frequently changed to reflect the correct Yupik syntax and cultural sensibilities.

The collaborative effort has taught all of us that presenting language and culture in a computerized format is a slow, deliberate process with negotiated outcomes that reflect the reality of the people who use the language, and an active tool to present their world view. In sum, developing a computer application or an interactive multimedia system has many similarities to producing an ethnographic film or videotape—the respect and care that go into a film production are no less important in designing and producing computer or videodisc programs. Both *Yupik for Non-Speakers* and the *Yugtarvik Museum Videodisc* are continually being revised and updated because interactive technology, like culture, is dynamic and can be adapted to reflect either changing realities or a deeper understanding of phenomena.

What's Next?

Additional multimedia programs are under development including *Yupik Science©* and *Introduction to Traditional Yupik Culture©*. Both programs will use ethnographic materials as educational tools that will continue to reinforce the status and influence of the Yupik language and culture in western Alaskan public schools. As anthropologists and educators we believe that our work serves to illustrate a few of the potential applications and extensions of visual anthropology in the classroom.

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Note on the Screening of *Voice of the Whip* at the Imbaba Camel Market, Cairo

Louis Werner, Producer and co-director.

Voice of the Whip documents an 800 mile camel drive made from Kordofan Province in the west central Sudan to markets in Egypt, following the desert route used since pharaonic times (as noted in the tomb hieroglyphic of Harkouf, court official and expedition leader during the reign of Pepi II) and now known in Arabic as the way of the forty (Darb al-'Arba 'een), named for the journey's average number of days.

This overland camel trade is controlled by urban Sudanese merchants whose purchasing agents in Kordofani market towns assemble trail herds and hire trail bosses and camel drivers, many from the Kababeesh (sing. Kabbaash) tribal federation. The area's traditional pastoralist economy has been disrupted by drought, resettlement, and adjacent civil wars (many marauding camel thieves are now armed with automatic weapons), which increasingly has forced subsistence breeders and herdsmen into refugee camps outside Umdurman or into the wage labor market as camel drivers for the export trade.

In February 1988, the three-person crew accompanied a group of three camel herds led by three trail bosses: Bilal, an old and grey 45 year veteran of the trail; KhairAllah, an experienced and widely respected camel man in his prime; and Yousif, an inexperienced 25 year old who was accompanying the other two for the first time as a trail boss. Each boss had three drivers under his command, so there were some 15 of us altogether on the trail.

I had accompanied KhairAllah on a similar drive in 1984 and had seen him once in the intervening years at the Cairo Market, when I had given him copies of a magazine article I had written about the journey featuring photos of him and our other companions. This previous experience enhanced the entire crew's credibility and eased our entry into the drivers' work routine. It also helped that the crew rode camels alongside the drivers, ate millet porridge ('asseeda) from the common bowl, and helped with the camp chores when possible.

Both trips were arranged by my friend of ten years, the Sudanese camel trader Bashir Abu Jaib, whose word and reputation in both desert and urban circles has more clout than even government documents. On one occasion, a rural policeman rejected my official permits and threatened to put me in jail but suddenly

smiled broadly after reading Abu Jaib's letter of introduction. My social ties with the drivers' employer naturally affected how they received us.

Without a specific shooting plan in mind beforehand, we decided to focus on what appeared to be key interpersonal relationships between the master trail boss Bilal, the teacher KhairAllah, and the apprentice Yousif. At the midway point, however, Yousif raced ahead with his herd in order to arrive at the market before the others, and the films emerging student-teacher theme was left without the student (i.e., Yousif) available to the camera.

The film then was refocused to the subtle discord and ill will that Yousif had caused among the others by his selfish behavior. It is a generally accepted social code to end a desert journey with whomever one had first set out, especially after having benefitted from the collective protection of companions when crossing the country. Parallel interviews on camera with KhairAllah and Yousif at the Egyptian market underline the issues at stake in the films conclusion.

Besides the interpersonal focus, the film provides a visual inventory of camel driving and trail chores such as grazing, hobbling, watering, vetting, and camp making. Folkloric elements include Bilal reciting campfire-side poetry, KhairAllah telling a humorous camel thief story, and various drivers singing improvised camel driving songs (classic Arabic, *hudaa*'; Kabbaashi dialect, *du'bayt*). The film ends at the railway station in the market town of Drau north of Aswan, as the camels are loaded for onward shipment to the Cairo market.

I had the opportunity to screen *Voices of the Whip* at the Imbaba Camel Market in Cairo on December 11, 1990, some thirty months after it was shot and eighteen months after it was edited. The Imbaba market is Cairo's gathering point for Sudanese camel drivers and functions as a social space analogous to that of the summer wells in Dar al-Kababeesh, when far-flung tribesmen gather in central locations to exchange news and commentary.

When I visited the market on Friday before the planned screening, I was surprised to learn that KhairAllah had just arrived from a drive. He and I had not seen eachother since the last trip and had only been in touch indirectly through Aba Jaib's son Mahdi, who manages the family's business in Cairo. Also by coincidence, the trail boss Bilal and the young driver Hamid, the latter unnamed in the film but featured in one extended camel singing scene, had also just arrived with separate herds.

From a Kabbaashi point of view, unforeseen and unplanned encounters are not unusual in the desert, at wells, or at the market. In fact, it was by such a coincidence that KhairAllah became part of the film. Even though I had asked the camel trader Abu Jaib to send him as trail boss on the camel drive we planned to film, KhairAllah was still delayed in Khartoum on the day of our departure from the Kordofani town of al-Nahud. Another trail boss would be sent in his stead. An hour before setting off, however, KhairAllah arrived by overnight lorry and calmly took charge of the herd. I was greatly relieved to be accompanied by a person I knew would be of great help on a difficult film shoot.

Similarly, it was by chance that Bilal was chosen for our drive. Abu Jaib's purchasing agent in al-Nahud had been uncertain about sending Bilal or RahmatAllah as the third trail boss. Both were experienced but also quite infirm, Bilal from arthritis and RahmatAllah from near blinding trachoma. To settle the question, the agent wrote their names on two scraps of paper, crumpled them, and placed them on the sand before me to choose. Just then the wind moved one of the scraps a few inches, which I picked up, saying, "this one wants to travel." On it was written Bilal's name.

I was overjoyed to see KhairAllah, Bilal, and Hamid unexpectedly in Cairo and thrilled that they would be present for the film screening. It was fitting that the same element of chance which had first brought us together, and made the film possible, had reconvened us again two and a half years later and made it possible for them to see the finished product.

KhairAllah too seemed pleased, slightly giggly in a bemused sort of way, and eager to talk in private. We went into his dark quarters at the edge of a camel paddock, a smokey room where a tea fire burned, and shared Camel cigarettes from a carton I brought him and viewed my snapshots of the 1988 trip.

I was glad that Bilal was present, for he and KhairAllah were old trail companions and in the film were both allies against and victims of Yousif's conduct. After greeting me warmly he became silent again, a trait that had prevented us from focusing on him and developing his film character in any significant way.

During the film shoot, Hamid had ben another story. As one of the youngest drivers, he was assigned the campmaking tasks which we often assisted and helped us draw close. He was gregarious and worldly, having worked in Iraq for some time, and was proud to think that we shared the common experience of travelling abroad by airplane. He was also patient in explaining things about camels and helping with our film gear.

At the market, Hamid was dressed in western clothes and kept to a circle of friends, all camel drivers, similarly attired. I barely recognized him, but we were quick to catch up on news about our respective colleagues. He seemed quite ill-at-ease, however, speaking nervously and under his breath, and he was reluctant to sit in the same circle as KhairAllah and Bilal, who barely acknowledged him. For whatever reason, my hope that all the film subjects in the market would gather together to reminisce about the trip and accept public plaudits was not to be.

Yousif's absence was almost as strongly felt as his presence would have been, it seemed to me, although this may have been due to my insistent questioning of KhairAllah about their relations subsequent to the trail incident. There had been no lasting fallout between them, he assured me, and the matter seemed to have been forgotten. In retrospect, I began to wonder myself if perhaps I had overplayed this incident in my follow up interviews as a way of creating some sense of film tension and drama in what otherwise had been, speaking honestly, a rather monotonous forty days.

It turned out that Yousif was still working as a trail boss, contrary to his intentions stated in the film, when he said he hoped to work overseas, and in fact was on the trail with a herd at that very moment. KhairAllah noted with satisfaction (lightly, not meanly) that this time he had arrived before Yousif, who therefore would miss seeing the film.

The American Cultural Center provided a 16mm projector, remote speakers, and a screen which we erected in one of the markets empty paddocks. I arrived in late afternoon to pass the word and just after sunset prayer, with some 200 Sudanese drivers and a few Egyptian marketeers standing and sitting in wide rows (fairly orderly given that they arranged themselves), I screened the film.

This audience's response during the screening was much more animated than I had seen it for American, British, or Egyptian audiences. The Sudanese interjected and exhorted during KhairAllah's thief story and Bilal's poetry recitation, praised the meat eating scene, laughed during the camel pad catching sequence when the animal growled loudly, shouted out whenever they recognized people momentarily on screen, and whispered commentary among themselves during the interviews that examined the Yousif incident.

Their behavior was somewhat contrary to what I had anticipated. I did not necessarily expect the same hushed, full attention and respect of a typical western documentary film audience, but perhaps I did expect seeing some wide-eyed awe and amazement of an audience unaccustomed to watching film, certainly not in a camel market paddock and certainly not in their dialect, about individuals that most knew personally.

Instead the Sudanese reacted to the film as if it were not a film at all but a series of live events they were witnessing from the perimeter. They came alive to the screen, speaking to and interacting with the screen subjects as if they were flesh and blood. During Bilal's poetry recitation and KhairAllah's camel thief story, for instance, they behaved as if they had been sitting beside them, reacting and interjecting just as the listeners had on screen. KhairAllah was in fact so well known to most in attendance that responding to him on screen was perhaps like cheering for a local hero

During the screening, I walked back and forth between KhairAllah and Bilal, who stood together near the center, and Hamid, who was silently in the rear. These three were the most solemn of everyone in the audience. I wondered if they were perhaps nervous about how they would be made to "look" by the filmakers before their fellows, or rather if they were simply curious about how the screen would make them really look. Either way, I suspect the high seriousness and slight apprehension are near universal reactions for subjects of a documentary film watching for the first time.

After the film, KhairAllah, Bilal, and Hamid were surrounded and questioned in a lively manner. To my surprise following a random questioning of the audience. Yousif's conduct was not a controversial issue to them. All agreed that he should not have done what he did, but all also agreed with his explanation in his final film interview. A camel driver's job is terrible, he said, and one wants to be done with it, (i.e., reach the end of the trail) as soon as one can.

I had feared that the film might tarnish Yousif's reputation, hurt his future employment prospects as a trail boss, or cause further unpleasantness between him and KhairAllah. But there was none of it. The audience saw the logic of his decision, what might be called his new style thinking, at the same time they saw his violation of accepted trail conduct, an example of old style thinking. The audience in fact did not even recognize what I thought had been posed as a rather neat dichotomy. So much for organizing principles!

The next day, the Economic Councellor at the Sudanese Embassy in Cairo, the man responsible for the camel trade protocol who had attended another screening, came to the market and engaged KhairAllah in a long private conversation. From a distance I saw that they were smiling, and afterwards the Councellor wanted their picture taken together.

Early in the film, KhairAllah says, "Everyone in Umdurman knows me as a famous trail boss. I've traveled to Fasher, Nyala, Mileet." While the film's lasting impact on KhairAllah and his tribal status is uncertain, I assume that his reputation at least has now reached even higher and wider circles than before.

Criteria for Style and Content in Ethnographic Film

Peter Biella, Temple University

The photographs of Imparakuyo Maasai and Wakwere woman which appear toward the end of this essay were shot in 1980 in eastern Tanzania. They are part of an ethnographic collaboration I undertook with photographer Richard Cross and anthropologist Peter Rigby. These pictures, among seven thousand made at the time, conduct a visual critique, of arguments in the anthropological literature, which attempts to define "scientific" or "ethnographic" styles and uses of film (Biella 1984, 1989). The specific photographs here react to the most common tendency in that literature—proposals for a style of filming which is based on an empiricist model of science. Because the empiricist epistemology is severely limited, styles based on it also limit the content and communicative potential of ethnographic film. The photographs demonstrate inadequacies of empiricist methodology.

The basic tenet of empiricism is that human understanding is best advanced inductively, through the student's high exposure to sense impressions which were collected in a limited context. Many authors of an empiricist bent, who wish to advance human understanding through ethnographic film, call for a style and methodology of filmmaking which conform to an inductive orientation. Such authors advocate the use of lengthy, sinc-sound clips of film which are presumed to let activities reveal their own cultural contexts by themselves, as an inductive demonstration. So-called "fictional," non-inductive techniques, such as the use of voice-overs for theoretical explanation, are strongly discouraged.

In order to critique the problems which induction and empiricism pose for scientific understanding, I will discuss a publication by Karl Heider. His *Ethnographic Film* (1976) is the most complete argument for a film style and methodology based on empiricist assumptions. Because of its longevity as well as its empiricism, this publication continues to require serious attention.

Heider's argument for an ideal filmmaking method unfolds through his presentation of "criteria of ethnographicness." Although not described as such, these are criteria for film *style* and *holism* which are supposed to permit one to judge the scientific value of ethnographic films and to produce such films most scientifically.

Heider argues that "maximally ethnographic" (1976:4) filming should principally adhere to three *stylistic* criteria. These direct one to film:

(1) "whole bodies," (that is, bodies filmed in long-shot, with few or no close-ups [1976:7]), while also recording—

(2) synchronous sound (ideally adding no narration and no non-synchronous indigenous music or song [1976:74, 68-70]), and making only—

(3) camera runs which are of unusually-long temporal duration (using few or no montage sequences and few or no cut-aways [1976:91, 78-79, 89, passim]).

Heider's stylistic criteria require the filmmaker to concentrate of activities that occur within a fairly shallow continuum of space and time. In the following, I refer to this "shallow continuum" as a short-hand description for the principle effect achieved by Heider's three stylistic criteria—an effect which causes film-makers to concentrate on the immediate spatio-temporal context. It may be seen that this emphasis can occur only with the corresponding deemphasis of theory, comparison and diachronic analysis.

In addition to his criteria for an ethnographic filming style, Heider provides two *holistic* criteria for ethnographic content. These direct one to film:

(4) "whole [complete] persons" (1976:7, 89-90), who perform—

(5) "whole acts" (selected through ethnographic research as representing a holistic view [1976: 6-7, 74ff]).

On the face of it, Heider's stylistic criteria appear to contradict those for holistic content. The former emphasize a shallow continuum in space and time which radically discourages theory, comparison and diachronic analysis. The latter appear to call for a filmic exegesis which is much broader in scope. This methodological contradiction, one of several, is masked by a structured ambiguity in Heider's text.

According to general usage, *holism* means the association of a broad variety of cultural characteristics which the ethnographer has liked together through theoretical argument. Holistic analysis is generally understood to include a broadly-based comparative and diachronic component. Although Heider acknowledges general usage—he cites, for example, an ethnography's need to provide a "social, political and economic context" (1976:76)—his criteria of ethnographicness *promote* a much more limited meaning of the word: "holism accords very well with the capability of film to show things and events in physical and temporal context" (1976:75; cf., 6-7, 74-76). The contradiction is hidden by Heider's idiosyncratic and ambiguous definition. Its effect is the reduction of holism to a shallow continuum of space and time.

The photographs below critique Heider's first stylistic criterion, that of "whole bodies." They underscore the methodological contradiction between style and holism as well as others in the model. As described, filming "whole bodies" is supposed to send a high amount of undistorted information to film viewers, crucial for empiricist method: scientific understanding is thought to be reliable only when inductions are based on a a large sample size. Heider affirms the general need for high information when he argues that viewers of exotic ethnographic films "need all overcontextualization" (1976:79, 75). Concerning the specific need for high information met by criterion of "whole bodies," Heider argues that the wide-angle shot is the scientific ideal not only because it presents "much general cultural information" about body-movement communication, but also because the "deprivation of information in the close-up is particularly felt" (1976D:78-79).

Immediately after arguing for a maximum of information, however, Heider notes exceptions. He points out "extraordinary" cases where low information occurs in good written ethnographies and he asserts that *maximal* presentation of information in film is "unrealistic realism":

> it is conceivable that a short and simple act could be filmed by several cameras simultaneously and then projected on multiple screens. This would be an interesting exercise. But it would merely be the reproduction of reality, not the understanding and analysis of reality which is the basis of ethnology (or any other science) [1976:83, emphasis supplied: cf., 86-87].

This statement points to one of the fundamental weakness of empiricism and Heider's stylistic criteria. Once a viewer's understanding is recognized to be distinct from the reception of high information, there can be no logical or scientific ground for a method which is based strictly on induction, on the shallow continuum of Heider's stylistic criteria, or on the idiosyncratic definition of holism.

To demonstrate this argument visually, the following pairs of photographs undertake the 'interesting exercise" which Heider suggests. As may be seen, two cameras were used, almost-simultaneously taking each set of photographs. The two pictures in each pair were made of the same activities: Imparakuyo (fem. plural; fem. singular, *Omparakuoni*) Maasai and Wakwere women draw water from a well. The pictures were made from locations about fifteen feet apart, with the cameras turned 90-degrees to one another. *Figure1* shows how the two cameras were placed in relation to activities at the well.

The image-pairs permit a viewer to see more than the maximum information called for by Heider's "whole bodies" criterion. In addition to a frontal composition, the photos also give a second view, from the sides of the women. Thus, if one of Heider's principal arguments were actually true—if in exotic locations viewers do "need all the information they can get"—then each pair of images would be superior to and would create more understanding than only one. For most viewers, and even for most anthropologists familiar with exoticism, the opposite is true. Precisely because these image-pairs contain an unusually high amount of information, they obstruct understanding. Viewers first become confused by the double-images and then distracted as they puzzle out each locus of twice-recorded action. This exercise is amusing, but it distracts most viewers from the ethnographic nuances which occur among Imparakuyo and Wakwere at the well. (if the double images were in a live-action film the distraction would be greater.)

Accompanying each pair of images are translations of the participants' words recorded at the time. Although this simultaneous dialogue is *superficially* comprehensible, the extent to which its meaning actually requires decipherment is indicated in the *Background Sketch* and in the *Commentary*. The photographs, too, give the impression of high information, in part because they are wide-angle. Yet to the extent that any information masks the need for interpretive guidance, it creates an illusion. The "whole body" may be on the screen, but its meaning is significantly absent. The double-take at the well then stretches Heider's "whole bodies" criterion to its *reductio ad absurdum*. When taken to the logical extreme—that "whole-bodies" have backsides—the criterion generates too much information. Too much information negates "understanding and analysis of reality."

Heider's argument therefore faces a second failure of empiricism, the contradiction between high information and low understanding. As Heider struggles with this problem while attempting to preserve all of his stylistic criteria, he proposes an apparently innocent compromise. He argues that whenever understanding in a film is *low*— whenever, in his words, it is *necessary* to explain cultural "mysteries" and "contexts"—filmmakers may legitimately disregard the second stylistic criterion for synchronous sound and may use voice-over narration to create *high* understanding (1976:72; cf., 7, 47-48, 70-73). (Elsewhere in the text, however, Heider withdraws this endorsement for narration [1976d:74].)

Despite its appearance, Heider's compromise proposal is far from innocent: it leads to a final contradiction which nullifies the only real claim he has in favor of synchronous sound and the other stylistic criteria, the claim that their use is "maximally ethnographic." This is true because, simply put, in culture, *every* context is 'mysterious." In ethnography, explanations are *always necessary*. Thus, though it appears that Heider will permit exceptions to his shallow stylistic criteria on rare occasions, in fact, any criteria which realistically promote understanding require that shallow space-time depiction be avoided much of the time. Understanding, like holism, results from a blend of theory, comparison and diachrony.
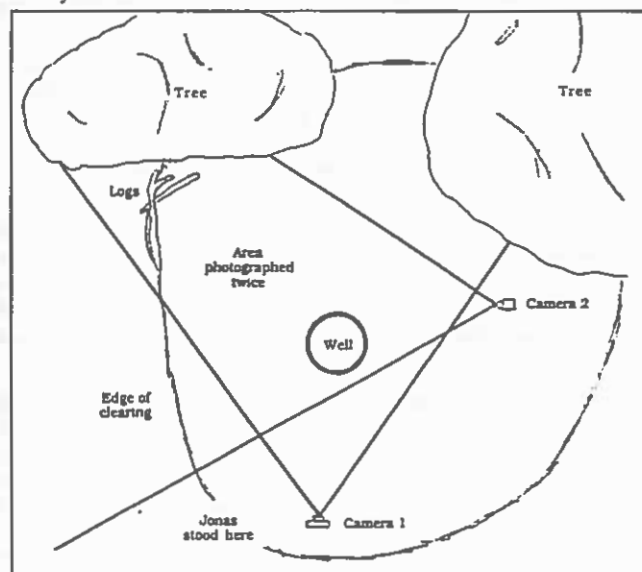

figure 1. Position of the two cameras in relation to the well

Background Sketch

The well in the following photographs is located about eight miles from the town of Lugoba and three miles from the Ilparakuyo homestead where Peter Rigby, Richard Cross and I lived. It is the closest source of good water. A second small water pump is located about two miles from this spot and four miles from our homestead.

In this part of West Bagamoyo District, hundreds of Ilparakuyo homesteads are interspersed throughout thousands of field cultivated by culturally and ethnically distinct Wakwere (sing. *Mukwere*) farmers. Since the Tanxanian government introduced its policy of forced sedentarism on transhumant pastoralists, the relation between the cattle-herding Ilparakuyo and their farming neighbors has grown increasingly more intimate despite continuing conflict and a four-year drought. Stability of relations, such as it is, comes in part from a symbiosis of the two ecological adaptations, herding and farming, and from shared feasts. Ilparakuyo are comparatively wealthy (because their cattle provide them with superior nutrition), whereas the herdless Wakwere have political and numerical superiority, outnumbering Ilparakuyo by about one hundred to one (Rigby 1984, i.p.; cf. Beidelman 1961, 1964).

Richard, Jonas Wanga and I arrived at the well in mid-morning with two Imparakuyo co-wives and a young cross-cousin. The special filming circumstances that required two photographers prompted Jonas to offer to come and record sound for us. He is related to the co-wives by marriage: their husband, Katao, is his brother-in-law. As we did ourselves, Jonas refers to these women as *nagari* (lit."child", or "wife") since they are married to a man of his age-set. He knows them extremely well, spending much of his free time at their homestead.

Jonas' Ilarusa-Maasai family is wealthy and, unlike Ilparakuyo Maasai, invests deeply in farming as well as in pastoralism. Jonas is well known in the region by Ilparakuyo and Wakwere alike: not only is he a prominent Christian and well to do, as a transplanted Olarusai he is a member of the only Maasai Section which tills the soil. For this reason, he is sometimes subjected to friendly jokes by his Ilparakuyo friends and in-laws who liken him disparagingly to cultivating Wakwere. Yet, as will become clear, there is little love lost between Jonas and this particular group of cultivators.

These photographs were made in the middle of an encounter which had begun about five minutes earlier. Shortly after we set up our cameras and placed Jonas off screen to record sound, a group of four Wakwere women and two children came to the well. Upon discovering us, these women immediately began to discuss collecting their water at the distant pump. Jonas mocked the camera-shy Wakwere, telling them that they were free to do anything they wanted but that we would stay and take pictures as long as we liked. The alternative to being photographed that Jonas gave the women—walking two miles to the only other source of good water—was naturally unattractive.

In addition to firing verbal shots at the Wakwere women, Jonas also makes joking disparagement of Katao's first wife, calling here a devil with tail and horns. She rejects his description with characteristic forcefulness. It is ironic that despite our efforts to include "maximum information" in these photographs, Jonas, who is off-camera, is a principle protagonist of the scene.

Dramatis Personae

(in the first photograph)

From the left, the small girl cleaning the bucket, the baby and the adult are Wakwere. The latter is *"Mukwere Woman"* in the transcriptions.(In the third and fourth image-pairs, the three other Wakwere women allow themselves to be photographed.) Wakwere women wear hair, no necklaces and print dresses.

Next to the right, the Emparakuoni with the bucket is Katao's eldest wife, mother of his baby daughter. Because I am not permitted to use the names of women in her age-set, she is *"First Wife"* in the transcriptions.

To her right is her co-wife who is *"Second Wife"*." At the time of these photographs, she had no children.

On the far right is their young cross-cousin. All of the Maasai women have shaved heads, necklaces and plain dresses.

Off-camera, "Jonas" Wanga recorded sound.

Dialogue and Commentary

I

Peter Biella [in English]: Same f/stop?

Richard Cross: I'm at 5.6 and 8.

Peter: Tell me when you do that.

Richard: I just did it.

First Wife: [in Swahili unless otherwise noted]: And you don't want a picture taken?

Mukwere Woman: I don't mind having one taken [1].

First Wife: Taking a picture is better than taking the voice.

Jonas: Wanga: If you don't want to photographed then you'd better go because even over there you'll be photographed as well as recorded.

Peter: Shoot, shoot, shoot!

First Wife: They've already taken some. They say, "hee!"

Second Wife: [to the Mukwere girl]: You, *meeki!* Bring me the gallon bucket.

First Wife: You! Little girl!

Jonas: Well, you're all on the tape. You're all on the tape! [*laughs*] [2]...

[1] To the extent that it is visual, the Wakwere reluctance to be photographed is a "visual mystery" which requires interpretation. The women consider going to the distant water pump because, like many Wakwere, they believe photographs can harm them magically. In fact, three women are hiding from the cameras in first two of these image-pairs. (Buckets belonging to two of the three can just be made out in the tall grass, in the left-hand photograph of the second pair of images.) Later the women do permit themselves to be photographed.) The Wakwere's willingness to be photographed largely depends on their evaluation of the photographer's intent. Richard Cross and I were usually perceived to be benign, despite our obvious alignment with Ilparakuyo.

[2] It is fair to say that the tenseness of this situation was increased by our sound recordist's satirical comments. Jonas' remarks were perhaps fired as much by a Maasai aloofness toward cultivators as by his Christian disdain for the fear of magic: Jonas' joking personality is in contrast with that of his father (at right) who is the region's Olarusai Maasai Lutheran minister, an influential, charismatic and serious man.

II

Mukwere Woman: You think I'd let myself be photographed just like that?

Fist Wife: Your mother's cunt! You borrow my gallon bucket and don't bring it back! [3]

Mukwere Woman: Ok. I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I made a mistake.

First Wife: [all in Kimaasai below, unintelligible to the Wakwere]: These cultivator women are ashamed.

Second Wife: Let's pour this one out. There's rope hair in it.

First Wife: Where are we going to get a better rope? This is all we have.

Second Wife: Let's pour this out.

First Wife [in Kimaasai]: That one [a Mukwere woman] said she would [draw water] at first. That one, that one.

Second Wife [in Kimaasai]: yes, that one. And then the other one told her, "No."

First Wife: [in Kimaasakai]: She's like a donkey! What does she know?

[3] Traditional hostility against the cultivators is expressed in many ways. When Ilparakuyo children are born, their paternal grandmother writes a song about them and the incidents surrounding their birth. Following is a fragment of the birth song written for Katao's nephew. His grandmother sang it frequently in the homestead.

O my little man

O my little warrior

Hi ye-ye he ye yah

Do not be afraid of the cultivators

Little man

Do not be afraid my little warrior

Hi ye-ye he ye yah

Take a shotgun and kill the cultivators

This song, written in the spirit of hyperbole, still provides an important, if invisible, context for interpretation.

III

First Wife [all in Kimaasai below]: Is this for water also?
Jonas: Yes. Fill it. Bring it you devil.
First Wife: I'm not going to give it to you now!
Jonas: Just bring it.
First Wife: Why do you call me devil?
Jonas: Haven't you always been a devil? [4]
First Wife: I'm going to dump this water out!

Jonas: Don't!
[sound of water dumping]...
[4]
Because Jonas is related to Katao's First Wife by marriage, he shares a joking relationship with her. The joke of calling her a devil refers not only to what he considers her "heathen" religion and her notorious temper but also to an event which occurred two nights before. She was caught secretly taking snuff. This is a privilege which an Emparakuoni must purchase from her husband at the price of a cow. No such arrangement had been made between Katao and his wife.

IV

Jonas: Get the water, you tailed devil.
First Wife: I am not a devil with a tail!
Jonas: So what kind of devil are you? A horned devil? [5]
Richard: God, are we getting darker?
Peter: 5.6.
Richard: This is good at 90-degree angles. We ought to cover them either way.
Second Wife: If you can't reach it, leave it.
First Wife: [unintelligible]
Richard: Shoot them going away.
[5] Speaking of horned devils, no story of Katao's First Wife is complete without mention of her father-in-law, Koisenge, the fiery, undisputed patriarch of the homestead. In this photo, Koisenge sings a Swahili fighting song which he learned with the King's African Rifles. His exultation is prompted by the fact that he has just soundly defeated a Mukwere man in verbal dispute.
In making this picture, Richard Cross wisely ignored the ban on photographic close-ups and expressed his humorous interpretation of the event—Koisenge as a singing, horned, devil. The compositional skill in this and in the close-up photograph of Jonas' father, above, are indications of what is lost in criteria which seek to limit the interpretive guidance of the visual anthropologist.

Conclusion

The *Background Sketch* and *Commentary* above move from the shallow continuum of wide-angle and synchronous sound into a different world of analysis and understanding. Theory, comparison and diachrony, essences of all good ethnography, rarely present themselves unassisted before the documentary lens, no matter how wide the angle or how long the take. The necessary assistance must come from the ethnographer.

Heider's stylistic criteria do suggest a useful way to introduce data in a film study of whole-body communication, but their usefulness does not extend equally to *other* topics in ethnography. Unable to communicate a sense of holism as the word is normally understood, Heider's stylistic criteria would equally fail to communicate other important ethnographic perspectives. Among these, evolutionism, diffusionism, culture and personality, ethnoscience, structuralism, symbolic and interpretive anthropology, post-structuralism, and historical materialism would necessarily be lost. This is true because premises basic to all of these perspectives require the comparison and analysis of data which are broadly disbursed in space and time.

Theoretical and practical conclusions may be drawn. First, contrary to a basic tenet of empiricism, an increase in human understanding does not necessarily result from an increase in information. Other factors, notably theoretical guidance, are manifestly necessary for ethnographic education and understanding.

Second, because of the necessity for on-going guidance, filmmakers must frequently disregard Heider's stylistic criteria. Strict adherence to shallow space-time depiction is appropriate only for brief inductive demonstrations which are contextualized theoretically.

Third, as a corollary, in the absence of convincing counter-argument, it is most reasonable to introduce theoretical interpretations of ethnographic data on screen, when and where the data are presented.

Fourth, because theoretical ideas are abstract and comparative, and because they often involve diachronic analysis, filmmakers can only communicate them by making frequent use of those film conventions which Heider strongly discourages:the conventions include but are not limited to expository narration, song, music and other non-synchronous sound, close-up compositions, cut-aways and montage.

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Utilizing Visual Anthropology to do Ethnography: In-Depth Case Studies of Two Elders in the U.S.

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The article discusses the production and contents of two ethnographic video cassettes (VC) created during 18 months of anthropological fieldwork in an elite retirement facility in the urban Southwestern United States. These VCs are the results of two separate in-depth case studies and demonstrate the contribution visual anthropology makes to the general body of ethnographic literature. One study focuses on a 90-year-old man (Free 1988) and the other features an 85-year-old woman (Eppright et al. 1987). These elders discuss what it means to be old, single, affluent, and living in institutionalized retirement with "personal care" (carrying out daily activities with assistance of others [Springer and 1984]).

While dilemmas may be associated with video-taped ethnography, such as technological problems and/or space and environment for long-term storage of cassettes until videodisc technology becomes more widely used (Scheiman 1990), it lends an extra dimension to the ethnographic quality of the work (Collier and Collier 1986; Davis and Davis 1985; Ellen 1984; Kenworthy et al. 1985). According to these authors, its most salient contribution is that of capturing verbal and non-verbal aspects of the subject under study. Non-verbal communication, including para-verbal, is estimated to be 70% of total communication (Dr. William Pulte, personal communication, 1985). Therefore, disseminating the results of this research to the scientific community through video-taped cassettes is the purest replication possible of this fieldwork experience. As it was succinctly put by the anonymous early Chinese philosopher, "One picture is worth a thousand words."

Even so, criticism, such as subjects who seem to be "playing to the camera" (Stephanides 1990:498), has been levied at film and/or video-taped ethnography. Hence, care must be taken to ensure that the intent of the ethnographer is carried out (Lockwood 1990; Stephanides 1990; Wood 1989). The following questions offer a framework for accomplishing this goal:

1. does the researcher want a structured recreation of the findings, such as one with a full script and props

2. is the natural ethnographic scene with subjects and topics spontaneously presented

3. is the desired product better presented in a combination of these two?

In these two VCs, the introductions and summaries and conclusions were scripted; the interviews with the subjects were spontaneous.

These video-taped ethnographic accounts are not life or oral histories. That is, they are not examples of what Frank and Vanderburgh (1986:188) refer to as retrospective or contemporaneous life histories. Instead, these studies represent emic perspectives of these elders who live amid their own home furnishings in private apartments in institutionalized retirement. Data for these studies were generated from countless hours of separate conversations with each elder, which "permitted the participants to discuss their experiences in terms that were personally meaningful" (Willms et al. 1990:393). Thus, neither research subject experienced invasion of privacy (Langness and Frank 1981).

Listening to an old person's story, or "elderly reminiscing" (Free 1988), is a major research tool for gathering primary data about being old. Utilizing video-tape to record elderly reminiscing adds to the value of the ethnography because interpretation of verbal reports is increased by visual and auditory access to the key-informants and their environments. Moreover, it provides an important personal, psychological, and social resource to promote adaptation to one's aging process, reduce the effects of stress often associated with and/or related to aging in the U.S., and enhance an elder's sense of well-being.

Human adaptation is a genetic and behavioral process essential to survival in a specific environment. Biologically, variations exist within genotypes, thus phenotypes; behaviorally, individuals manifest differences in competences, levels of knowledge, and personalities. An individual's adaptive potential becomes particularly important upon retirement and associated events. Retirement is ranked 10th of 43 stressors on the Social Readjustment Scale (Holmes and Rahe 1967).

Well-being may be regarded as a subjective state that is influenced by one's personality and enhanced by the ability to maintain a positive attitude toward one's self and one's life, to experience a sense of fulfillment and comfort, to have self-perceived competences in order to conduct satisfying relationships, and to carry out personal responsibility (Caplow-Lindner et al. 1979; Free 1988; Nydegger 1986).

Further, well-being may be viewed subjectively through conceptions of general health, feelings, body image, physical ability, self-esteem, life satisfaction, and availability of material resources. Personality is the encultured way a person thinks, feels, and behaves, allowing a life-style with which to adapt to one's environment (Werner et al. 1984). Competences include biological health, sensorimotor function, cognitive skill, and ego strength (Lawton 1986). Personal responsibility is defined as culture-specific activities of daily living in which the members of a society are expected to engage.

Elderly reminiscing has traditionally been treated in the anthropological literature in the context of enculturating the young into a society's way of life. While this form of elderly reminiscing is certainly important for the larger society, it

takes a different form in retirement settings. These data suggest this behavior fills time and validates the existence of elders to themselves in a setting in which youth are absent. The following analysis of elderly reminiscing illustrates its special use and highly adaptive quality in formal retirement living.

Comprised senses (namely, hearing and sight), retrieval difficulties associated with fluid (short-term) memory, and relatively intact crystallized (long-term) memory are biologically based processes, some or all of which are seen in various dimensions among all elders (Hultsch and Deutsch 1981). Because of these aspects of late-life, some of what transpires in the daily lives of elders eludes them while other current notions are often difficult for them to retrieve. The ego-centered and valid view of their own mature wisdom, which lent them authority in their former milieus and continues to confirm who they are, combine to produce in old people a level of introspection. Therefore, reminiscing behavior, the verbalization of that which is easiest to locate in the brain and retrieve, may be viewed as an adaptive coping skill.

Methods

After approximately six months participant observation with these two key-informants, I designed and produced separate video cassettes featuring each elder. I spent an average of two hours/day for four days/week for six months with the elderly widower; I visited with the elderly widow less frequently, but for longer periods of time (three hours/visit on two days/week).

Although the research project was fundamentally focused on qualitative measures of residential life, it was decided that some quantitative instrument might also be employed in this study. In light of the arguments in favor of a "qualitative-quantitative mix" (Pelto and Pelto 1978:36) in ethnographic fieldwork, utilizing a formal instrument to measure the attitudes of these two old people was appropriate.

I chose the Cantril (1965) Self-Anchoring Scale. This standard protocol includes a facsimile of a ladder which the investigator shows to the subject while asking questions designated to elicit levels of personally perceived life-satisfaction and well-being (in the present and five years prior). The subject points to the appropriate rung (1, least; 10, most) which is then marked by the investigator. Thus, the subject determines the rank of these qualities.

Because well-being is a subjective quality, it can be quantified only through personal reports—all answers to objective measures of data collection are subjective. In essence, the level of well-being one feels is keyed to a biased perception of self-accomplishment and economic security (Free 1990). This protocol can be used in larger samples and statistically analyzed or, as in this case, analyzed individually. Data analysis showed that these elders have positive senses of well-being.

Technical production was done in the television studio of a nearby major university in this urban area. The research was camera-recorded on 3/4 inch video-tape and sound was recorded using lavaliere microphones. Care in lighting design eliminated the use of special make-up so that the key-informants could be viewed in the natural states—an important facet of the research. Master copies of the final document were reproduced on 3/4 inch video-tape and copies were transferred to 1/2 inch tape. Theme music accompanied graphics used during titles and credits of each documentary, with permission secured from publishers and recording companies.

The study involving the elderly woman was set in the TV studio. Besides myself, a geriatric psychiatrist and gerontological psychologist interacted with her. Because of the number of persons in this VC, three cameras were used. The final document included most all recorded material, but editing was extensive.

The level of frailty of the male key-informant made problematic his going to the TV studio; therefore, the video-taping with him took place in his apartment in the retirement home. However, this turned out to be a serendipitous happening (e.g., the more intimate quality as he referred to "his things",indicated by a wave of his hand). While the information is qualitatively identical and both subjects were extremely articulate, the ambience conveyed by the apartment setting was more personal compared to the studio location. Although only one camera was used, editing was extensive. Because his compromised hearing would have necessitated posing the questions in a voice level which would not match the level of his in answering, the technical director manually recorded each question; his answers were then video-taped. At the end of the recording session, I was

video-taped separately, asking the exact questions. This strategy is successful when filming interviews with hearing-impaired subjects.

The VCs were produced in the following manner:

1. The format consists of an introduction, an interview, and a summary and conclusion. While they are primarily designed as teaching instruments, members of other milieus interested in this aspect of being old will find them useful. They last for 43 minutes (man) and 57 minutes (woman) respectively.

2. The interviews were unscripted, thus the rigidity often imposed by scripts reflecting preconceived ideas of the investigator was avoided (Lockwood 1990). While elderly reminiscing on many of the topics presented in the documentary had transpired during data gathering, questions of the investigator and responses of the key-informants were spontaneous.

3. Each VC begins with a scripted introduction of general information about the human aging process and some personal data about the respective elders. Finally, with the VHS in a pause and start mode, I transcribed each study. The scripted summaries and conclusions were written by the investigator after careful review of both the taped interview section of each video-recording and the written transcripts. The introductions and the summaries and conclusions were taped later.

The Subjects

I selected this man and woman as subjects of in-depth studies because initial contact with each of them in the research setting resulted in an immense rapport between them and me - an important dimension of this type of data collection (Frank and Vanderburgh 1986; Lockwood 1990). As the research progressed, personal data revealed the subjects had many similarities. This specificity between them made the comparison of culturally sex-specific issues especially interesting.

These elders are accomplished academicians with earned Doctor of Philosophy degrees and service to their respective universities in both professorial and administrative positions. Since retirement, they have maintained on-going interests in their disciplines (he is Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and she is Professor Emeritus Physiological Chemistry). Moreover, each has developed new intellectual interests and keeps abreast of world happenings, primarily through television. Both are widowed. They are quite affiliated in their social milieu, albeit in cohort- and gender-specific fashions (e.g., he is less inclined than she to join outing parties or seek company). Each were parents of one son and one daughter. She is the grandmother of seven and he has eight grandchildren. They shared similar age-related and/or -associated compromises (Rowe and Kahn 1987), such as dentures, impaired vision and hearing, and reduced ambulation. Excepting their slightly differential levels of frailty, both elders have generally good physical status. Lastly, their responses to questions are remarkably similar.

The Case of the Elderly Man

The elderly widower is quite involved with the issues and concerns of successful aging (Rowe and Kahn 1987). He has had a long and accomplished career in academics and has been a contributing member of a number of civic organizations and professional societies. In addition, he reports numerous occasions when he accompanied his wife to events in which their children were involved, an action that was largely due to her efforts and somewhat atypical for elite men in his cohort.

He received his Ph.D. degree in 1926 from a prestigious U.S. university. His career as an academician, which covered some 43 years, was marked by a steady rise in responsibility. After World War II, he became the first provost of an eminent university from which he received his undergraduate degree. The office of provost was a new concept in American universities and he left a legacy there that endures in that office today.

Discussion the Man's Transcript

Researchers have devoted little attention to the role of the widower in society, and even less investigation has focused on elderly widowers. However, elderly widowers have many sex-specific adjustments to make to this role; thus, adaptive strategies ned to be identified and developed to aid in these adjustments.

Just before his wife died in a nursing home, this man relocated from his private home to a retirement facility. His children, who felt he would thrive better in an area where the "comforts of home" are integrated with the necessary level of

care, suggested the move. He states that continuing to live amidst his own home furnishings affords him great pleasure and enhances his [perceived] well-being.

The VC reveals his lingering pain over the death of his wife as his face clouds and his words come haltingly when he mentions her. Even so, his affect (dominant emotional tone of an individual as perceived by others [Gaylen 1988]), which can be determined by viewing the VC, appears positive; he recovers composure quickly. This study suggests that relocation proved helpful in his adjustment to widowerhood. Upon losing their wives, widowers in this elderly cohort are faced with housekeeping chores and meal preparation which they view as difficult tasks because of their lack of experience in this domain. This man specifically reports that living in this retirement setting has eliminated his concern about "the art" of making his bed.

On the other hand, because men in the U.S. are socialized to be independent and in control of their lives, institutionalized retirement living may produce perceived loss of self-worth. However, when retired men retain some of their former roles, they tend to experience less negative impact. Residency in a retirement facility, which theoretically ensures that essential biological and physical needs of residents are met, provides an environment which liberates an elder from these concerns. Therefore, concentration on cognitively stimulating issues is possible. For example, this man has maintained an active interest in the current status of his former profession, has developed his on-going interest in history, reads various journals and newspapers, views televised sports and news-casts, and engages in a prolific correspondence with relatives and friends. During elderly reminiscing about these issues, his countenance and voice brighten. In addition, he takes pride tending to all his business transactions—which becomes obvious as one observes his posture straighten and hears his voice deepen upon reporting this. In sum, retirement for him, for which he says he was ready, provided time to continue on-going interests and to develop new ones.

Retsinas (1986) suggests that families may offer more expressive support to elders in a formal retirement setting than in their homes because laborious caregiving is not a factor. Traditionally, this current cohort of elderly men rarely concentrated on kinship ties; therefore, they readily accept limited numbers and lengths of visits from relatives and friends. Although he rejoice in reports from his family of their accomplishments, this elder has no expectations in terms of attention from them (he makes this point with a very serious demeanor).

A number of researchers have suggested that "predictability" enhances well-being among the elders (cf., Pennebaker 1982; Rodin 1986; Rowe and Kahn 1987). In addition, the literature suggests that men react more positively than women to this condition. The predictability of his children's attention to this elder is a prominent and enjoyable feature of his relationship with them. His daughter regularly telephones him from her home in another state and his son visits him at the same time each week.

According to research, men who survive to very old age seem to be healthier than their female counterparts (Atchley 1987; Botwinick 1984; Kahana and Kahana 1985). Research suggests this may be a psychological response of the American man to be enculturation of values, such as stoicism and instrumentalism (plans of action for adaptation which are validated by their effectiveness) (Atchley 1987; Free 1988). These become major coping mechanisms in old age. Although this man has experienced some physical degeneration, he is medically sound, admits to few health concerns, and usually responds positively when asked how he feels. Viewing him on VC tends to confirm the preceding. However, on several occasions, he has spoken of residual pain from a broken hip suffered several years ago, a vaguely bothersome skin cancer on one foot, and his related concern of future confinement to a wheelchair. Nevertheless, he maintains his independence with the aid of personal care.

Old widowers tend to express fewer feelings of loneliness than do old widows. This may be a result of previous multiple roles performed by most men in the public domain that bestowed upon them a variety of identities, all of which are not lost upon retirement. Moreover, the large majority of men lose spouses later in life than do women. Furthermore, because the approximate ration of women to men is five to one in most retirement settings, men never lack social opportunities. This elder does not voluntarily take part in most planned activities in his retirement home, but he receives numerous invitations from women friends to be their guests on special occasions. While he smiles as he speaks of their attention, he accepts it with alacrity. Other data suggest that widowers are often embarrassed by these overtures from their female cohorts (Atchley 1987; Botwinick 1984).

The Case of the Elderly Woman

This woman is the 85-year-old widow of an academician. Her life has been touched by professional accomplishments and personal tragedy. She was widowed after five years of marriage and left with two small children to raise. She relates, with appealing wit, that she and her husband moved her mother in with them because she "was 60 years old and we felt she was too old to live alone - can you imagine?" Her husband's death precipitated her decision to return to graduate school in order to increase her opportunities to support herself and her children. Having her mother in residence proved invaluable because child care as we know it now was extremely rare. After earning her Ph.D. in 1936, she embarked on a 36-year academic career.

Her professional accomplishments include membership on research teams in Brazil, India, and Iraq, for the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization; Rockefeller Foundation; Ford Foundation; and, World Bank. She reports that she "eased into retirement" as a consultant in physiological chemistry to a medical school in this region. Fully retired now, she is successfully adapting to her own aging process.

Discussion of the Woman's Transcript

This study points out that being very old carries with it both burdens and pleasures (Weiner 1987). In this elderly woman's case, burdens include her physical compromises which require what she calls her "spare parts." She has suffered a stroke from which she has essentially recovered. However, a subsequent broken hip affected her gait. She now requires a cane. She views her problem with her hearing, which she says is a generally misunderstood handicap, as her greatest burden. As the VC progresses, it shows the importance she attaches to this topic is demonstrated as she returns to it from time to time.

In addition, psychosocial issues often confound physical ones. Whereas old men tend to find homemaking chores overwhelming, old women are inclined to respond in kind to business tasks. This elderly woman endures a level of stress brought about by tending to her business matters, although she takes pride in doing her own accounting. She smiles as she speaks of the dichotomy of perceiving this event as both rewarding and stressful. When the concerns of her business affairs become too burdensome, she seeks help from her attorney grandson.

This elder's life has taken its share of pleasures, which she recounts with a positive affect. She, too, expresses comfort and satisfaction from living among her own furnishings. She interacts with her grandchildren and their families, has many friends and associates in her retirement community, and involves herself in selected activities which she has tailored to her endurance level and specific needs. For example, she regularly volunteers in the home's library and attends daytime informal courses at the nearby university.

While this elderly woman does not feel withdrawn from society, she suggests that retirement includes a dimension of disengagement (Cumming and Henry 1961) in the form of role changes and shifts. Some of these have been dramatic and grievous (e.g., surviving her husband, mother, and adult children during which she lost the roles of wife, daughter, and mother). She suddenly becomes tearful and her voice cracks when the subject of her elderly remiscing includes her children whose deaths have left a great void in her life. However, her recovery of composure is instant and remarkable. She has welcomed other changes and shifts as "natural" over-time progressions (e.g., retirement from the active university life).

This elder has frequent contact with her physicians and abides by their suggestions and decisions. Thus, she "medicalizes" her aging by transferring the responsibility for her physical problems to her physicians, an adaptive process which relieves her of responsibility for growing older (Free 1990). The VC reveals a demeanor that reinforces one's sense of her relief.

All in all, this elderly woman has devised a format for retirement in which her personal structure of ideas (internal continuity [Atchely 1987]) persists in a familiar environment populated with homogeneous people (external continuity [Atchley 1987]). She conveys a serenity to the audience that seems to result from an intelligent approach to developing inner strength. Her aging process is a balance between dependence and independence (Weiner 1987). She is dependent on her spare parts, the population and structure of her retirement home, her physicians, and her grandchildren. However, she maintains independence by still managing her affairs and directing her daily routine. This research shows her personal sense of well-being is intact.

Comments

In studies presented in media, such as video-tape, film and even still pictures, non-verbal communication can be used in interpretations of the data. Because these studies utilized visual anthropology through video-tape, their impact is far more powerful. According to Wood (1989:30).

> Thus a concept of culture to have integrative power must comprehend material artifacts and visual arts as well as patterns of human movement and posture, feeling, emotion, cognition, and social relations—that is, all the aspects of human life.

In this framework, I suggest that the male subject is essentially more at ease in discussing the status of living in a retirement facility than is the female. However, the man was in the surrounding of his home, while the woman was in a TV studio. The chairs in the studio may have caused her some level of discomfort (due to the well-known back pain endemic among elderly women) that, when she was recorded on camera, appeared to be lack of ease. I do not suggest that the cameras are an issue; both subjects seemed equally relaxed before them. On the other hand, this difference in non-verbally communicated ease between the subjects may result from sex-and individual- specific patterns of adaptation, such as:

1. The man states that he had made up his mind to adapt to the circumstances of his move to the institution.

2. His roles have been essentially those traditionally performed by males of his cohort; thus, his perception is that life is essentially predictable which may enhance adaptation.

3. He has adult children which represent for him a significant security.

4. The woman led an atypical life in that she was raised by a widowed mother; was widowed herself (after a five-year marriage which produced two children); obtained the highest possible academic degree in a time when most women in her socioeconomic stratum often accomplished some level of higher education but were not expected to be employed outside the home; pursued a profession usually held my men; and now essentially manages her own business affairs. In short, she is a cohort anachronism: a single-parent, professional woman with a Ph.D. degree who is competent in personal business.

5. These aspects of this woman's life may have encultured in her personality expectations of personal vicissitudes which, while they do not threaten her perceived well-being or diminish her self-esteem, may engender in her a cautious attitude during the period of adaptation.

6. Because her children are deceased and her nearest living relatives are grandchildren with young families, she may have some dimension of apprehension about her future security.

7. Finally, old men in this cohort are more habituated (lack of conscious recognition of something due to the frequency of its occurrence) to being assisted or "cared for" than are old women (i.e., wives, secretaries, housekeepers, etc.), most of whom have spent their adult lives giving assistance or care.

While no single formula exists which ensures successful aging, the experiences of these two elders suggests that formal retirement living is a viable option. Institutionalized living features reduced personal responsibility, decreased spatial area, and opportunity for personally desired amounts of social interaction, all notions shown to enhance subjectively perceived well-being (Free 1988). Well-being is a condition which seems fundamental for successful rather than tenuous or usual aging (Rowe and Kahn 1987). Furthermore, at this institution retirement living reestablishes physical and social qualities that may have been lost in the pre-institutional period of an elder's retirement. Utilizing video-tape presents the research results holistically.

The lack of data on specific issues related to the status of elderly widowers and widows suggests that these are important focuses of research in order to develop methods and guidelines for enhancing well-being among members of this segment of society. To accomplish this it is important to understand the cognitive, social, physiological, and financial aspects which influence and modify their personal environments. The case-study approach explores these issues in detail thereby amplifying knowledge about them. By this means, the anthropology is expanded to present the physical and environmental aspects of the subject, as well as their story. When the results of research include an ethnographic VC (shown to enhance understanding and interpretation of the data), it should be considered a version of discourse arrived at the same way as written texts (Hughes-Freeland 1989).

Hughes-Freeland (1989) correlates the traditional anthropological methodology, consisting of the proposal, fieldwork, and data analysis/write up, with the methodology for a visual ethnography, involving the formation of a treatment, filming, and editing. This present article discusses the technological, methodological, and anthropological aspects of doing two ethnographies utilizing the medium of video tape. To this end, it contributes to the theory espoused by visual anthropologists that "ethnographic film forms part of the larger 'culture industry' of Western society" (Martinez 1990:35).

According to Martinez (1990), visual illustrations have long been a salient part of anthropological classroom teaching; therefore, their merits have been recognized. Fuks (1989:27) posits that audio and visual ethnographies "add a temporal dimension essential for studying ephemeral phenomena." It is hoped that this discussion will advance the growing consensus among anthropologists that video-tape is a viable technique for doing ethnography. Technological advances present compelling reasons for anthropologists to disseminate the results of fieldwork to the scientific community by doing ethnography in the various mediums available.

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Stephanos Stephanides' *Hail Mother Kali*

Arnold H. Itwaru

Stephanos Stephanides' *Hail Mother Kali* is a filmed celebration of the propitiation of the divine Giver and Taker of Time, Mother Kali, and its ceremonial healing continuities practiced in Guyana, South America. The uniqueness of this project, considering the limitations which the filming of any aspect of reality entails, is that its documentation also commemorates a cultural memory and practice, and in so doing serves as an acknowledgement of the generally silenced Madrasi descendants of certain Indo-Guyanese indentured labourers.

Unlike the linear reconstruction of meaning which predominantly characterizes filmed documentation of that which is non-linear — and thus *re-interprets* within the levelling prism of techno-logicality, a bias which is necessarily destructive of non-logical complexity — Stephanides' *Hail Mother Kali* enters the phenomenon and seeks to bring out the significance beyond the spectacle of the event. It is thus that at the beginning there is a grey sun-black Indo-Guyanese man who recollects in drum and metaphoric speech the cadenced voice of a particular Madrasi remembering, a simultaneous fading reappearing of black and white flashes of barefoot tattered men and women and children labouring in the mud and soot of the sugarcane fields behind the mudflats and hovels of a time not so far past. Within this dual narration there is also a mythical accounting for the emergence of the worship of Maha Kali.

Stephanides does not impose any external structure to this telling, and his translation which is both conversation with pujaris and information for english-speaking persons who are watching the ceremony's unfolding — is, to his commendation, completely non-intrusive. Indeed there is a comfort among the pujaris with him which indicates acceptance, and this is one of the most important conditions which adds authenticity to the project. Stephanides is not seen as an outsider: he lived among those people for six years: and he does not see from the judgemental position of the outsider.

In this way *Hail Mother Kali* differs in its depiction. The activities are not merely those observed during the Big Puja. These are relations in terms of the lived recognition of many of these people's lives, prior to this, during and after the three days of propitiation and celebration. Care is taken to explain the historical and religious meanings within the symbolic use of vessels, vestment, water, fire, blood and sacrifice against death, mutual adult and youth involvement, blood and sacrifice against death, mutual adult and youth involvement, the ceremonial acts of healing when the spirit presence of the Divine Mother enters the mortal form of her pujaris through whom intercession takes place.

These depictions are themselves metaphoric. They do not in their informing explain away the sacred reverence fundamental to the ceremony. Rather, they invite in their clusters of interrelated phenomena, a contemplation outside of logical desiccation, and as such *Hail Mother Kali* is a work which would contribute considerably to those different and necessary attempts in some of our universities and places of critical cultural interest in trying to understand somewhat, life outside of the logical positivism of eurocentric arrogance, and domination.

There is a complacent arrogance in most of the cinematic and televisual attitudes towards the viewing of films, an attitude in which the monotony of comfort-producing structures consistently works against seeing outside of familiar boundaries. This is often what comes into play when there is a ready condemnation of films which demand more of the viewer, which disturb the conventions pertaining to entertainment and information. *Hail Mother Kali* is not entertainment. It is not information, although it can be used in this manner. It encourages a departure from the sequences of linearity in that each of its multiple depictions invite, if you wish, reflection as metaphor.

The "lighting" is not laboratoried clarity: it rises and fades in the flickering of the torches and *deeyas*, the fires in which the dark night of despair burn in eternal hope and immerse themselves in the water of life, blessed, yes still blessed, by the Divine Mother of Time.

Stephanides has named this project a tribute to the healing arts in the Kali Puja. This work is also a tribute to the seer in Stephanides.

Hail Mother Kali is available from Singer-Sharrette Productions, 52370 Dequinder St., Shelbystownship, Michigan 48316 U.S.A, Telephone 313-731-5199.

Arnold Harrichand Itwaru interviews Stephanos Stephanides about his video documentary *Hail Mother Kali*

Arnold Harrichand Itwaru interviews Stephanos Stephanides about his video documentary *Hail Mother Kali* (Guyana, 1988). Itwaru is Guyanese of East Indian descent. He was born and grew up in the county where Stephanides made his film. He is a poet, novelist, and teacher of Sociology at York University, Toronto.

AHI: I would like to begin by thanking you for taking the time and thoughtfulness to have filmed *Hail Mother Kali*, a work which is empathetically done, and somewhat surprisingly so, considering that in many respects you are a stranger to Guyana and Guyanese forms of reality. How did you develop this interest in this particular cultural practice?

SS: I first went to Guyana to take up an academic appointment in the University's Modern Language Department in 1978 and stayed for six years. I knew little about the country and its East Indian population at the time - my only introduction had been V.S. Naipaul's *The Middle Passage*, whose caustic vision depicts the legacy of the descendants of indentured labourers in the Caribbean as purely negative. Naipaul did not inspire me to want to learn more about Guyanese East Indian culture. Nonetheless, after the real human encounter with rural Guyana, at first through the invitations of friends, colleagues, and students who invited me to their homes for family events and ceremonies, I soon there became enthusiastic to learn and understand more. I especially fell in love with your home county, Berbice, and its rich folk culture brought from India and still persisting with great vitality.

Kali worship made a deep impression on my sensibility and imagination, more than the "mainstream traditions" of Hinduism of the so-called "great tradition". My interest in the "great tradition" followed my interest in the "little traditions" of village India. These are living testimony that the link with India has never died in the inner life of the folk. In contrast, some of the classical forms of Indian culture of the "great tradition" were later revived or "imported" by the westernized or creolized Indian middle classes who had regained pride in their Indianness. This was a result of the Indian independence movement, which also gave impetus to the national movement for independence. One late importation was *kathak* dance, which is now very popular in both Guyana and Trinidad. The "little traditions", of course, also received impetus from this revivalism and you can see some accommodation or assimilation of some elements of the "great tradition" in Kali worship. Nonetheless, its source of vitality is still evidently the "little tradition" brought to Guyana in the late 19th and early 20th century by Tamil indentured labourers devoted to the regional goddess Mariamma. Apart from vitality and intensity, Kali worship has a psychological depth and beauty that it has not always been given credit for. It has been largely ignored or even feared by non-participants.

Indo-Guyanese researcher and writer Kama Singh shared my feelings and perspective on this tradition and he had also done important work in the community before we met. We have collaborated closely in our work. After some work together in the field, we decided to jointly produce a photo essay that would be both a tribute and documentation of the highest form of expression of Kali worship: the annual three-day "Big Puja". My principal ideas for the video came out of that work with Kama. It was also suggested to me by Pujari Basdeo of Blairmont Temple, where I had actively participated in the life of the temple for several years and developed intimate friendships. The project was finally undertaken in 1988 (the year commemorating the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first East Indian indentured labourers to Guyana and the Caribbean) as a tribute to the descendants of "Madrasis" [South Indians] on that occasion. The video attempts to depict the collective poetic and spiritual expression of "Big Puja", and is therefore also a production of the Blairmont devotees who entrusted me to do this. I approached the film in the same way as I did the other tasks that were assigned to me by the temple committee during the years I lived among the temple devotees, xx with respect for the temple and sense of form and order, and notions of purity and pollution.

AHI: The film strikes me to begin with that although it's a film - and I am very conscious that it's a film with all the difficulties inherent in filming, i.e. rendering an experience into an image etc. - nonetheless when I watch it I get the impression that it is a celebration of a very oral history within the Indo-Guyanese experience. The film begins with black and white reflections of that history, the sugar plantation clips that come and go and a principal figure, an old man begins telling a story; the film develops as if it is in fact an oral history in the making.

SS: Yes, many Indo-Guyanese responded positively to this part of the film because the legacy of indentureship and sugar plantations is common to all of them, even Indo-Guyanese who were uncomfortable with the Kali Puja and its form of expression because they were from a different caste, background or creed. The elder who recounts the ethnohistory of Madrasi coolies and their worship in Guyana is Uncle Jamsie, Pujari for Albion Temple, whose father was one of the first group of people to establish Kali worship in Guyana. The black and white clips were borrowed from Rupert Roopnaraine's film, *The Terror and the Time*, on the national movement for independence in Guyana in the 1950's under the leadership of Cheddi Jagan. My post-editor had worked on that film with Dr. Roopnaraine and it was his suggestion to use that black and white footage to illustrate Uncle Jamsie's story. Besides giving some historical background about how this tradition came from India, I also wanted to illustrate how this form of Shakti worship arose on the sugar plantation as part of the people's self-healing, their reintegration and regeneration in their indenture and exile. I would have liked to have shown the process of active dialogue and debate that has taken place in the evolution of this tradition. People have sometimes wrongly assumed that the evolution of Kali worship in Guyana is simply a result of what has been remembered or forgotten rather than due to conscious deliberation and decision-making. There have been debates and disputes about what should or could be modified or changed without sacrificing authenticity and effectiveness. Kama Singh brings this out admirably in his study on Kali worship and in recorded interviews which he has deposited with the Caribbean Research Library of the University of Guyana. New directions and new temples have arisen as a result of differences of opinion over such issues as animal sacrifice and accessibility to the main altar by women and the non-pujari caste. While I could not hope to fully illustrate all this on film, I would have liked to have shown a glimpse of the dynamics of this process. Unfortunately the only footage I had of a debate of the temple committee turned out to have inadequate sound. Since I was working with a small personal budget, I was limited to what could be filmed in only four or five days.

AHI: One of the things I like about what you have done is that you don't explain away the ceremony and its values. It doesn't become didactic at all. In many respects the word "tribute" is correctly applied in the film's title - because even though in your interpretation there is an attempt to make the text, so to speak, understandable to viewers in another culture, this does not interfere with the unfolding of events. The actual film clearly goes beyond the instructional although it is at the same time also instructional. Were you conscious of this or did it happen to flower beautifully?

SS: I was very conscious of this and there was much discussion on how this should be done. Initially I had wanted to provide no narrative or explanation but just allow the puja to work upon people's imagination and sensibilities and leave any explanation to the monograph. Some colleagues who gave me editorial advice suggested that I should find some means to convey information even if I wanted to be unobtrusive in the ceremony. In addition to scholars, the video was intended for (perhaps primarily) Caribbean audiences interested in the oral traditions of their own region but who may not take the time to read a monograph. It then became clear to me that the media of video could be used to transmit information in a way that is consistent with the spirit of the puja tradition itself. After all the puja has been kept alive tenaciously by oral means and this oral communication is just as much a part of puja as the images and actions. People recount experiences and dreams, tell stories, and when there are newcomers they give information, guidance, and explanations about the deities and events of the puja. My own narration was also done in the same spirit. My explanation is also that of a pujari, as I was a pujari in the broad sense of the word. I participated in puja or worship, had been a member of the temple committee, represented the temple in meetings with other temples, kept fast in accordance with the puja calendar, and wore ritual dress when the occasion required or the leading pujari requested it of me. I give some indications of the nature of my relationship and participation in the video but do not dwell on it because it is not meant to be autobiographical. Nonetheless, it was important to allow the viewer to understand the nature of my relationship. I am not simply an observer presenting my "object of study". I do speak in "standard" English but I am translating concepts that were communicated to me in Indo-creole speech, just as that speech translates concepts that were originally expressed in Tamil, Hindi, or Sanskrit. The narration is instructional in the same way that I first received "instruction" when

I first went to a puja. I did not introduce extraneous concepts nor was it perceived as such by the devotees. I raise this because some people have commented that I sometimes used words that most people in that community would probably not use. Perhaps. But in Guyana Creole English coexists with "standard English". Devotees habitually speak Creole English and I sometimes but not always spoke Creole English with them. In the film they were quite comfortable with what I said and how I said it. It does not clash or contradict the devotees' beliefs. The people speak for themselves in the film ....

AHI: The people speak for themselves and I think the ceremony speaks for itself - I found this very unusual. When I watch many films of a somewhat anthropological nature, they often seem to violate the event or ceremony by presenting it in such a way that the film takes on a linear western notion of what is happening and thus misrepresent what is happening. In *Hail Mother Kali* there is no attempt at a linear organization, there is no conscious sequencing - I feel as if I'm watching a puja and when the puja unfolds in the darkness of the night so do the images of the film that emerge. And in this respect in the unfolding of the story your work is highly unique - you do not seek a linear organization of images to fit within a kind of notional logic that would be familiar to American or European audiences.

SS: Perhaps it seems as if there was no conscious sequencing but there is of course very conscious sequencing. We adhered closely to the strict sequence of the ritual drama itself and made much effort in the sequencing and pace to capture the heightened sense of drama of the puja. Even though the puja is dramatic and intense when you are participating, this would have been lost on film since it lasts for three days and nights and we shot at least 20 hours of footage. I paid great attention to the details of the puja and attempted to show every act, gesture, icon, vestment, vessel, color, plant, flower, and task (ritual and otherwise) involved in the puja. I had meticulously noted these details with Kama Singh some years prior to filming. It was not easy to show all the details and maintain the drama and correct ritual order. I took some liberty in the way I synthesized and explained the iconographic representations of the deities. I took this liberty to shorten the time of the exegesis and because it was done outside of ritual context, so I arranged my presentation to emphasize contrasts, analogies and opposition and thus highlight the meaning of the symbols and metaphors, and used slides to show close and detailed views. Uncle Jamsie felt that I transgressed a little here. He would have preferred to have seen the presentation of the deities in strict ritual order and in the context of the puja. Nonetheless I found this difficult to do cinematographically. It would have been lengthy and visually not very interesting because during the puja there are throngs of people around small shrines making it difficult to get good shots of the *murtis* or icons inside the shrines and to see exactly all the activity going on. I supplemented video shots of the activities with slides showing iconographic detail.

But you are right in saying that it is not structured notionally to suit western audiences or students. I did not want to distort, dilute or reduce by "rewriting" for westerners. My primary concern was that it should be an honest and compassionate documentation acceptable to the participants. I think in this way it is also more valuable as an ethnographic document. There is nonetheless much information and detail in the video for those who are able to use it the classroom.

AHI: If I were to use it in class I would use it as it is and invite discussion about what it attempts to depict rather than construct the thinking of students into a particular attitude to view the film, because in doing so they would miss out the experiential importance that this film holds. It is not merely a "video" being played, it is a ceremony unfolding and hence it requires an imaginative participation for those who are watching it. This is how I would use it rather than deal with the technical concerns of production that are a waste of time - at least from my perspective. The experiential juxtaposition of images seeks to reproduce the ritual drama. I think the film is suitable for our university programs but you need instructors who would be able to discuss it with some degree of sensitivity, and I see that as a problem. How do you propose to aid instructors? Have you done anything in relation to that?

SS: Yes, that's how I intended it to be used. The video is in reality a presentation of a "dance drama" or a "play", and critical and textual explanation should be kept separate from the video itself. As I mentioned earlier I co-wrote a monograph/photo essay with Kama Singh - *The Feast and Festivities of Mother Kali* - which inspired the video. This will be published soon and will serve as a useful companion to the video from a humanist perspective. Generally speaking it seems that humanists have given their attention to classical Indian culture of the "great tradition" and anthropologists have dealt with village India. There is a

common area where the humanities and anthropology meet, and perhaps our work falls in that area. We felt the "little traditions" of village India deserved a humanistic approach. In our work we attempt to enhance appreciation of the themes and motifs, lyricism and drama, symbols, images and metaphors, and philosophical ideas in Kali culture. We give a detailed explanatory description of the events of Big Puja and of its players and participants. We also provide a glossary of Hindi, Tamil, and Creole terms currently in use by devotees so as to familiarize people with the language of the puja. There are also publications by social scientists who have worked with Guyanese "Madrasis" and their work gives other perspectives. A pioneer researcher of Guyanese Kali worship is Dr. Philip Singer of Oakland University, Michigan. Dr. Singer has worked closely with Uncle Jamsie and has primarily researched and written on the healing role of puja from a western psychiatric perspective. This is the focus of his film *Divine Madness*, filmed at Albion Temple in the 1960's.

AHI: The reason I am asking about aiding instructors is that I was discussing the film with one of our graduate students at York. I found his response rather shocking because he is Indo-Guyanese. He said he would not use it in class because it would call for too much explanation and it would also run the risk of reinforcing people's stereotypes over here - by that I think he meant white people over here - because of the "bloodthirsty" aspects etc.

SS: Yes, I have encountered similar responses, in fact a great variety of responses by Caribbean East Indians concerned about their image with regard to Whites and/or Creoles. Indo-Caribbean identity is rather complex as you know much better than I do. The response, however, often had much to do with people's preconceptions about Kali worship even before they saw my film. Even before I made the film some people made ironic remarks as to the nature of my involvement. However I have also found that many were appreciative (as you are) of my interest and receptivity and felt that if foreigners treated it seriously it would enhance its image among Indians. I became cautious about who to show the film to after one Brahmin referred to the ceremony as "barbaric" and refused to see my film because of the animal sacrifice. When another Brahmin I knew asked to see it I was reluctant to lend it to him and told him I thought it might offend his religious sensibilities, but to my surprise he proved to be very catholic in his tastes and reaffirmed his interest in seeing it by saying "never mind, there are many different traditions and forms of worship in Hinduism etc." A study of the variety of responses I have received would be very revealing regarding the complexities and tensions of Indo-Caribbean identity, their confidence about their identity, how they wish to project that identity to other cultures etc. I see it as positive that it has provoked controversy and reflection about one's identity. These concerns did not affect my editorial choices. Naturally I wanted to inspire sensitivity and compassion but I did not want to censor certain aspects of the puja to accommodate the taste or prejudice of outsiders. Not only would there be a loss of authenticity and but it would be disloyal to the Blairmont devotees whose puja and film this also was. I knew the "acceptance of the sacrifice" would be troubling for some. A person "playing" Mother Kali, that is a devotee entranced with the Mother's spirit, picks up the sacrificed goat head and puts it in his or her mouth as a sign that the deity has "accepted" the sacrifice. When I started attending puja in the early 80's this practice was extremely rare. At the time I made the film in 1988 it was far more common. Every time there was a sacrificed goat, several trancers would reach for the head every time an animal was sacrificed. This was an interesting trend as it seems to affirm the importance of the sacrifice and shows increasing confidence among the devotees in affirming their form of worship. In the years before I began to attend puja, some temples had totally foregone animal sacrifice and adopted a purely vegetarian mode of worship in an accommodation to Brahminism. These trends are worthy of study.

AHI: How do you understand the sacrifice?

SS: In the puja, everything one offers is perceived as some form of sacrifice. Offering one's life is the highest sacrifice the human spirit can make and the animal sacrifice is the highest manifestation of this in Kali's ritual drama as it is currently practiced in Guyana. The animal in the puja is perceived as giving up this life so as to achieve a higher incarnation by the grace of the Mother Goddess. It is therefore honored by the person who will decapitate it and who prostrates before the animal. There is a spiritual message of hope even before the tragedy of death. One devotee said to me that the Mother (in this case he was referring to her form as Durga riding the tiger) takes the spirit and the tiger takes the body. There is a release from ego identity and an identification with the godhead. The devotees in a state of trance always becomes more ecstatic and intense at the moment of the sacrifice. It is the devotees' dramatization of the struggle with his

or her history (collective and individual) and the struggle with the temporal world. I have noticed fascination with the Hindu attitude to death in writings of early European travelers to India. Similarly, 19th-century European commentators on Indian labourers in Guyana have often noted that "coolies" are not afraid of death because of their belief in reincarnation.

AHI: In your entire experience of Kali, in becoming a pujari, do you see any relationship between the socio-economic conditions of the devotees and the worship? Is it a plea for hope in the context of grinding harshness? Or is it that and something else?

SS: Yes, perhaps those who have been most crushed by history and time place their greatest hope in the Goddess of Death. I think there is a relationship but care should be taken not be too deterministic in making these kind of judgments. It was partially as a response to the more deterministic arguments that Kama and I felt there was a need for a "humanistic appreciation" of the Kali Puja. Some people take the socio-economic argument too far and have tended to demean, undermine or invalidate the puja's qualities and values as a perennial spiritual, cultural, artistic, and social expression. It has been said that the proliferation of Kali Temples in post-colonial Guyana is a reflection of the social and economic disintegration and breakdown in the society, as if Kali worship were some kind of pathological syndrome of that disintegration. Some more plausibly have seen this growth as part of increased confidence resulting from Indian leadership in the national movement and more religious freedom in the post-colonial period. Also plausible is the argument that as a result of the setback that Indians have suffered in politics and government in the post- colonial period, ethnic and religious identity has been strengthened. There has been greater identity with the international Hindu community than the small nation-state of Guyana. Some argue that this has always been the case. In the colonial period when only Christians were allowed to teach in schools or join the civil service, most Hindus tenaciously resisted conversion. These points are beyond the scope and objective of my video, but hopefully the video will inspire interest in these issues. Kama Singh's illustrated monograph *Temple and Mosques* is very enlightening regarding the cultural history of Indian religious expression in Guyana.

But returning to your original question, Kali Puja is a healing ritual and for that reason, more than any other form of puja I had witnessed in Guyana, it draws the wretched, sick, and distressed, and its devotees tend to be more from the poorer classes. This is not only because of recent socio—economic conditions in Guyana. It should also be noted that it is not a high caste tradition. Brahmins consider it low caste as we mentioned earlier.

AHI: The Kali Puja is pre-Brahminical. It is Dravidian. Its very existence from the point of view of the politics of power is in opposition to what Brahminism is all about, and that is why Brahmins call it barbaric and low caste, and so on.

SS: Yes, yet there is a somewhat ambivalent relationship with Brahmins among Kali devotees; there seems to be both irreverence and respect toward them. They are often spoken of with irony yet Brahmins are considered the appropriate persons to perform birth, marriage, death, and some other rituals. You are an Indo- Guyanese who grew up in Berbice. Tell me something about your experience of Kali worship?

AHI: My growing up was very ambivalent, in this respect. Initially I was very terrified of it and when the Christian church took me over I grew up thinking that perhaps it was barbaric, but something about it fascinated me nevertheless. I was always fascinated by forms of rituals and ceremonies, but this one in particular fascinated me, and later I grew to understand and accept that indeed there was healing taking place and my skepticism was unfounded. Much later I began to reflect upon by as a Christian, I was a Lutheran Christian and nearly became a Lutheran pastor - but when I began questioning that I also, interestingly, began to see more clearly the significance of many Hindu ceremonies around me. But I was never a participant at all, I always looked from the outside. I looked in awe, I knew in my being that I was in the presence of a very awesome power. When I grew up there were two big pujas every year about a mile apart and I attended both of them. I always had a feeling, deep within, and this is the feeling I have now, and I describe this in a section of the work of fiction I am currently writing, *The Barbed Maize*, that this is a dance against death, this is a dance of life in the midst of dying, a dance of the affirmation of existence within the mystery of birth and death, and the invocations of a deity in the quest for some coherence.

You have said that your film belongs to the Blairmont devotees themselves. How have they responded to the final product?

SS: The devotees were the first to see it. The first public showing of the finished video was at the "Genesis of a Nation" conference in Guyana commemorating the 150th anniversary of the beginning of Indian immigration to the Caribbean. Before showing it at the conference, I organized three showings of the video for Kali devotees in homes in the villages where most Blairmont devotees live. From there some of the devotees accompanied me to the conference where they had the opportunity to participate in the discussions. Most comments were related to what they felt was omitted or not fully developed, but most were happy and very satisfied with the overall approach. Uncle Jamsie made several comments, in addition to the one mentioned earlier. Uncle Jamsie did not participate in the puja I filmed at Blairmont, although he told the oral history at the beginning of the film. He is one of the most renowned and knowledgeable pujaris and has played an important role in establishing new temples in Guyana and Trinidad, and is one of the founders of Blairmont Temple, teacher of many of Blairmont's leading pujaris. He regretted that I did not show the distribution of the *kanchi rice* - a gruel made from food offerings collected from many villages over a period of weeks and then distributed to hundreds of people on the afternoon of the third day of puja. This is very significant as it is (in addition to the healing) the highest demonstration of the ethos of caring for the whole community. I showed the preparation of food but my footage of the actual sharing was quite inadequate. Uncle Jamsie also indicated that he would have preferred to omit the scenes of the skinning of the goat, and the eating of the goat and drinking of rum the day after the puja. Even though he recognized my reason for including it, his personal opinion was that it is not strictly part of the puja itself and therefore there was no need to make that public. Most Blairmont devotees thought it important to include those scenes, since they showed the movement back and forth from the secular to the religious, which are clearly marked in their lives by ritual practices. The eating of the sacrificed goat and drinking of rum offered in the puja is shared and consumed as *prashad* among devotees after the puja and marks the transition back to secular life. They also wanted to show the full story of the goat - the goat skin is made into sacred drums, the flesh is communally shared etc. I respect Uncle Jamsie's view. He was my first *guru* in the Kali tradition. Nonetheless I agree with the Blairmont pujaris in this case. i feel those scenes give an important additional dimension to the video.

One missing detail that particularly bothered me was that we did not have a shot of the ritual act that formally opens puja: the unveiling of the freshly dressed and adorned *murti* was missed by my cameraman, even though I felt I had given him adequate warning. I was angry but one devotee calmed saying "Mother is giving you much. You should not expect everything". Some devotees (notably the principal female pujari at Blairmont, Sister Dorothy) would have liked to see more of the healing. This of course is a very significant concern for pujaris who are primarily healers. The healing role of the puja is dealt with in *Hail Mother Kali*, but only in the form of testimony and in the context of the ritual. It would be interesting to make a video following the story of a devotee's healing process over a period of weeks, showing his or her relationship and interaction with the pujari, and participation in puja. Such an approach would be more accessible to audiences who cannot easily make the plunge into the intensity of Big Puja, nor into its density of symbolic and metaphoric expression. Nonetheless to do that I would have required a budget that would have allowed me to film over several weeks, and not merely five days as was the case here. Perhaps it can be a future project.

AHI: I look forward to this.

Images of Domination, Voices of Control: Television Coverage of the Gulf War

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As if in concert with an orchestrated US management of the war image and control of public opinion, television coverage of the Gulf conflict appeared in harmony with the administration's language and style. When President Bush reported significant decisions about the war in the Gulf at his weekend retreat, smiling at reporters and swinging his golfclub in a carefree, confident manner he

was affecting a masculinized language of controlled domination over a defiant, resource-rich worlds of Arabs and Islam.

It is a world painted in the minds of the west by Orientalist imaginations of an effeminate, sexy East, one filled with Harems, voluptuous belly dancers and blue veiled men on horses and camels in the desert. It is a fantasy by Orientalists, come true in Hollywood, of a world the west has subliminal desire to penetrate, to dominate.

This romanticized imagery, though, is harshly challenged by the memory of Arabs defeating Crusaders, and recently of almost two decades of humiliation by an Islamic revolution and an omnipresent Khomeini, from Americans held hostage, and marines blown out of Beirut, and now Saddam Hussein, strong, defiant. This world the west has a desire to subdue, to humiliate.

It was more than a Vietnam syndrome that Bush seemed to be combatting and not only his "wimp image" but America's as well. CNN helped him do it. It mastered the drama of war and victory. The American public was seduced and tamed.

Beginning with its opening graphics (colors, print and audio) CNN presented the Gulf conflict as a drama intensifying daily and hourly - building in suspense as Desert Shield, and its allusions of protectiveness, threatened to turn into Desert Storm as the deadline of January 15 neared. At the very moment when the United States began its unprecedented bombing attacks by high-tech weaponry on Baghdad, the earlier cooler colors of "Crisis in the Gulf" turned into "War in the Gulf" in red and goldish yellow, accompanied by rolling sounds of drums of war, followed by a dramatic silence, then by the deep masculine voice "This", pause, "is CNN".

The dominant television coverage was of Allied Commander of Desert Storm General Norman Schwarzkopf in camouflage fatigues, exuding an air of unquestioned authority as he granted an intimidated passive press pool regular briefings about a "theatre of operations" - a reaffirmation of masculinized power, mastery of domination, not only over the desert but over the information flow.

In contrast with Vietnam not much "verité" reporting was shown. Instead graphs and video images showed pilots inside high-tech war machines looking at dehumanized targets - images of military supremacy over a dehumanized enemy that dared to stand up to the U.S. - in a war described as "surgical", sanitized, and antiseptic. Damage was worded in strategic and military terms. The military projected U.S. successes and enemy losses, not human suffering but collateral damage, to an audience whose worldview is that of winners and losers, cops and robber, cowboys and Indians.

How convenient that the "Indians" in this drama are Arabs. The viewer is already conditioned from the familiar portrayal on television and in Hollywood films to think of Arabs as hook-nosed wealthy sheiks, subordinate veiled women, dark-skinned terrorists, or Muslim fanatics. Not a pretty picture. The only moments during the conflict that Iraqis were shown as persons were those of undignified surrender - images of Iraqi soldiers capitulating, described as lice-ridden, dirty, starved, dehydrated and disorientated because of their uncaring cruel leadership. One telling scene was that of an Iraqi captive kissing the boots of a U.S. soldier in the desert - the effect of a certain framing and camera angle and a selectivity of material edited into the broadcast news - an image of humiliation fulfilling the fantasy of ultimate submission to Western colonial powers. Bowing to the West and kissing its feet, the East (Arabs and Muslims) was finally subdued, subordinated, conquered.

Viewers lost track of the "cause" and rallied behind the U.S. in a fantasy of victory. It became a reflexive experience in which the viewer has become emotionally involved and seemed to enter the screen, as it were, sit in the cockpit, and identify with those projecting strength and control. They became one with the image on the screen, a mental process that allows them to participate and share in the power and victory. Ambiguities and contradictions in U.S. goals or between the image and the facts faded. Protest and dissent were drowned by the growing euphoria. Flags waved everywhere and yellow ribbons grew bigger. The image built by Washington and television began to take on a life of its own and mingled with the reality.

Putting Education and Anthropology to Work: Community Video and Ethnographic Documentation in South Africa

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Introduction

South Africa has a small but vital body of community video film makers in academic institutions who are exploring ways of broadening the scope of documentary film production. Opportunities for inter-disciplinary co-operation are limited, however, in the absence of established forums for interaction. Yet, this situation is changing as is reflected in this paper which outlines the steps taken by the authors, one an anthropologist, the other an educationist, to develop the potential of community video.

Costas Criticos, an educationist at the University of Natal, has been working extensively for the last 5 years on developing community video as a medium for education. Tim Quinlan, an anthropologist at the University of Durban-Westville, has been involved in ethnographic film work for the last two years. What brought us together was our respective work in ethnographic film. Costas has recently concluded a three year project in which descendants of a fishing community in Durban recorded the life and demise of that community in a film called 'Hanging Up the Nets: The History of the Durban Bay Fishing Community'. Tim is currently working with livestock herders in the mountains of Lesotho to produce films on their life-style and work and their perspectives on problems of conserving the alpine grasslands.

Both of us recognize the enormous potential of community video for documentation of history and contemporary social life. The emphasis of community video on full participation by 'subjects' of a film and on participant reflection on issues addressed in a film indicate that it can be a powerful means of political, cultural and scientific expression. This is what draws the academic to community video and, in turn, to consideration of its potential as a research instrument. In view of the premises and varied uses of community video, it is not surprising that academics from a range of disciplines have sought to use this medium.

However, it is also apparent to us that different disciplines are developing community video in different ways but that there is considerable overlap in experimentation. Accordingly, we realized that our current and future work would benefit by learning the insights afforded by our respective disciplines in the field of community video. Our interest, therefore, has been to see how our respective experiences can inform each other's work. In turn, our aim is to develop a model for community video inspired ethnographic film production. This is very much work in progress but we believe it highlights the general, albeit nascent, direction of community video makers in South Africa's universities.

In the following discussion, we identify community video as a powerful instrument for ethnographic research and documentation. This is identified on the grounds that community video promotes a reflexive perspective of the social construction of knowledge. In turn, we outline the current thinking of our respective disciplines on this perspective and how we have wrestled with translating this thinking in terms of developing methodologies for our respective community video projects. It is through this effort to rethink and develop methods for our film work that we are moving towards establishing the premises for a working model on community video inspired ethnographic documentation.

Social construction of knowledge: An educational perspective

Educationists who subscribe to a critical pedagogy position are attracted to community video because of its collaborative and dialogic character. Critical pedagogy demands a critical examination of traditional didactic processes of education in which the teacher imparts knowledge to a receptive learner. The critical educator argues that this traditional approach to education is not true education - it is rather, instruction of the learner in a particular interpretation. In instructing the learner, objectives are pursued with positive certainty; risk and uncertainty are not part of the educational agenda.

Freire (1972) called traditional education "banking education" in order to describe the view of the learner as an empty vessel into which the teacher pours knowledge. Critical education on the other hand is a dialogic relationship between teacher and learner in which learning is a collaborative task which builds on the skills and experiences of both learner and teacher. The engagement leads ultimately to the development of a deep understanding described by Apple (1986) and others as critical literacy and by Freire as critical consciousness. In such an engagement both teacher and learner make meaning of the world (ie they make rather than consume knowledge).

Freire calls this a 'problem posing education'. People who are educated in this manner are able to pose problems, problematise issues - ie to see beneath the external layers of reality rather than answer questions. In such an education there is a democratic rather than autocratic style of control of the learning enterprise. Content, processes and learning products are negotiated.

Those of us who advance this form of education attempt to build a strong link between personal and social liberation. This link which is central to Freirian education is called the process of conscientization. An educationist who works within this paradigm of education brings this perspective to all social activity, be it political activism or formal classroom teaching. In every activity there ought to be a dialogic tension between reflection and action, between process and product. This vision (Criticos, 1989b) has a procedural rather than a terminal view of education, an education which is an act rather than an end product.

The critical educator furthermore sees education as a life-long process in which all social activity has potentials for reflection and action. This potential is often ignored, however, and social tasks are undertaken in a mechanical manner. The educational potential of social activity can only be realized if the participants make the linkage between theory and practice, between knowledge and action. This linkage, or in Marxist terms praxis, is one of key components of socialist pedagogy. Realizing praxis in an educational event is the task of the teacher or facilitator should encourage.

Praxis is a central interest of community video (CV) which has emerged as a development of participatory research (PR) techniques. PR requires the active participation of all subjects of the study in all stages of the research, to facilitate action for development and to sustain the educational process of mobilizing for development.

Costas's own approach to community video is derived from the principles of PR and critical pedagogy. This is reflected in a project in which he participated and which resulted in a video "Hanging up the Nets". Three distinct phases can be identified during the production.

Exploratory Phase

The project was proposed initially by a social geographer, Dianne Scott who had studied the Indian community in the Bay area for a number of years prior to the start of production in 1988. Dianne had established relationships with a number of families who were descendants of the pioneer fishing community that was rapidly disintegrating. These families expressed an interest in her proposal to produce a video based on oral testimonies of the remaining families.

Costas was enlisted to help because of his experience and skill in community video projects. Costas and Dianne started recording interviews with the few contacts that they had at that stage. These interviews were relatively unfocused. They involved simple narrative accounts by people of their lives in the fishing village. Following this, a meeting of 70 descendants of the Indian fishing community was held in a local temple in the area where most of the descendants have now settled. At this meeting the two researchers revealed their interests and methods of working, and samples of all the "raw footage" was shown.

The meeting had expository and dialogic moments as the fishing community and the researchers were introduced to each others work and perspectives on the history of the community. The fishermen, and their families and descendants at the meeting were initially cautious with the researchers as they had been filmed on many occasions in the past without their consent or knowledge of the purpose of the films. Discussions at the meeting led to the acceptance of the video project and the election of a community representative and location coordinator to facilitate communication between researchers and the fishing community.

The grand-daughter of one the pioneer fishermen was chosen as the narrator and the community agreed to cooperate with the researchers and provide photo-graphic records. Furthermore specific demands of the finished product were agreed upon at the meeting. These demands were:

* to produce an educational video on local history to challenge the dominant white settler history that was prominent in South African school texts.

* to raise money through the sale of the video to erect a monument in memory of the Fishing Community.

* to use the video as public relations /political tool to convince the City Council to reconsider a demolition order on the Warwick Street Fish Market, a long established market place where many of the fishermen and their families traded.

This meeting was crucial to the success of the project. In particular it established a collective intent to produce a video and, in turn it served to reactivate a community which was disintegrating. The fishing families are dispersed over different residential areas, only one boat is still operating so the fishermen and their families no longer function as a fishing community. The tenuous links between the dispersed families exist in memories, oral histories and a limited amount of archival material such as newspaper cuttings, correspondence and photographs.

At the meeting, there was a palpable awareness amongst participants of the fragility of the history of the fishing community and the growing physical separation between people who once had strong bonds between them. The public meeting exposed the richness of what was available and encouraged them to seek out additional materials and information.

Production Phase

Our first task was to continue the preliminary interviews which we started in the exploratory phase. What became clear to us was that our investigative approach to interviewing posed questions based on certain assumptions about the fishing community. This was illustrated during the meeting at the temple by a fisherman who challenged Costas about his recorded interview which was shown at the meting. He said that we had "got it all wrong". He told us to come back and "re-do" him because we didn't ask him the right questions. He challenged our methods when he asked, "Why didn't you ask me about my experience when I was a child?" "Why did you only ask part of the story"

We were only asking "part of the story" because our questions were based on limited "scientific" understanding of the history. The error lay in our attempts to extract certain answers rather than arrive at some understanding of the history through dialogue. As we spent more time on the project the fishermen and their families were increasingly cooperative and they began to tell their history rather answer our questions. They volunteered information and personal records about their history.

The title of the video "Hanging up the Nets" was chosen by the researchers during the first year of production when we presented a paper on our work in progress to a conference on Oral Documentation. By this stage we had already come to the conclusion that the community had disintegrated and that they were in the process of hanging up their nets for the last time. The video was a documentation of the last days of a dying community.

The conclusions that we were making seemed valid as were not able to film any sizable catches nor did we find archival film records of the large catches that the fishermen reported as typical of the "old days" when forty boats were operating up to the 1950s. The vain attempts by the researchers to catch some of the fishing action during the first two years of the project was regarded by us as ample testimony of a failed industry and a community under threat.

However, in July 1990, the third year of production, an enormous shoal of sardines entered the Durban bay and beach areas. We were able to record the fishermen bringing the net to shore and emptying the nets with hand baskets. The patient engagement with the fishermen taught us to understand the conditions that were likely to yield large catches. This record is valuable because it is, as far as we know the only known film recording of a seine boat delivering a live catch.

This valuable illustrative material presented us with problems as we had already concluded that fishing was so poor that the fishing community could not survive on the paltry catches. The catches over the next few days were however reminiscent of the "good old days" that the pioneer fishermen spoke about. This contradiction was resolved when the fishermen reported that the last time a catch of this size was seen was in the early 1950s when large catches were common-

a real functioning of communication, without which there is neither the flow nor the transmission of information; that is why we consider the application of the theoretical model of information to be appropriate in describing the phenomena of culture.

One of the insights provided by the ethnosemiotic examination of culture is that there are always several kinds of sign-systems, as the totality of texts and the functions assigned to them, and as a definite mechanism generating these texts.

They imagine culture as a concentric system of sign-spheres, where it is possible to distinguish between the sign-systems and the non-semioticized sphere, between culture and non-culture (the area lying outside culture). Distinguishing between those opposites has characterized human cultures for a long time, for even the ancient Greeks disassociated themselves from the "barbarians", the cultures of the religious Middle Ages held themselves apart from the "heathens"; the Enlightenment despised "ignorance"; civilised Europe despised the so-called "primitive" peoples; in Germany, the Nazis persecuted "morbid" art; in the Soviet Union and China, the Communist cultural revolution persecuted the art of "bourgeois reaction" - the list is almost endless. That disavowal actually meant exclusion from the dominant culture, the ousting from the culture of all the phenomena regarded as non-culture. Another aspect of this process of semioticization is the relationship between the central and the peripheral areas of culture.

The code of the central area of culture is determined by several important factors - primarily by its widespread use in society and its high degree of sophistication. This elaborate structure also implies a high degree of constancy and coherence in the sign-systems, features combined with the automatism of the use of the codes. In other words, it is the frequent repetition of the words that ensures the safe transmission of information. The ultimate aim of this whole mechanism is to enable the collective (the society using the signs) to preserve its identity, which is what it uses the texts and the codes for. In other words, the essence of unlimited semiosis is the constant reproduction of culture, which also implies a reproduction of the codes, the texts, the world of objects, the social institution and the conceptual system. And here we have arrived at an important problem - namely, that to the collective using the cultural sign-systems the constancy of certain communications, texts, symbols and pictures is immensely important. This is ensured partly by the identity of the signs, but more by the constancy of the structure made up by the elements. While the elements of culture are continuously changing and are being replaced, certain structures show a fair degree of permanence. This applies particularly to certain parts of the individual ideological structures, religion, beliefs and the value system.

In other words, the central part of culture ensures the preservation of constancy, the development of homogeneity - in one word, the identity of the group. It is these permanent types of culture that we can consider to be national culture. While it does adjust to the tasks of the various ages, it also shows a high level of constancy and may maintain its character for extremely long periods of time. Visual anthropology analyzes the visual texts of culture, and ethnographic films belong to these cultural texts.

Cultures can be understood through the objects, facts and "texts" they create. The methods of ethnosemiotics or of cultural semiotics are eminently suited for analyzing "culturally coded" signs and sign-systems, and films may be regarded as such characteristic sign-events (cf. Ruby, 1982: 129 "film as sign-events"). Soviet researchers dealing with the theory of cultural texts also attach primary importance to continuous texts, as opposed to (linguistic) texts consisting of discrete signs:

In the overall model of culture another type of text is also essential, one in which the concept of the text appears *not* as a secondary one derived from a chain signs, but as a primary one. A text of this type is not discrete and does not break down into signs. It represents a whole and is segmented not into separate signs but into distinctive features. In this sense we can detect a far-reaching similarity between the primacy of the text in such modern audio-visual systems of mass communication as the cinema and television, and the role of the text for systems in which ... language is understood as a certain set of texts. The fundamental distinction between these two cases of the primacy of the text consists, however, in the fact that for audio-visual systems of the transmission of information and for such comparatively earlier systems as painting, sculpture, the dance and pantomime, the continuous text may be primary and a sign appears as secondary. Semiotic theory is concerned

with the continuous (indiscrete) texts as primary datum...precisely at a time when in culture itself communication systems using predominantly continuous texts are acquiring increasingly greater significance (Uspenskij et al. 1973:6-7.).

The ethnographic film, as a cultural text, is a form of social consciousness. It performs two highly important functions in the life of the community. One is memory, and the other - following from the former - is maintaining the cultural identity.

Every culture has an inherent intention to ensure the transmission, the handing down of important information (the sort of information that characterizes the culture concerned); therefore it employs a plurality of channels and codes to ensure the coding of relevant messages, for instance, in the form of rites, myths, songs, dance and rituals. Film, and particularly ethnographic films, are just such a device in today's modern world, including Europe (cf. Worth, 1981:77; and on the problem of culture as memory see Posner, 1988:30).

Culture as a collective memory is not only a storage mechanism but also a selective device...The chances of long survival for a piece of information are highest when there is a code which requires its renewed expression in each of its applications...They maintain the culture's identity...

3. Ethnographic Film in Hungary

Hungarian ethnographers (Béla Vikar and Béla Bartók) were among the first to use the phonograph for recording folk songs. Yet, it was not until 1927 that the first ethnographic film was made. It is attributable to Sándor Günyei, a researcher at the Ethnographic Museum (the old film strip has recently been restored, as a result of which a 15-minute programme of pictures taken in the land of the Palots is now available for screening).

It was also in these years (1924) that the professionals of the motion-picture industry launched the regular weekly newsreel, which, in addition to news and current events, recorded the characteristic festivals and collective rituals of popular life (such as the pilgrimage, local religious festivals and popular customs, folk costumes and folk dance). By the end of the '20s, the film material accumulated had grown so large as to call for the release of a catalogue (The Hungarian film...1930), listing the themes of the small pieces lasting for a few minutes (35-millimetre films, each of a length of 20 to 60 metres), as well as those of the longer, so-called cultural films. These latter films were specially commissioned by the state and were distributed round the country in 400 copies: that is, they reached practically all the cinemas in the country (Castiglione - Székely 1941:367). They included a film about Hungarian folk dances ("Genuine Hungarian Dances" 1927 -ms) and one about a horse festival in the Tiszántúl, the area east of the river Tisza (1928 - 35 ms).

In the 1930s, the making of ethnographic films in Hungary was given a boost, partly by the emergence of the Pearly Bouquet Movement (1931-1944), which brought popular culture - in particular, the colourful peasant costumes, showing fairly large variations from region to region, and popular dance - into the mainstream of interest. The other impetus was provided by the continued production, with significant financial assistance from the state, of the "cultural films", with the active participation of, among others, the director Béla Paulini, founder of the Pearly Bouquet Movement. Thus, a film was made about a pilgrimage in a Transdanubian Village (Szanyi búcsú, 1933 - Pilgrimage in a Hungarian Village); while the film "Magyar Falu" (Hungarian Village, 1935) is available in a version with English subtitles. "Amahyar falu művészete" (folk Art of Hungarian Villages, 1937) presents the decorative art of villages, with another film bearing the self-explanatory title of "Magyar táncok és népszokások" (Hungarian Folk Dances and Folk Customs, 1939). These films were compiled partly or entirely from short segments of contemporary newsreel footage. In 15 to 20 minutes, they touched upon a whole range of subjects, showing, therefore, only a few tantalizing pictures (e.g. of the techniques of embroidery or bone-lace making). Though they contain some highly illuminating ethnographic pictures of the life led by the peasantry in those days, these films - as regards their ideological contents and aims - served the propaganda of nationalism, which was then increasingly asserting itself. In the late '30s, such propagandistic uses of the genre could also be observed elsewhere in Europe (let us just think of Italy and Germany).

Apropos of the early history of Hungarian ethnographic filmmaking, two interesting episodes should be mentioned here. The first concerns a film by the Austrian-born Georges Höllering (Hortobágy, 1936 - 73 min.), which he shot in the Great Hungarian Plain in 1934-35. The result is over fifteen thousand metres

struggle with allegorical statements in descriptions of environmental issues as well as with explaining the concept of film to many herders who had limited if any experience of it. These problems were partially resolved respectively, through purchase of a portable generator and employment of a Mosotho as a trainee video-cameraman and interpreter.

Since the project has begun, we have had to continually rethink our field techniques and to revise them. Much of our attention has focused on developing subjects' understanding of film. The community video approach presumes knowledge of, if not familiarity with video, and certainly some understanding of the concept of film. In Lesotho, however, many herders have no experience of film. Some of the older herders, who are ex migrant workers to the mines of South Africa, have seen training films and feature films in mine hostels and in urban cinemas. The experience of many herders, however, is limited to seeing American feature films on the rare occasions when entrepreneurs bring old projectors with hired films to show in bars and restaurants in villages. Not only are these occasions few and far between, but also the films are in English and often, they are incomplete. Therefore, while the participant herders understood that the documentary film would be like the "bioscope" films some had seen, few understood the nature of the films to be made in this project.

This lack of experience proved to be a limitation to discussion of the issues to be addressed in the film and particularly to debate on recorded footage (which was shown on a small portable monitor). In order to address this problem we compiled a short film which included interviews and scenes from earlier fieldtrips. On subsequent fieldtrips, this film was used to illustrate the nature of the enterprise. This technique has proved to be extremely successful. Following each showing of the film, discussion of the project was always forthcoming. On the one hand, these discussions initiated the process of creating 'community' amongst herders who expressed interest in participating in the project. On the other hand, points of view and actions expressed in the film provided bases for discussion and argument about the issues to be addressed in the project.

This experience guided our planning for later stages of the project. We are now at a stage where we can edit footage into a film on the life-styles of herders. Ideally, we would like to show raw footage again to herders for comment and criticism, and for discussion on what to include in the film. However, our funding is limited as is our time schedule. Accordingly, the plan is to make a film which will then be shown to participant herders on later fieldtrips for comment and criticism. Subsequent group discussion of the film will be filmed for editing into a revised film. In addition, in view of the interest in our film work in the village which we use as a base, we intend to show the film to villagers. Again we hope to film group discussion of the film which can then be worked into the revised film.

In following this path we have independently arrived at a methodology similar to that developed by Workgroup 2000, a Dutch social action group. Workgroup 2000 use community video methodology as a tool to stimulate citizen participation in social action. (Criticos, 1989a) The method 'community self-research through video' consists of three phases. Phase one involves the documentation of individual and group problems. Phase two documents the community responses to these problems and compiles a video of these responses. The final phase involves the editing of previous footage from the first and second videos into a third video which is then shown at a public meeting prior to its presentation to municipal authorities.

Our methodology is, however, slightly different to that of Workgroup 2000 given the financial and temporal limitations, and in view of the greater logistical problems of working in isolated locations. We have had to modify the procedures for collective discussion of film footage and we have not been able to train herders in use of the video cameras. These variations from the ideals of community video are significant.

On the surface they appear to be pragmatic answers to logistical problems. Allowing comment and criticism of an edited film rather than raw footage at least provides opportunity for revision of the film and saves us time and money. Likewise, the retention of actual filming in the hands of the film crew is in part a compromise with the context of the project. We do not have the time and resources to train participants in use of the professional ENG (electronic news gathering) camera and in the use of the second camera which has been a different one on each trip (3). Nonetheless, this is only a partial explanation. The compromise reflects not only logistical problems but also, professional interests in the project.

There is a demand to produce professionally crafted films given our training,

our desire to record and to communicate valuable insights to audiences in an effective way, the considerable effort involved in carrying out this project, and not least, the research values of our academic peers. In spite of the ideals of community video for minimisation of professional interference, we cannot abandon entirely our respective professional interests. As a result, those interests are felt in our control of methodology.

We recognize, however, the dangers in such thought and action in a project of this nature. Professional interest has to be balanced against the demands and perspectives of the herders. The academic search for valuable insights is dependent upon the herders having opportunities to express as comprehensively as possible, their views. We are, therefore, drawn into a process of finding ways to reduce the bias of professional interest. This means that we must continually re-evaluate procedures.

Re-evaluation is evident in our work on the conservation issues film. We realize now that this film will take longer to produce than the herder life-style film as we assimilate the problems and successes of our methodology in making the latter film. We feel that one way or another we will have to overcome the financial and time restrictions on the project. Already we have begun to revise schedules and techniques in order to improve critical understanding about local perspectives on ecological processes in the mountain areas.

In effect, our struggle to balance the ideals of community video with professional concerns is part of a deeper dialectic. A closer look at this struggle shows it to be the learning process inherent in the nature of the community video approach to film. Not only have the ecologist, anthropologist and video producers had to learn from and adjust to each others' skills and demands but also, they have had to learn the interests of the herders. It is in short, a process of mutual education which shapes the content of film footage and the course of the project.

To date, our attention has focused largely on one aspect of this process, the education of the academic participants. Indeed this is revealed in some of our film footage which records discussions amongst ourselves. Some of this footage is accidental but much has been recorded deliberately given our awareness of the reflexive nature of the project. One of the reasons for carrying a second camera was to allow documentation of interactions that highlight this reflexivity. Yet, this footage has also served to remind us to plan for and to expect greater critical awareness amongst the herders as the project progresses. We do expect herders to re-evaluate their earlier views in due course and, in turn, to desire opportunities to revise and\or amplify their views. How this will affect our current methods remains to be seen but we do recognize that our film work will probably change as will some of our methods.

The project is at a stage where we are still learning the intricacies of using a community video approach for ethnographic documentation. Yet, this experience has already raised questions about the film product. Simply put, we have yet to decide on our target audiences. On the one hand, film production is directed towards Basotho audiences, the majority of whom would be rurally based and whose experience of film is limited. Accordingly, we recognize that the nature and content of the films cannot be produced entirely in terms of our standards of tele-literacy.

In this regard we are working very much in the dark. The only certain knowledge is that the films for Basotho audiences could be longer than films directed at urban audiences who are familiar with and inculcated into primarily American styles of narrative and editing (4). The majority of Basotho audiences may be naive in these terms but they are of a society which values oratory. Thus, apart from being absorbed by the novelty of film, Basotho audiences are likely to appreciate longer film discourse than would be the case with urban audiences.

On the other hand, we also want to produce films which are valuable in our academic terms and which will have an impact on specialist and lay audiences. For example, the herder life-style film could be valuable beyond the rural communities of Lesotho given the relatively little research that has been conducted in the mountain region of the country. With regard to the conservation issues film, the anthropologist and ecologist want it to have an impact particularly on government officials and international conservation agencies whose policies, we feel, threaten the livestock economy of Lesotho. Our concern then is not simply to produce uncritical testimonies of the rural communities which, as is evident in many academic reviews of community video inspired films (e.g Muller, 1990), can be of limited interest to audiences beyond those communities.

Again, it is the nature of the project which causes us to consider carefully the

place and fleet of forty boats operated in these waters in comparison to the one remaining boat today.

The interviews with the descendants and the currently active fishermen were conducted at the beach or in peoples homes. When we had completed the bulk of the interviews, the various testimonies were pieced together to form a continuous chronological narrative of the oral history. This activity undertaken by Dianne Scott and a research assistant identified periods and activities that were absent in the narrative when contrasted to other historical records. A final round of interviews was then undertaken and a narrators script was written to deal with gaps in the narrative and to provide a linkage between different interviews.

A script based on the interviews and the narrator links was then presented to the elected community representatives for their approval. Once the script was returned to us for refinement and alteration we then completed the sound recording and initiated the editing. The editing was undertaken by the researchers in accordance with the approved script. No deviation was made from the script except in cases when there were timing errors or when the footage requested proved to be damaged.

Unlike other community video initiatives no attempt was made to develop the technical skills of community members during this production as this was not an interest of theirs. However what characterized this production was a very high level of consultation and creative direction by the community. There was interest in the creative and content decisions of the script but not to engage directly with any of the technical tasks.

Post-Production Phase

When the video was completed the first copy was shown to the community representatives. They then requested a few minor changes and identified editing and caption errors which were incorporated into the revised video. After the revisions were made we then called a meeting of descendants at the local library where the completed video was shown and discussed. There was unanimous support and acceptance of the video and an explicit claim of "ownership" of the video. We reported that by using private transport and volunteer assistants the total production costs for the video were R3000 (US$1200) and we sought a directive from the meeting of whether this money should be recovered through distribution profits or external sponsorship. There was a passionate and strong resolve that the descendants should collect this money themselves so that it could be said that the fishing community paid for the production. The location coordinator was then elected to collect these funds. Furthermore it was decided to sell the video at the cost price of R27 (US$10) which is marginally above the cost of a blank tape. This would ensure the widespread use of the tape in schools and prevent the circulation of pirate copies. This was a reversal of the decision, three years earlier, to realize a profit from the sale of the video. We can only conclude that the fishing community identified strongly with the final product and they now saw it in terms of its political and educational value.

A further development at the meeting was the offer by the curator of the Local History Museum, to distribute the tape through the museum. She also offered to establish a "living exhibit" of fishermen demonstrating their boat-building and net-making skills at the Maritime Museum and has applied to the City Council for funds to produce a video which will document these boat-building skills. Her offers were accepted by the meeting.

In addition, the researchers were requested to write to the City Council on behalf of the Fishing Community to request that their boat launch and storage area sites be preserved as "historical areas" and that this be incorporated in the current redevelopment plans for the harbour area. The Council was also requested to consider the erection of a commemorative monument at the launch site.

The video did not however fulfill the initial objective of halting the demolition of the Warwick Street Fish Market as the demolition took place before the video was completed. Scenes of the original market and the now vacant site feature in the video.

The Social Construction of Knowledge: an Anthropological perspective

The central tenet of community video is that all participants should be involved in the entire process of production. The argument is that the methodology whereby the subjects control choice of topic, the filming and editing, promotes the participants critical awareness of what they are doing, of the world around them, and it reveals opportunities for constructive community and individual intervention in that world. The community video project stimulates amongst participants a collective construction of knowledge and meaning about the world. This is set against standard documentary film procedures wherein, it is argued, the film maker's adoption of the role of 'expert' and his\her control over the making of the film and the film itself, minimizes participation of subjects and opportunities for expression. In turn, these procedures restrict the development of critical awareness amongst all participants.

The appeal of community video for the anthropologist is that its' central tenet lies in closely to contemporary anthropological discourse on reflexivity. As Holy cogently discussed several years ago (1984,13-34), anthropologists recognize that fieldwork is in part a process in which both anthropologist and subject mutually construct shared meaning about various aspects of the society inhabited by the latter.

In short, the anthropologist does not simply observe and record 'social facts' but constructs an interpretation of the social relationships and their dynamics amongst subjects of a study.

In the light of the above, what draws the anthropologist to community video is the way it brings into the open the process of constructing knowledge, and offers immediate opportunities for reflection and debate with informants on social issues. Simply put, collective discussion on what to film and why, ability to film interaction and to play back the record to stimulate reflection and debate, makes community video a powerful research instrument. This is the ideal. However, the anthropologist involved in a community video project struggles in the field to translate the ideal into practice.

Combining tenets of community video with other fieldwork techniques and with the demand to produce a valuable documentary record involves intensive reflection and effort. The anthropologist, like the other participants, undergoes a process of education and feels profound changes in his\her perception of the social issues addressed in the film. However, s\he cannot help influence the course of the project in terms of his\her anthropological concerns.

Having identified community video as a potentially useful research tool, it is the anthropologist who often initiates a project, provides the equipment and who, therefore, has particular status in the project. Furthermore, the anthropologist, by virtue of his\her training, academic and political interests, will inevitably start with a critical perspective on the project. In the course of reflecting on each stage in the making of a film, s\he will be evaluating procedures and be inclined to use his/her influence to implement methods to ensure success in terms of a wide range of parameters (1). It is in the course of this effort that the anthropologist is invariably drawn to rethinking and developing methods to facilitate future projects.

This struggle to combine effectively a community video approach with academic demands has been very much part of the process of Tim's current work with Basotho herders. The project arose out of previous research on livestock management in the alpine zone of Lesotho which contributed to implementation of various range management and conservation programmes initiated by international aid agencies (2). Disenchantment with the way in which results of the research were put by planners, particularly the subordination of local herders' and stock owners' concerns, led to the initiation of the current project. This is an integrated research project involving an anthropologist, an ecologist, two video producers and a trainee video cameraman\interpreter. The project has adopted a community video approach in the work on visual documentation.

The video part of the project was based on two central issues which concerned herders in particular, and which had been identified through previous research. These were their conditions of work (their poverty, loneliness and the harshness of living in an alpine area), and government policies with regard to livestock management and conservation of the alpine grasslands. An initial fieldtrip was conducted to gain experience of the practical problems we might face with filming in the alpine zone.

That trip revealed two problems; the difficulty of keeping charges in batteries in cold winter conditions and the inadequacy of Tim's command of the Sesotho language on film. With regard to the latter problem, it is a common one faced by many anthropologists. The acquisition of fluency in a local language is achieved largely through conversation in interviews, during which the anthropologist repeats questions, seeks clarification on words and, through the forbearance of his\her informants, gradually learns the language, its nuances and slang. Such is the nature of many conversations but the repetition, false starts, and disruptions in the flow of speech does not come across well on film. In this case, Tim did

struggle with allegorical statements in descriptions of environmental issues as well as with explaining the concept of film to many herders who had limited if any experience of it. These problems were partially resolved respectively, through purchase of a portable generator and employment of a Mosotho as a trainee video-cameraman and interpreter.

Since the project has begun, we have had to continually rethink our field techniques and to revise them. Much of our attention has focused on developing subjects' understanding of film. The community video approach presumes knowledge of, if not familiarity with video, and certainly some understanding of the concept of film. In Lesotho, however, many herders have no experience of film. Some of the older herders, who are ex migrant workers to the mines of South Africa, have seen training films and feature films in mine hostels and in urban cinemas. The experience of many herders, however, is limited to seeing American feature films on the rare occasions when entrepreneurs bring old projectors with hired films to show in bars and restaurants in villages. Not only are these occasions few and far between, but also the films are in English and often, they are incomplete. Therefore, while the participant herders understood that the documentary film would be like the "bioscope" films some had seen, few understood the nature of the films to be made in this project.

This lack of experience proved to be a limitation to discussion of the issues to be addressed in the film and particularly to debate on recorded footage (which was shown on a small portable monitor). In order to address this problem we compiled a short film which included interviews and scenes from earlier fieldtrips. On subsequent fieldtrips, this film was used to illustrate the nature of the enterprise. This technique has proved to be extremely successful. Following each showing of the film, discussion of the project was always forthcoming. On the one hand, these discussions initiated the process of creating 'community' amongst herders who expressed interest in participating in the project. On the other hand, points of view and actions expressed in the film provided bases for discussion and argument about the issues to be addressed in the project.

This experience guided our planning for later stages of the project. We are now at a stage where we can edit footage into a film on the life-styles of herders. Ideally, we would like to show raw footage again to herders for comment and criticism, and for discussion on what to include in the film. However, our funding is limited as is our time schedule. Accordingly, the plan is to make a film which will then be shown to participant herders on later fieldtrips for comment and criticism. Subsequent group discussion of the film will be filmed for editing into a revised film. In addition, in view of the interest in our film work in the village which we use as a base, we intend to show the film to villagers. Again we hope to film group discussion of the film which can then be worked into the revised film.

In following this path we have independently arrived at a methodology similar to that developed by Workgroup 2000, a Dutch social action group. Workgroup 2000 use community video methodology as a tool to stimulate citizen participation in social action. (Criticos, 1989a) The method 'community self-research through video' consists of three phases. Phase one involves the documentation of individual and group problems. Phase two documents the community responses to these problems and compiles a video of these responses. The final phase involves the editing of previous footage from the first and second videos into a third video which is then shown at a public meeting prior to its presentation to municipal authorities.

Our methodology is, however, slightly different to that of Workgroup 2000 given the financial and temporal limitations, and in view of the greater logistical problems of working in isolated locations. We have had to modify the procedures for collective discussion of film footage and we have not been able to train herders in use of the video cameras. These variations from the ideals of community video are significant.

On the surface they appear to be pragmatic answers to logistical problems. Allowing comment and criticism of an edited film rather than raw footage at least provides opportunity for revision of the film and saves us time and money. Likewise, the retention of actual filming in the hands of the film crew is in part a compromise with the context of the project. We do not have the time and resources to train participants in use of the professional ENG (electronic news gathering) camera and in the use of the second camera which has been a different one on each trip (3). Nonetheless, this is only a partial explanation. The compromise reflects not only logistical problems but also, professional interests in the project.

There is a demand to produce professionally crafted films given our training,

our desire to record and to communicate valuable insights to audiences in an effective way, the considerable effort involved in carrying out this project, and not least, the research values of our academic peers. In spite of the ideals of community video for minimisation of professional interference, we cannot abandon entirely our respective professional interests. As a result, those interests are felt in our control of methodology.

We recognize, however, the dangers in such thought and action in a project of this nature. Professional interest has to be balanced against the demands and perspectives of the herders. The academic search for valuable insights is dependent upon the herders having opportunities to express as comprehensively as possible, their views. We are, therefore, drawn into a process of finding ways to reduce the bias of professional interest. This means that we must continually re-evaluate procedures.

Re-evaluation is evident in our work on the conservation issues film. We realize now that this film will take longer to produce than the herder life-style film as we assimilate the problems and successes of our methodology in making the latter film. We feel that one way or another we will have to overcome the financial and time restrictions on the project. Already we have begun to revise schedules and techniques in order to improve critical understanding about local perspectives on ecological processes in the mountain areas.

In effect, our struggle to balance the ideals of community video with professional concerns is part of a deeper dialectic. A closer look at this struggle shows it to be the learning process inherent in the nature of the community video approach to film. Not only have the ecologist, anthropologist and video producers had to learn from and adjust to each others' skills and demands but also, they have had to learn the interests of the herders. It is in short, a process of mutual education which shapes the content of film footage and the course of the project.

To date, our attention has focused largely on one aspect of this process, the education of the academic participants. Indeed this is revealed in some of our film footage which records discussions amongst ourselves. Some of this footage is accidental but much has been recorded deliberately given our awareness of the reflexive nature of the project. One of the reasons for carrying a second camera was to allow documentation of interactions that highlight this reflexivity. Yet, this footage has also served to remind us to plan for and to expect greater critical awareness amongst the herders as the project progresses. We do expect herders to re-evaluate their earlier views in due course and, in turn, to desire opportunities to revise and\or amplify their views. How this will affect our current methods remains to be seen but we do recognize that our film work will probably change as will some of our methods.

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In this regard we are working very much in the dark. The only certain knowledge is that the films for Basotho audiences could be longer than films directed at urban audiences who are familiar with and inculcated into primarily American styles of narrative and editing (4). The majority of Basotho audiences may be naive in these terms but they are of a society which values oratory. Thus, apart from being absorbed by the novelty of film, Basotho audiences are likely to appreciate longer film discourse than would be the case with urban audiences.

On the other hand, we also want to produce films which are valuable in our academic terms and which will have an impact on specialist and lay audiences. For example, the herder life-style film could be valuable beyond the rural communities of Lesotho given the relatively little research that has been conducted in the mountain region of the country. With regard to the conservation issues film, the anthropologist and ecologist want it to have an impact particularly on government officials and international conservation agencies whose policies, we feel, threaten the livestock economy of Lesotho. Our concern then is not simply to produce uncritical testimonies of the rural communities which, as is evident in many academic reviews of community video inspired films (e.g Muller, 1990), can be of limited interest to audiences beyond those communities.

Again, it is the nature of the project which causes us to consider carefully the

film product as much as the film process. A simple answer would be to produce at least two different editions of the films. However, to decide on this course now would prejudge the product. Not only would this course imply that the problem is simply a technical one - that different cultural orientations can be overcome by different technical construction of the films - it would also challenge the ethical and theoretical premises of the project.

The fundamental feature of the project is that the process of filming dictates to a large extent the product. The type of films that we do eventually produce must necessarily develop from the learning experience of the participants. If the project is to be successful in any way at all, the films need to present knowledge which has been mutually constructed by, and which is mutually intelligible to, the herder and the academic participants. We have yet to decide on the techniques to be used to put together a coherent film and no doubt there will be experimentation with technical procedures (e.g. dubbing, narratives). However, we believe that a commitment to promoting critical awareness amongst all participants will in time draw out issues which will resonate with any audience.

The interface of education and anthropology in ethnographic film

Our respective projects highlight the tensions in any academic effort to adopt a community video approach to ethnographic film production. Nonetheless, it is evident that these tensions are symptomatic of the premises of projects of this nature. These premises, the emphasis on reflexivity and the participation of all involved in the entire process of the production, ensure that tensions are acknowledged and addressed critically. This is evident from the start in the appeal of community video to us. For both of us, these premises bring into the open the question of the social construction of knowledge which is central to developments in our respective disciplines. In turn, community video becomes a means to explore both the underlying principles of this question and their application in practice.

In looking at our respective efforts in community video, there are obvious differences as well as overlaps in our approaches. Costas emphasizes critical pedagogy as a principle implicit in the premises of community video, and therefore a basis for developing procedures in projects. Tim emphasizes reflexivity in the course of a project as a basis for developing procedures. For Costas, his emphasis leads to a focus on means by which participants negotiate issues to be addressed and procedures in filming these issues. For Tim, the focus is on the way reflexivity stimulates re-evaluation of methods used to address issues. For both of us, however, the result is the same; a commitment to developing amongst all participants in a project a critical understanding of what they are doing, and of the issues that they address.

The key issue here is process, for in developing a critical understanding we have become aware of the multi-dimensionality of the projects and in particular, changes in our own perceptions. For example, both projects were initiated on a relatively formal basis; through a public meeting in Costas's case and through use of a demonstration film in Tim's project. In both cases, however, this basis was soon superseded by fluid and everchanging procedures as the participants' understanding of the projects developed. Likewise our own pre-conceptions were rapidly dispelled as we began to address the dynamics of our projects. For instance, both Costas's revision of interview techniques and Tim's evaluation of the project team's control of methodology, highlight the changes in our own understanding of our projects.

Our adoption of a community video as a research instrument and our experience of the multi-dimensionality of the processes involved has stimulated our interest in working out a model to guide future work in this vein. In coming together to compare our projects, we are looking for insights into the nature of these processes which we can then use to identify key elements of a model. This is still work in progress and the discussion below outlines only the initial steps we have taken so far in developing a model.

Mutual criticism of the ways we have respectively addressed these processes in our projects has revealed important issues to consider. For example, Tim, coming from an anthropological background, is wary of Costas's use of the concept of community. There is a tendency in Costas's evaluation of his project to imply a contemporary existence of the fishing community when the project itself was a medium for the recreation of a community very different in nature to that which once revolved around fishing in Durban bay. The point of contention here is that our projects have created community rather than begun with identifiable communities. Creating community is in fact a rationale for community video projects, a

consequence of collective and full participation in a project, and a result of employing the perspective of social construction of knowledge and meaning.

In taking this into account we are able to identify a dimension of the processes in community video projects and its interface with others. Community video projects, in principle, deny assumption of the issues which need to be addressed at the start of a project. Instead they work towards socially constructed knowledge and meaning. It is the interactions of the project participants in constructing this knowledge which introduces another dimension, namely a particular form of learning, as discussed by Costas. This form engages participants to pose problems to be addressed and to act upon them and thereby contributes to the creation of a community.

In a similar vein, Tim's academic concerns over the nature of the film product in his project and the consequent diminution of full participation by herders runs contrary to the educational and political premises of community video endorsed by Costas. The point of contention here is that the logic of community video, as identified by Costas, implies adoption of democratic procedures in order to ensure critical education. Accordingly, the nature of procedures adopted in a project need to be continually evaluated in order to ensure the critical education of the participants. In practice, of course, it is apparent that procedures will vary in degree to which they are democratically founded and this needs to be recognized of community video projects.

In identifying this dimension, we can recognize another which may be stated in terms of 'the film process shapes the film product'. Commitment to democratic procedures, even if breached on occasion, is necessary to draw out nuances of social behaviour and significant political and cultural concerns of the 'subjects' of a film. The academic concern to make a "good" film according to academic values is misplaced. By letting the project run its course with as little autocratic interference as possible, the academic participant is more likely to achieve the academic results s\he desires than by attempting to dictate from the outset the nature and content of the film product.

Furthermore, the commitment to democracy in the project initiates a process of political conscientization. In due course the academic participant must expect political action or attempts in this vein by the participants and in turn, demands upon his\her time and resources. We have already seen evidence of this in Costas's account of the role the completed video is to play as political tool in influencing the City Council to declare the launch site as a "historical area".

In addition the researchers are also involved in supporting the fishermen in their efforts to distribute the video to schools. Here the political and educational dimensions of the video coalesce. In distributing the video to schools there is a simple educational agenda: that is to show students a history of one community as explained by members of that community. Yet, intertwined with its agenda there is political interest in that the video is expected to stimulate students to think about writing history of their own communities.

Conclusion

Our dialogue has heightened the tensions between the central principles of community video and attempts to use community video as a research instrument. These tensions cannot be overcome entirely but this should not be seen as a major problem for community video inspired ethnographic films. Rather, we recognise that these tensions are a positive feature of projects of this nature in that they help us to identify the complexity and interconnectedness of processes which occur in documentary research.

We are beginning to understand these processes through comparison of our experiences and we are in a position to start formulating a working model to guide future projects. We cannot claim, however, to have got very far in this work. Here we have tentatively identified the processes which need to be integrated into a model but, we recognise that considerable further work needs to be done amongst community video film makers in South Africa

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Notes

(1) The anthropologist takes into account diverse issues such as closer affinity with subjects, resolution of logistical problems, 'optimal' development of critical awareness amongst all participants and the demand for the film(s) to provide insights valuable to academic discourse.

(2) The previous research was part of a broader multi- disciplinary programme, the Maluti/ Drakensberg Catchment Conservation Programme (M/DCCP). This programme was designed to provide the Lesotho government with recommendations for a conservation policy for the mountain region of eastern Lesotho. This demand arose out of a major hydro-electric project in Lesotho wherein several large dams are being constructed in the mountain region. These dams will draw their water from alpine catchment areas and, there is official concern over the danger of silting through soil erosion in the catchment areas. Accordingly, there was pressure to formulate a conservation policy to minimize soil erosion which is seen to be due in part to the overgrazing of alpine grasslands.

(3) A second camera has been used to accommodate the limitations of the ENG camera. The latter camera provides professional standard film but it is not a versatile piece of equipment. It has to be securely stored on pack animals and it takes time to set up for a shoot (setting up tripod attaching gel battery and recorder). Therefore, it is impractical for filming events that happen without forewarning either in the course of travelling with pack animals or during a set -up shoot. We have therefore, used a second camera which has alternately been a Panasonic M10 VHS Camcorder and a Sony Hi-8 Camcorder.

(4) American feature films and television programmes predominate in South Africa and Lesotho.

Voyage to Remote Places: A Review of *Disappearing World: Television and Anthropology*

André Singer with Leslie Woodhead, Boxtree in association with Granada Television Ltd., 1988

Marcus Banks, University of Oxford

(This is a revised version of an article that originally appeared in the Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford)

Television and anthropology stand in a curious relationship to one another. At various times each has fed off eachother and each has subordinated itself to the other. In one sense, anthropology - once said to be the handmaiden of colonialism - has seemed at times to be the handmaiden of television, providing access to the exotic and lending a studious veneer to peak-time viewing. On the other hand, many anthropologists - at least in Britain - see the televising of ethnographic material as a valuable way of alerting the general public to anthropology's existence and, perhaps, attracting students to undergraduate courses. To the fore in this public relations exercise is Granada television's series, *Disappearing World*, a fact of which Granada is not unaware. In this review of a recent book from the series, I want to consider the relationship between television and anthropology, rather than providing an assessment of any particular film that has been screened.[1]

Disappearing World is one of Granada Television's most successful products, purchased by television companies throughout the world. The book states on the dust jacket that it is the first to be "linked" with the series. Written and compiled by André Singer - a former director and one-time series editor - with contributions from a then current director (Leslie Woodhead) and a former producer and series editor (Brian Moser, who wrote the short forward), the book claims on the dust jacket to draw upon an archive of unique interviews and memorable photographs, taken specially by the film-makers' (ibid.). That is to say, the majority - if not all - the illustrations in the book are 35mm slides, rather than stills from the (16mm) films. This was presumably done in order to gain visual quality, but it serves to seal off the films, rendering them closed, as though once they had been transmitted (that is to say, consumed) they were to be consigned to storage.

The series itself has been 'linked' with anthropological writing from early in its history: Singer notes (pp. 26-27) a turning point around 1974 when, starting with the first film on the Mursi of Ethiopia, the films became 'parallels' to the written research of the collaborating anthropologists. 'Television was thus able to close the gap between anthropological ideas and public awareness of them' (p. 27), a gap that had previously resulted in misleading stereotypes of other cultures being fed to the public by popular novelists and the like. With this publication we turn full circle: the films of the books have been followed by the book of the films.

The volume is unashamedly presented as a coffee-table book - the large format, the glossy paper, the abundance of luscious colour photographs on every page. The text, although almost marginalized by the photographs and their captions, is interesting and informative - much of it is given over to short,and occasionally extended, quotations from members of the society in question.

The book was written, according to Singer, to 'encourage [a] voyage of discovery' (p. 41) and because 'it was always obvious that *Disappearing World* ought to make a book as well as a series' (p. 42). While I cannot comment on the validity of the latter point, the former is probably true: in many ways the book reads like a description of the most exciting adventure holiday you have ever seen advertised in the back pages of the Sunday newspapers. The text is in clear, well written and as uncontentious as one could expect; the photographs are charming, informative and beautiful by turns; the price reasonable for the quality of printing and photographic reproduction. while all this would not necessarily

instigate a voyage of discovery, it would certainly help ease the passage. Located within its own cultural framework, and more especially the framework of a television series, the book avoids the banality and anodynity into which it could easily have slipped. Rather, it represents the scholarly integrity of Singer - himself a trained anthropologist - accommodating himself to the demands of a popular medium.

As we know, however, cultural texts transcend their apparent authors and reveal processes and cultural meanings that anthropologists pride themselves on unpicking. For example, while Singer is presumably writing metaphorically when he describes the book as a instigator of voyages, the metaphor seems to lie deeper than he realises: the very structure of the book and the reading of it enhance the feeling of a luxurious ocean cruise.

First there is the send-off by the head of state (Dennis Forman, the former head of Granada Television [p. 7]), followed by quotations from sacred texts (a command from a native voice, a Mehinacu, and a quotation from Malinowski, [p. 8]) as though to bless the ship and all who sail in her. These are followed by a personal testimony to the wonders of the journey and a recounting of the origin myth from an old member of the crew, no longer making the voyage himself but waving bravely from the quayside (Brian Moser's Forward, [pp. 9 - 14]). Singer then takes over as our captain and, after another quotation from scripture (from Franz Boas, in fact, that early liberal of the anthropological conscience), he gives a brief illustrated lecture on the sights we are going to see. This helps allay our fears of the unknown (Dennis Forman is quoted as saying that the purpose of the series is to 'allow' other cultures 'to be understood' [p. 19]), sets the moral tone ('He [Boas] firmly refuted the belief that any race was superior to or more intelligent than another' [p. 15]), modestly blandishes the satisfied endorsements of previous travellers, ('"The series has always seemed to me one of the most valuable on television" wrote Sylvia Clayton' [p. 34]) and prepares us for the coming frills, ('quotes from indigenous people have been woven into the narrative' [p. 46]). Most significantly, a note of pathos is introduced when we are told that fears expressed in some of the early films that some groups were in danger of 'Disappearing' '...have been tragically fulfilled today' [p. 41].

But this feeling of loss is soon forgotten in the first-mate's rollicking narrative of previous voyages (Leslie Woodhead's chapter: 'On Location : filming *Disappearing World* [pp. 47 - 61]). Despite the jokes, the humorous anecdotes ('sometimes hilarious' according to the dust-jacket), Woodhead writes with an underlying note of unease: the voyage in the past has been dangerous (' we've got lost, become stranded, been accused of murder' [p. 47]) and there is 'a worrying amount of guesswork: How do we get there? Where will we live? What will we eat? ' [p. 48]. Certainly, film-making is tough 'even... the lists of items needed are surprisingly daunting.' Luckily, on our voyage we are in good hands because of the anthropologists - as Woodhead says: 'Their experience and insights have always been the basic fuel of *Disappearing World*, the vital ingredient through which we can hope to move beyond the level of travelogue towards something more revealing and lasting' (ibid.). Thus the anthropologists are the gatekeepers and guides; Singer (wearing his captain's hat) and Woodhead are merely the technicians who structure their experiential knowledge.

A few more traveller's tales and then, before we really know it, so well-prepared have we been by the nesting narratives we are meeting our first societies, guided again by Captain Singer. These, conveniently, are 'Societies in Change' (Chapter 1), as though they had helpfully come part of the way to meet us, so that the first impressions will not be too dislocating. The journey progresses around the world's cultures, a kaleidoscopic vision of open-air blues and forest greens: the people we meet are changing (Chapter 1), clashing their cultures (Chapter 2), making choices (3), hiding behind 'the' curtain (4), obsessed with order ('Order, Order, Order' Chapter 5), gaining control (6), being Christian or pagan (7) and celebrating (8). They are also, should we have failed to notice, men and women (Chapter 9). The journey finishes rather abruptly given the many preparations and preambles, but we can organize our memories with a complete list of the films (pp. 242 - 243; there is also an index), shake hands with those helpful anthropologists on the way out (pp. 244 - 246) and look forward to winter evenings by the fire reading up on other voyages of discovery.

The book's subtitle, *Television and Anthropology*, invites comment. The book is not 'about' the relationship between television and anthropology, nor 'some thoughts on' or 'an investigation into', it simply *is* television and anthropology. Or rather, given that it is a subtitle, it is *Disappearing World* which is both television and anthropology. It is undoubtedly the former and there are many ways in which it could legitimately claim to be the latter. The book and the series

rest on a binarism which makes television and anthropology separate fields of action, which posits separate categories of person as the concern of each. *Disappearing World*, however, is felt by those involved to have a foot in both camps. This is expressed in a sentence from the dust jacket: '*Disappearing World*...has brought some of the remotest peoples on earth into the living rooms of millions of viewers all over the world'. The viewers, the objects of television's attention, who live in 'the world' consume remote people, the objects of anthropology's attention, who live on '[the] earth'. The title of the series is often acknowledged to be inappropriate, given that some of the societies filmed (the Han Chinese, for example) are not 'disappearing' in the way that others (the Cuiva Indians of Colombia, for example) are, or have done.

But in another sense the title is entirely appropriate; it is a key to understanding the series and the book. *Disappearing World* is described in the book as an epic voyage of great hardship. Chosen randomly from Woodhead's chapter one finds the following phrases: 'remotest places', 'memorably uncomfortable', 'horror stories', 'hundred-mile treks', 'two agonising weeks', 'tribal war', 'punishing heat', 'daily sleaziness', throat-clogging darkness'. Crucially, even when the hardships of the voyage are surmounted, Woodhead writes that: '...at the end of the journey, there's often anti-climax' (p. 52). The object of the search is elusive, shifting, absent. Woodhead talks of 'hanging around', of 'waiting', of 'times when nothing happened' and, most revealingly, 'it's the waiting that really tells me I'm back on *Disappearing World* (all p. 52). The disappearing world is, by definition, unavailable; its apparent presence and solidity of form illusory.

The situation is far from clear-cut, however. Sometimes the disappearing world is disguised by apparent others that mimic the desired others, screens behind which mirages lie hidden. The positivist stance of *Disappearing World*'s anthropology demands that these imposters be exposed. Hence the passages in the book which relate to the films shot in Mongolia denigrate the state for attempting to hide and distort the real Mongolia: 'The necessities of a modern urban existence have made many of the older practices and customs redundant... other symbols of traditional Mongolian life... are being forgotten or repressed similarly: '... inevitable constraints [meant that]... many of the social issues that fascinated Moser [the films' director] remained concealed from his camera' (p. 32). Islam is also an apparent other, its 'rigid system of repetitive prayers' (p. 166) hides 'breakaway... sects' such as the Qaderi dervishes (p. 165). This attitude is best exemplified in two photographs of Muslim women which bear almost identical captions: of a Kirghiz woman, 'Although the Kirghiz are Muslims, they do not require their womenfolk to be veiled or live in seclusion (p. 156); of a Tuareg woman, 'Although the Tuareg are Muslims, their women do not veil and seclude themselves like women in many Islamic societies' (p. 70). The deceptive otherness of Islam is torn away with the veil: the desired other is - for Granada's purposes - made visible.

Doubts remain about the solidity of the world discovered, however. How can we prevent it retreating before the 'bossy one-eyedness' (a quotation of Paul Baxter's cited on p. 33) of the camera's lens, how can we redeem the vision from the charge of 'travelogue' (p. 48)? Hope seems only to lie with the consulting anthropologists, because they are 'steeped in intimate knowledge of a people' (p. 20). But later it is revealed that this strategy is doomed to failure: 'anthropologists have different priorities, of course' (p. 48). The anthropological vision cannot be accommodated within the frame because 'as film-makers seeking to communicate with a mass audience, we have to be a little more realistic' (p. 20). A strategy advanced by the anthropologist Bernard Arcand in his commentary to one of the first films, *Last of the Cuiva* (1971) is rejected, because: 'Simply human beings... make for boring viewing' (ibid.). Thus we are back to Woodhead's 'anti-climax'; the object of the *Disappearing World*'s quest is unfilmable, for a television audience is not there, it has disappeared.

The vision of *Disappearing World* is a once binary and totalising, a paradox that is at the heart of the series' enterprise. It is binary because there are two kinds of people, those who live on the earth and those who consume them in the global living room. In Singer's eyes, this consumption becomes revelation ('we can hope to move beyond the level of travelogue towards something more revealing and lasting' [p. 48]) and in relation the nature of worlds to disappear is countered. But because revelation is consumption and a negation of the quest, *Disappearing World* must always continue the endeavor, its vision is thus totalising. Singer reflects on the inadequacy of the corpus of the films as it presently stands: 'There were too many gaps. Where for example were the films from North America, eastern Asia or India?'. In true totalising fashion this must be rectified, the gaps must be filled. Once filmed, a remote group is incorporated into television's

world, becoming one with those in the global sitting room. They become consumers of their own culture, like the Mursi who seem to exist in some cinematic hall of mirrors, being watched in the act of watching themselves (several photographs in the book play on this idea of people watching themselves through *Disappearing World*'s eyes: see for example the frontispiece photograph and the photographs on pp. 40, 59 and 60). The result of this vision, however, is that 'remotest peoples on earth' are still out there (after all, the global living room can only exist is there is an other for it to consume); these people are retreating 'gaps', managing to evade capture.

The tension that the book admits is to one between the aims of television and the aims of anthropology ('The anthropologists have different priorities,of course' [p. 48]) but this is easily resolved: each side agrees to differ and a working relationship is established ('we've managed to rub along together productively for almost twenty years' [ibid.]). This is a dissimulation. The tension exists between the totalising goals of *Disappearing World* (both the series and the book) and the fragmentation it creates. The 'peoples [of the] earth' are a unitary other until fragmented by the appearance of a part of their corpus; capture by the lens negates a claim to be a disappearing world. The self-congratulatory tone of the book's introductory chapters hides a deep sadness, a tristesse that is revealed in the title of the book and series.

The book itself hints at this fracturing of the peoples of the earth, even while setting the agenda for totalisation. For example, Singer discusses the alternative forms the book could have taken (pp. 44-45), as though unsure of what he has produced. Similarly there is the fact that he is unsure of the book's status vis-a-vis the films (it is ambiguously 'linked' with them). These hints, it seems to me, are indicative of an uncertainty of purpose - an uncertainty that lies at the heart of anthropology as much as it does at the heart of so-called 'anthropological' filmmaking.

"Disappearing World: Television and Anthropology" is permeated with themes of change, of loss, of anti-climax - these are the unconscious acknowledgement that the 'real' disappearing world is a gap, an absence not a presence, a universe forever retreating, forever evading capture.

Notes:

[1] Reviews of films from the series itself can be found in the following articles
Ginsburg, Fay 1988. Ethnographies on the airwaves: the presentation of anthropology on American, British and Japanese television. In *Senri Ethnological Studies 24: Cinematographic theory and new dimensions in ethnographic film* (eds) Paul Hockings and Yasuhiro Omori. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology.
Henley, Paul 1985. British ethnographic film: recent developments. *Anthropology Today*, 1 (1), 5-17.
Loizos, Peter 1980. Granada Television's Disappearing World series: an appraisal. *American Anthropologist* 82, 573-594.

Who's Speaking Here? Shifting Voices, Memory, and the Use of Archival Film

John P. Homiak, Human Studies Film Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Sermons and Sacred Places. 1987, 29 minutes, film or video. Edited by Lynn Sachs, Center for Southern Folklore (Available from the Center for Southern Folklore, 152 Beale St., Memphis, Tennessee 38103)

A black and white image, enlivened by the singing of a spiritual, scrolls across the screen. The camera pans an assembled multitude of black churchgoers gathered at a riverbank. Immersed up to his waist, an enrobed black preacher prepares to baptise an adult member of his congregation. The pitch of the singing trails off as a voiceover narrative breaks in. The voice is female, faceless and unidentified: but it speaks with the authority of one familiar with the scene. The

statement transports the viewer across the gap of time separating the antique image from the present:

> Well, now deh baptise you in the church, in de baptising pool. But de way when I was baptised, I was baptised out in de woods in de old time way. And deh doan do like deh use to do in de old time way... now deh are quiet. Now when I was baptised de spirit of de Holy Ghost was der. An' people was shouting everywhere...

Filmmaker Lynn Sachs chose this paradigmatic scene of African American life to open *Sermons and Sacred Pictures*. Following this establishing shot, a series of photographs and moving images are offered up from the personal archive of Reverend L.O. Taylor, a Baptist minister who established himself in Memphis in the late 1930's. Over the 29 minute running time of the film these images are made to serve as vehicles to animate and provoke the memory of those who were either part of or familiar with Rev. Taylor's ministry. In the final scenes, Sachs brings her viewers full circle again to the riverbank. The same unidentified female voice offers a final nostalgic commentary:

> When I saw de Baptising on the films, it sort of reminds me when you see de pictures in de Bible and you read about dem baptising on the River Jordan. They are more sacred to me even though we doan do 'em now. It seems to me deh were more sacred oriented - baptising 'em then than they are now baptising in de church pool.

And finally a male voice closes with: "You know, those pictures really spoke to the minds of the people. In fact, they were sacred to them." The principle message of the film is clear: these images, seen later by those who comment upon them, are deemed "sacred". This view is signaled as well by the title of the production and by certain conscious editing choices employed by the filmmaker.

While wearing the hat of archivist at the Smithsonian's Human Studies Film Archives (HSFA), I have screened many thousands of feet of black-and-white footage of similar historical vintage. Most has been shot by American or European travelers abroad in Africa and Asia. In the 1920's, 30's and 40's, upper-class anglo-Europeans were, by and large, the only people who could afford the luxury of a camera and access to the suitably "rare" experiences deemed worthy of recording on film.

At the HSFA the primary research approach to this kind of historical footage is orientated to interrogating the underlying discourses of power, class, race, gender, and control associated with the early amateur efforts with the camera. In order to ensure this kind of "researchability", the Smithsonian Film Archives makes every effort possible to secure detailed annotations from depositors. Footage of this kind may thus lend itself a reflexive approach which can open up a revisioning of the past. This becomes as much a statement about the era during which these materials were created and the social outlooks of the people behind the camera as it does about the subjects "captured" on film. Rare footage shot by a southern black preacher would seem to afford a filmmaker a host of exciting prospects in this regard. Insofar as Rev. Taylor's films were clearly used for didactic purposes, as social commentary, and as a means to represent black people to themselves, these film records might be expected to afford us an alternate view of an "official" local history, or even the possibility of interpreting how the factors of race and class affected what was filmically created. It is precisely from these perspectives that *Sermons and Sacred Pictures* is most disappointing.

As both an anthropologist and an archivist attempting to understand this film as visual ethnography, I found it raised a series of issues concerning archival access, ethnographic authority, interpretation, and the identification of and collaboration with informants. For some time now those of us concerned with visual ethnography have been calling attention to the canons by which these are constructed. No longer at issue is whether a filmmaker should be present in the filmic event- but how he/she will reveal his/her presence or mediating influences. A film constructed largely from a corpus of archival footage - necessarily one of second and third order mediations - should be expected to engage with these issues.

In *Sermons and Sacred Pictures* the question is not "who's filming here?" We know we're looking at selections from a collection shot by a black Baptist minister in the South during the Jim Crow period. Rather, the questions are about who is it that has reconstructed these materials, by what authority, and in terms of what relationship(s) to those who are chosen to comment on these images. Without answers to these questions how are we to know what weight should be given to this production as a reconstruction or revisioning of local black history in the South.

Sermons is not simply a film organized around Rev. Taylor's historical images. It is equally organized around the selective recollections, memories,and ideals which these images illicit in the individuals who are themselves self-selected or privileged as commentators. This immediately brings to the fore a concern central to reflexive ethnography: *"who's speaking here?"*, and what is their relationship to the events/personages depicted? Throughout the film, the voices of these commentators are never identified either in terms of their relationship to Rev. Taylor, to significant others in his congregation, or in terms of their present circumstances. The viewer is left to hazard his or her own guesses. A few appear to have been members of the Olivet Baptist Church in Memphis headed by Rev. Taylor. Others, it seems, are the children of congregation members speaking from childhood recollections. In her introductory credits, the filmmaker provides a list of credits under the heading "Spoken Words." But this is merely a courtesy to the speakers themselves for viewers have no way of knowing which names go with which voices. Just who is speaking at any given moment is never known.[2] Nor are we given any inkling about what the current relationship of these speakers might be to the Memphis community for which Rev. Taylor produced these records. Have all remained local residents? And when past recollections are revoked and generalized, it is never clear to what extent these are elaborated in terms of events which shaped black life in the intervening years (e.g., the civil rights movement).

None of these are trivial points since Rev. Taylor - as is clear from a voice recording of his included in the introduction - never intended his collection simply as a personal archive. It was expressly intended by him to represent and reflect the interests and values of a community and to provide them and their progeny with a record upon which they might reflect. Seen in this light, the failure of the filmmaker to evolve a methodology which identifies community members and which speaks to their selective revisioning of these materials is troubling.

These points also serve to cast doubt on the overall "sacred" gloss which the filmmaker and some speakers subjectively append to Rev. Taylor's images. For her part, Sachs opts to essentialize the voice of the black churchgoer by the very frames of reference which open and close the film (scenes and voiceovers related to baptism). The spiritual motif is further developed by the film's construction. This includes the intercutting of contemporary footage shot in an African American church, a sound track composed largely of church hymns, and locating speakers within this institutional context. A shuttling back and forth between archival shots of Rev. Taylor's Olivet Baptist Church and shots in the contemporary (but unidentified) church encourages viewers to assume a unity of outlooks across time and to reinforce the perception that those who comment upon these images share a single set of ideals and evaluations. The omnipresence of the church seems to make these voices echo timelessly through the chambers of this central institution of African American life.

This point again goes to concerns of methodology. For fieldworkers who have collected oral history it is a commonplace that the social construction of memory is intimately related to setting and context. In this instance, this is not to say that we should doubt the importance of the church or the fact that these films were apparently integral to Rev. Taylor's ministry. Sachs' filmic emphasis on the context of the church, however, does the raise the issue of how these images are remembered and what was *selected in relation to the overall body of these archival film*.

It seems apparent from what is presented in the film that a considerably larger and more variegated body of film was produced by Rev. Taylor. This being the case, we need to know not only "who's speaking here?", but what is their relation to the filmmaker and to the events being depicted? These insights could have been communicated unobtrusively through subtext in some of the cutaways to the contemporary church scenes. This apparently was a context where Sachs located many of her informants.

In any event, one would like to know what kind of access the filmmaker and her informants may have shared to the total collection of Rev. Tylor's footage? How extensive is this body of work and what topics does it cover. Did filmmaker and informants screen this collection in its entirety or was access to it mediated by the filmmaker. If seen by informants in its entirety, did their subsequent commentary on the images serve as the guiding hand for the filmmakers decision as to what to use? Or where certain shots preselected by her for comment, thus prejudging what might be of principle importance to them? These and other questions would ll have to be answered before we could take "Sermons" seriously as a critical piece of visual ethnography.

Along these lines, Sachs includes materials and statements that implicitly challenge the predominance, or at least the exclusivity, of her play upon "the sacred." Many shots, for example, are more accurately reinscribed as political commentary either on blacks as powerless and exploited, or on the prevailing racist images of blacks as shiftless. lazy, and dull. Rev. Taylor's shots of church life challenge these stereotypes of blacks by showing them as organized and dignified. Other footage - like that of black women being taught to type to the rhythm of piano music, further contest the representations of the dominant society. These scenes, screened by Rev. Taylor at community gatherings, inspired confidence in people because they let them know that they were not, as one speaker put it, "just black and poor".

I suspect that more could have been done in this vein. One male voice, for instance, intones "I have never seen an extensive record like [Rev. Taylor] had in the black community." Certainly we want to know just what is meant by "extensive". But there are intimations that the speakers have seen more than just those images they comment upon. Shortly thereafter, mention is made of shots by Rev. Taylor showing black children riding on the running boards of automobiles - automobiles which their parents which their parents were too poor to own and which presumably belonged to white folks. What, one wonders, might Rev. Taylor have filmed of race relations or socioeconomic inequality in the Memphis of the 1940's. My interest was certainly piqued by a male voice which asserted of Rev. Taylor's collection that "...its a social statement what he did because its like a tale of two cities" (i.e., the era of Jim Crow in the South). The same voice then proceeds to explain that in the segregated south of Jim Crow, blacks were forced to duplicate the civic services that were readily available to the white population. Rev. Taylor, we are told, documented them all.

When the filmmaker inclines in the direction of such a political reinscription of the footage, it is only barely so. Shots of railroad travel in the segregated south during the 1940's (primarily by those attending the National Baptist Convents) left me wanting to see more of how blacks experienced and responded to the colour line. The nature and significance retrospectively attributed to this travel (to National Baptist Conventions) is certainly of importance. One speaker asserts that this travel "from city to city paved the way for the road we are now on." By this, she refers to this assisted in developing the collective experience which would later enable African Americans to respond to new changes during the civil Rights period: "so when the Civil Rights movement came about you already knew what was here and you just move into it - so it was a learning process." These points of view seem far more worthy of exploration than the well-known commonplaces of church life, however resonant the latter might be. To have coupled these traveling sequences (as an essential part of the interface between Southern blacks and whites) with local scenes of the Jim Crow South would have been to reinscribe them in a powerful political way.

I was likewise struck by what I took to be significant gender differences in response to the images. One woman, reflecting upon Rev. Taylor's films emphasized his "contribution to the spiritual world and to the family." The shot selection used here is black and white photo of a wake - with a deceased man in casket surrounded by wreathes bearing signs of sympathy from family members. The accompanying voiceover implies that Rev. Taylor regularly used such images as "visual education" to give character sketches, develop parables, and to "tell a story about people." This is one of the few instances where I felt the title - "Sermons and Sacred Pictures" - actually fit with the narrative and was part of the visual record which I thought could have been further analyzed. For example, in the inter-play between male and female voices, female speakers sometimes adopted a moralistic tone to comment on these images, male speakers more often remark on the "progressive" aspect of Rev. Taylor's work and how his films served to instill pride and confidence in black people. Finally, I found irony in a final shot of what was (apparently) an all male church delegation which had traveled to a National Baptist Convention. As the shot runs, it is a female voice which explains the significance of these travels to the latter freedom struggle.

In *Sermons and Sacred Pictures*, it is the opening and closing scenes, relating to baptism, that I find most ironic. These privilege a spiritual reading of these images at the expense of a more detailed look at the social and political meanings of Rev. Taylor's footage. To be sure, he black church was/is a central institution - social, political and religious - in African American life. The religious imagery associated baptism - through its well-known allegorical association with "crossing over the River Jordan" - is doubly ironic in this case because it was equally one of social struggle and movement of African Americans toward political liberation and equality. Unfortunately, *Sermons and Sacred Pictures* does not encapsulate a methodology which provides viewers with the information that

would allow them to "crossover" to a fuller appreciation of Reverend Taylor's photographic and filmic legacy.

notes:

1. For a discussion of the symbolism of baptism among African Americans, see M. J. Herskovits *The Myth of the Negro Past*, 1990, p.234

2. Sachs could well have provided answers to these questions either via subtext or direct narrative address which exposed her own role in the project. In 1986 while working at the Center for Southern Folklore, she spent some months visiting the Pilgrim Baptist Church in Memphis, the first church where Rev. Taylor first served. In her discussion of this project at the 1988 Flaherty Film Festival she stated that "Basically I looked for as many people as I could find who had known Rev. Taylor or heard of him, or seen his images as children." Although the viewer cannot discern from the film, it was also at the Pilgrim Baptist Church that she shot most of the contemporary footage intercut into the film.

Contact - The Yanomami Indians of Brazil

Edited by Winborne Hughes, produced by Geoffrey O'Connor, 1990, 28 minutes

Gilio Brunelli, Université de Montréal

Considered to be the last of Latin America's large indigenous ethnic groups living in a certain isolation from the expansion fronts of the national society, the Yanomami live in a mountainous area densely covered with tropical forest and straddling the international boundary between Brasil and Venezuela. The works of Jacques Lizot and Napoleon Chagnon, among others, have contributed to making these Amerindians known well beyond their territory. Very often, however, the deep interest the anthropological community had in their modes of existence and of reproduction, has somewhat eclipsed the contradictions of every day reality for these Amerindians, whose isolation from the fronts of expansion was becoming more and more relative with no particular measures of protection being implemented. In particular, their isolation suffered a deadly blow when it was found that they were sitting on a bed of gold, or, to phrase it more correctly, that the rivers and brooks irrigating their territory budded with alluvial gold deposits. Given the catastrophic state of economy in Brasil at the time, tens of thousands of poor people rushed onto the lands of these last savages, their only aim being to gather as much gold as possible in as little time as possible. And this meant an end to the relative isolation that had enabled these Amerindians to carry on reproducing and developing their own way of life for longer than any other ethnic group in Amazonian Brasil.

This whole story is told, somewhat succinctly and cryptically I admit, in the title of the video offered by Winborne Hughes : *Contact*. Over with the isolation; over with the happy days spent ferociously fighting each other, as Chagnon says, or idly exchanging stories, as Lizot asserts. Now, brasilian society has come to stay, in the avid guise of desperate gold washers covered in rags or of helicopter borne contractors; and let us not forget the adventurers and the mercenaries who are always present on such occasions. The fact that they are called *jagonços* or *pistoleros* does not change their nature.

The video shows how links are established between the two worlds: the last savages of the Amazon and the gold thirsties of Brasil. The opening scene is Edenic and shows the small hours of dawn, when the tropical forest is still covered in a shroud of mist that shrinks slowly under the rays of the rising sun and when the singing of the birds and the rustling of the leaves have not yet given way to the noises of human activity. And there we go... contact! Seen from the cockpit of a small Cessna, the landing strip looks like a purulent scar on the heart of the forest. But it is vital, for only planes can bring the gold washers who invade yanomami country by the thousands. Even the most poor, desperate gold washers, clad in rags and tatters, pushed back deep in the jungle by an economic policy that denies them minimal survival conditions in their areas of origin, even they, arrive by plane or helicopter. They are the workforce of an industry that, in the deepest of the forest, uses the most advanced means of transport. Furthermore, those flying monsters who write off in a roaring propulsion the beneficial distance which had spared the Yanomami from the disastrous contacts other

Amerindians in Brasil had known well before them, these very flying monsters are key characters in the video. They are everywhere to be seen and the video itself is deftly structured in segments taking place between a landing and a take-off. The train which defeated the Amerindians in northern american Prairies, has in the Amazon given the way to aircraft; and what needed here half a century to be completed, will be committed there in only a few years.

Of course, armed encounters have depleted Yanomami villages without even slowing down the flow of gold washers. But when the toll amounted to twenty-five Yanomami and six gold washers in three years, a much deadlier and more insidious weapon eradicated whole *chabonos* with swift efficiency. Some brasilian organisations reckon that about one third of the yanomami population living on the brasilian side of the international boundary line have since 1987 lost their lives to deceases introduced by the gold washers, malaria in particular. And a third means here from two to three thousand Amerindians.

The video does not dwell on the ecological disaster generated by the extraction of gold from the river beds, even if one scene of washing is enough to suggest to the viewer the magnitude of the ecocide. It cannot elaborate on this aspect because the plane is taking off, soon to land at Boa Vista, capital city of the state of Roraima, the very place where the conjuration against the Yanomami starts from, right in the palace of the state governor. Indeed, the head of the government is Romero Jucà Filho[1], a young migrant from the Nordeste the secret service pushed at the head of the federal agency for the indian affairs (FUNAI). Once he was familiar with all the institutionalized tricks of bureau-technocratic trade in the brasilian administration, he was promoted to the controls of the state of Roraima, the only state in Brasil where the indigenous population outnumbered the allochtonous one until very recently. Public opinion has it that Jucà was hired by the military to bring an end to the question of the Yanomami, and the action he took certainly did nothing to infirm this belief. But the surprises are not over and Hughes' video brings them out with timely alternation. Whom do we find in Boa Vista, arm in arm with governor Jucà ? José Altino Machado, a man who speaks as easily as he thinks clearly and who is, as president of the local gold washers union, the principal organising force of the occupation of yanomami territory and of their being despoiled of their mineral riches, be they gold or tin ore. The naïve viewer could well have thought José Altino Machado prepared his crimes from an obscure and clandestine base, hidden away in the deepest, most impenetrable jungle, since from whatever legal point of view his activities amount to crime : he robs Brasil of its natural riches -the federal owns amerindian reservations- and encourages others to do the same. On the contrary, he is governor Jucà's main adviser on what they pompously call developing Roraima. They have not even managed to build a hospital worthy of that name in the whole state, but when it comes to robbing the Yanomami of their gold, they know how to go about it. They even trick an Amerindian, who must have lost all his senses, into flying in from wherever he lives on that huge continent called Brasil and be shown off at a press conference in Boa Vista as a symbol of how Amerindians do agree to gold washers exploiting and robbing them. Were it not for the tragic of it all, one would laugh out loud!

Furthermore, José Altino Machado did find a solution to the question of the Yanomami, and thus tries to impose silence on the outrage organisations supporting the Amerindians kick up all over the world. He announces that " instead of taking out the *garimpeiros* (the gold washers), we will move the Indians into reservations." Easy enough, don't you think ? And this is where I think the video moves on too quickly and does not take advantage of the stupidities proffered by this rascal disguised as a state councillor, to explain the basic situation of land ownership of yanomami territory. We remain with a vague feeling of sympathy for the respect of yanomami land integrity, when it would have been easy to come up with a few adequately coloured maps and show traditional yanomami territory, the archipelago it has become after president Sarney had slashed it into nineteen mini reservations isolated one from the other[2], the location of the major alluvial deposits exploited by the gold washers, and so on. A short reminder of a few decisions taken by the federal courts would have enabled us, with full knowledge of the facts and not the hint of an hesitation, to call the governor of Roraima and his copilot bandits, well on the other side of the law.

Between a take off and a landing, the Yanomami who live in the vicinity of mining camps must survive. Those of us who took pleasure in the reading of the scenes of yanomami life depicted in Jacques lizot's "Le cercle de feux" or Helena Valero's "Yo soy Napèyoma", can measure the degeneration into which was thrown such a proud people - I prefer *proud* to the clumsy *fierce* Chagnon has stuck them with-. The scenes where we see yanomami women begging for rice

from a miner, so covered in gold bracelets and necklaces that " *se poderia garimpar nele* (as an amerindian friend of mine used to say), those scenes are revolting, even more when you hear the 'kindly' comments this upstart miner dares offer! The shaman who shouts himself hoarse in his effort to fight the unknown diseases invading both bodies and souls, has no *hekurabe* left to help him. They are gone, maybe not for ever, but for now at least, so unbalanced is the fight. Sister Florencia - what a pleasure to come across the face of a friend after all those villains- does her best to increase the standing of native medicine, but against a 'cold' or 'bronchitis', that come out in her inimitable accent from Guyana as though they were bad words, what can native medicine do. There may come a day when *hekurabe* can win over them, but for the time being they must make room for aspirin and penicillin.

Over this *Contact*, hover the reflections of a shaman, the first Amerindian we saw in the opening shots when he was felling a leguminous tree to harvest the fruit. His comments run throughout the video, offering a cutting different from the one suggested by the plane movements. Like the choir in a Greek tragedy, he offers hints, tracks to follow, if we want to go beyond the immediate perception of events. Back in the 50's, he says, his father had first come across the Whites: back then the Yanomami cut up their game with bamboo slivers and used rodent teeth to sharpen their arrows. Many things have changed since and they now own and use knives, machetes,axes. His nostalgia is obvious when he recalls the bamboo slivers and the rodents teeth; but as he talks, he is using the despised foreign iron. *Contact* has been made.

The video ends with the convention in Altamira. Why ? So that we could hear Davi Kopenawa, the best known of yanomami spokesmen? To show that other amerindian peoples in Brasil, Kayapos for instance, have managed to bring to a halt the diabolical machine that was bent on developing their area? To bring a note of optimism in the end? To show that the problems of the Yanomami had a national dimension? All this is true and just, but in my opinion somewhat out of place. As for me, the video ends in Boa Vista because this is where lies a good part of both the problem and its solutions.

[1] After the video was made, elections were held and the new head of the state is a Ottomar de Souza Pinto. His policies take right after those of Jucà, since they are still dictated by the military connected with the secret service.

[2] Very recently, in April 1991, a decree taken by new president Fernando Collor de Mello has invalidated the carving made by Sarney. But the Yanomami's rights on their territory has still to be recognised and we only have a commission which is supposed to make proposals for a reservation within six months.

News from Amsterdam's Center for Visual Anthropology

After much deliberation, the Center for Visual Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam has decided to host a second *Eyes across the Water* conference in June 1992 from the 24th to 27th.

Like in 1989, it will be very much a joint and cooperative effort between the professional organizations in Visual Sociology and Anthropology, plus a great number of institutions and individuals. The strain on limited resources is considerable both in time and money, but so many colleagues expressed a craving to 'do it again in Amsterdam' that we felt we should not refuse. The conference format will be similar to the one used in 1989: short presentations, a broad array of topics, the heart of Old Amsterdam, and a boat trip for those who have the stamina to sit it through.

As I will be shooting a film that year, the conference direction will be in the hands of our Center's staff, headed by Ton Guiking who has joined the troops as head of the Visual Anthropology teaching program. It will be great to have you all back here. For more information see the 'upcoming events' section in this CVA Review.

Like last year, we had an intensive 5 weeks course in ethnography directed by Prof. Harper from Tampa, U.S.A.. After two successive and successful such courses, we now plan to offer an integrated research project each year in early summer, where graduate students from both the ethnography and the video program will work together. The basis of our research will probably be the Ysselmeer, the large Dutch inland sea where a rich history blends nicely with interesting new developments in terms of land reclaiming, fishery and farming. We will cooperate with a number of museums and local historical societies. The film *Smoke* made this year under the direction of Martin Rens has been a good start for such an endeavor: A good film, extensive press coverage, over sixty copies sold, and to a great extent financed by external funding. The subject matter in this film is the development of fish smoking in the city of Monnickendam. We have been able to integrate large chunks of archival material (both photo and film) by using this visual material as elicitation moments in the interviews and fish smokers and fishermen. These interviews were edited overnight, and used again as elicitation moments in further interviews. This reflexive methodology worked surprisingly well in not only getting lively interviews, but also as a constructional element in the final version of the film. We feel that such coordinated efforts centered around one topic offer a good way of learning the tools of the trade, especially for graduate students.

I am finishing the research for a large documentary project called *Frozen Brass*: the genesis of ex-colonial folk brass bands in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. It is a large production that will be entirely scripted to be made as a joint production with the Dutch film-maker Johan van der Keuken and the Dutch public TV network. With a bit of luck we should be able to show some preliminary results at the 1992 Amsterdam conference.

Like last year, there was a *Savan* film and photo festival plus conference this year in early May (Savan is the *Society for Audiovisual Anthropology in the Netherlands*). If solid organization and public attendance are anything to go by, this festival will be a yearly event, and it will form an excellent outlet for the many Dutch visual ethnographic productions currently undertaken in Holland. The conference was organized by Eddy Appels, who most of you will remember as the head of technical staff at the *Eyes Across the Water* conference in 1989. If we can afford him, he will be again be with us in 1992.

Finally, our former conference staff members Yvon Smits and Maureen Pieters have set up a production and research society on Asian and South East Asian film. This society isxaffiliated with the Anthropology Department at this University. Its first feature has been the organization of a film festival called *The Immortal Hero*, earlier this year, where a number of film-makers from the ASEAN countries presented their work. We hope to include a session on the Asian ethnographic documentary in 1992 *Eyes Across the Water.*

Sincerely, Robert Boonzajer Flaes, Director

Myburgh-Gordon Exchange: A Comment by Mathias Guenther

Paul John Myburgh, the creator of the film *People of the Great Sandface* and Robert Gordon, the film's critic, move each within his own universe of discourse. Myburgh's voice is very much that of the ethnographer who chronicles the life- and folk-ways of a non-western group of people, one he deems primitive and pristine, archaic and arcane. Gordon takes the film beyond the ethnography of the G/wi and their patch of Kalahari turf and places it within its wider political and/or ideological context, as defined either by South African white society or by the international anthropological academy. Gordon finds fault with the film because in his view it nurtures stereotypes that directly or indirectly jeopardize the social and economic well-being of its Bushman subjects.

To dismiss such criticisms as "banal" because it comes from the pen of an "armchair anthropologist" is to engage in specious rhetoric and to dodge the issue. No Bushman field work experience, no "I-have-been-there" mode of ethnographic authority, is required to raise the issued raised by Gordon. What is required instead is an understanding of the history, politics and ideology of both the geo-political region of southern Africa and the academic discipline of anthropology. Such understanding Gordon does indeed possess, as is eminently clear from his scholarly track record.

The disagreement between the film maker and his critic is heated, not to say vitriolic. The reason is probably because each of them is right in a way and justified in the position he is taking. As I have indicated in my review, Myburgh has created a film that in many ways is - ethnographically, aesthetically, dramatically - is compelling and effective. He is probably somewhat rankled by Gordon's failure to adequately recognize his film's merits. However, equally compelling is Gordon's point about the film unwitting endorsement of racist stereotypes about supposedly pristine and archaic hunters. As I have noted in my review such stereotypes can hamper the efforts of these erstwhile foragers of becoming an integrated, productive and viable part of the modern world of herding, cultivating and wage labour. An ethnographic film maker working in South Africa today should be aware of the possible, indeed likely, ideological implications and repercussions, of his work, the more so if this work features a people as persistently prone to maligningly Hobbesian or patronizingly Rousseauian stereotyping as have been the Bushmen in the course of their interaction with white settlers.

It is regrettable that Myburgh chose not to engage Gordon on what surely is a valid criticism of his film, irrespective of its ethnographic merit. The vehemence of the film maker's reaction to his critics comments - he does, methinks, protest too much - would suggest that Gordon hit a nerve. This is certainly what I hope in order that the next offering from this obviously gifted film maker might show the requisite degree of awareness of the ideological and political repercussions of the films he creates.

Comments on Paul John Myburgh's *People of the Great Sandface*

Edwin N. Wilmsen, African Studies Center, Boston University

The distressing - I am tempted to say disgusting - discursive defects of this film have been sufficiently aired by Tomaselli (1989, 1990) and Gordon (1990). I am grateful to them, for their having done so allows me to turn directly to the epistemological discourse in which the film participates. The basic proposition is recited early in the film: A G/wi man is seen trussing up a newly killed steenbuck and then carrying it away, his back growing smaller as if converging with the surrounding earthly elements while Myburg's mythopoetic, reverential voice-over reveals the true nature of this man,

> the absolute primitiveness in all of his ways, primal instincts always on the surface; he represents so closely the way in which Stone Age man related to his environment, almost as if he were a throwback to the old people, the ancestors of today's Bushmen.

In order to unearth this "Bushman in me" Myburgh tell us "I had to become a Bushman" (interview with Keyan Tomaselli [1989: 26]. Thus, Myburgh is a victim of and his film a vehicle for mythologies constructed in a crucial area in Euroamerica's symbolic reconstruction of its own ontology. In claiming a special 'naturalness' for a few G/wi people, Myburgh joined what Stanley Diamond (1974:120) saw as one of anthropology's major tasks, "a puzzled search for what is diminished [when] pre-civilized and, yes, a priori human possibility has practically disappeared from our cultural lexicon."

In this discourse, 'Bushman', 'San', 'hunter-gatherer,' 'forager' are "transmuted into indexical signs which perpetually point to their status as realities constituted independently of the process of re-presentation itself" (Alonso 1988:36). By displaying peoples so objectified in a prefigured category labelled 'primitive' who exist "in a timeless present tense...not as a particular historical event but as a pregiven custom or trait" (Pratt 1985:120), ethnographic writing and film validate the epistemological program required by the ontological quest. The intrinsic realities of these objects, as themselves, are of little or no interest to the program; what is important is that they maybe seen to conform to the discursive narrative.

People of the Great Sand Face can be taken at face value by ill-informed viewers because its basic proposition continues to be validated in respected scientific forum, even although the postulates and premisses on which the proposition is based have been shown to be false. An article by John Yellen published in *Scientific American* (April 1990) carries in its heading the statement that the Kalahari !Kung are "an apparent relic of ancient hunting and gathering groups." Presumably, that statement is an editorial insertion, but Yellen, himself, says (p.102B) "despite appearances to the contrary, the !Kung had retained their forager 'mentality'." At the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association in November 1989, Richard Lee still found those same people to be "exemplars of a hunting and gathering way of life." Both of these statements are exactly comparable to Myburgh's quoted above. And in December 1990, Jiro Tanaka (1990) continues to feel more sympathy for his supposed "cultural uniqueness" of San peoples than for their very active engagement with their political and economic reality.

Myburgh (Tomaselli interview, p. 31) protests that Laurens Van Der Post gains accolades for claiming to have written a testament to 'Bushmen' while what he actually did was parody them in a testament to himself. This is true, but only emphasizes the fact that the struggle to exorcise 'the Bushman in *us*' is a protracted one. So long as learned sentiment favors primordial uniqueness as a condition of any current culture there will be no way to enlighten laymen with respect to the degrading, segregating consequences. The inner iconic image of our wished for primal selves clings tenaciously even while its actual indexed image recedes beyond our empty grasp. To understand the one, we must come to terms with the other. That seems to be a difficult task.

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PARNU, IVème Festival du Film Anthropologique

Si nous avions dèjà ressenti un contraste entre l'austérité professionnelle de Manchester et le charme ensoleillé de la Sardaigne, passant de Nuoro à Pärnu, nous changions de monde et pas seulement de climat.

En 1987 et 1988, j'avais participé aux première et deuxième éditions de ce même festival. En 1987, c'était le premier Festival de films ethnographiques organisés en URSS et ce fut une véritable fête. Les films venus de l'Ouest étaient très (trop!) appréciés, Lennart Merri (maintenant ministre des Affaires étrangères d'Estonie) et Mark Soosaar avaient rassemblé autour d'eux toutes les énergies pour que cette manifestation soit un franc succès. Toutes les nationalités d'URSS étaient représentées, du Nord au Sud et de l'Est à l'Ouest.

Le Festival bat son pouls de toute la ville pendant une semaine et outre le programme officiel présenté à l'hôtel APN pour les participants, de nombreuses manifestations ont lieu ici ou là pour les films soient vus par le plus grand nombre.

Mark Soosaar, malgré le soutien fidèle d'Omar Volmer, la fidèle assitance de sa fille Kadriann et d'une quinzaine d'autres personnes, paraissait bien seul pour porter le Festival et faire face à tous les problèmes.

Organiser un pareil Festival aves près de quatre-vingts particiapnts, dont les deux tiers environ venaient d'ailleurs, n'est pas une petite affaire dans l'Estonie de 1990! Nos hôtes, et en particulier Mark Soosaar, paraissaient tendus et un peu tristes. On sentait le désemparement des Estoniens comme des autres citoyens soviétiques. Ceci s'exprimait dans le cadre du Festival par une grande place accordée à la morale, à la religion, au shamanisme considérés comme éventuelles alternatives à l'inquiétude, voire au chaos actuel.

Les Estoniens ne cherchant plus comme en 1987, et dans une moindre mesure 1988, à rassembler autour de leur Festival les différentes nationalités d'URSS mais sont plutôt concernés par l'établissement de liens privilégiés avec les pays nordiques, la Finlande en particulier.

Mark Soosaar a annoncé qu'à partir de l'an prochain la seule langue officielle du Festival serait l'anglais. Le russe disparaîtra et il n'y aura plus d'interprète russe-anglais ni français-russe.

Les Georgiens venus de Tbilissi, et qui pendant le Festival nous ont souvent acceuillis pour de petites fêtes informelles et joyeueses, ont d'ores et déjà dit qu'ils ne pourraient plus venir si le russe n'était plus accepté.

Le Festival présentait un programme. Outre les films sélectionnés, de nombreux films étaient présentés hors compétition qui n'étaient pas les moins intéressants.

La sélection n'était pas toujours très compréhensible. Il y avait des films ethnographiques bien documentés, de qualité, en particulier sur les rituels et le shamanisme, des documentaires de télévision sur le flamenco ou sur la vie d'un cameraman finlandais, un film de fiction sur les amours contrariées de deux jeunes violonistes suédois produit par la télévision suédois et La Sept. Les films les plus interessants st les plus émouvants por leur forme comme pour leur contenu étaient peut-être les films lithuaniens et estoniens, des portraits qui exprimaient fortement la misère, la tristesse, voire le désespoir actuels de cette partie du monde.

Les problèmes liés à l'écologie étaient aussi très présents souvent reliés aux irresponsabilités politiques.

A remarquer aussi un film sibérien *Visiting Evut-Iki* d'Arkadi Mihaljov, seul film d'observation, portant sur un rituel des morts où la méthodologie était explicite ainsi que la position du cinéaste, ce qui mérite d'être souligné. Malheureusement l'honnêteté du cinéaste n'a été ni comprise, ni appréciée et un malentendu l'a éliminé du palmarès.

Les difficultés de courrier, de transport, de communication en général en URSS mais également entre l'Estonie et les pays de l'Ouest ont rendu l'organisation du Festival difficile.

Ainsi, la plupart des films 16 mm ont été vus en cassettes VHS, les cassettes envoyées pour la sélection. Même certains films de la télévision estonienne ont été vus en cassettes.

En 1991, le Festival aura lieu du 15 au 21 septembre.
PÄRNU VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY FESTIVAL
P.O. Box 150
Pärnu 203 600 Estonie URSS

Comite Latinoamericano de Cine de Pueblos Indigenas - IV Festival of Indigenous Peoples Films

(Lima, June 17-21; Cusco, June 22-26, 1992)

In its fourth version the American Festival of Indigenous Peoples Films and its associated activities will be held in June of 1992 in the cities of Lima and Cusco. The Festival will focus on indigenous traditions and institutions in South America. The festival seeks to promote and appraise recent audiovisual productions connected with indigenous reality, which constitute valuable documents in the field of visual anthropology. For more information on the festival, its activities and to obtain an entry form please contact:

Organizing Commission
Av. Juan de Aliaga, 204
Lima 27, Perú
tel. 61-7914, fax (5114) 61-7914

4th Festival of Visual Anthropology "Materiali di Antropologia Visiva" - Rome, November 13-15, 1991.

The fourth edition of the biannual Festival of Visual Anthropology, organized by the Museo Nazionale della Arti e Tradizioni Popolari (MNATP) and the Italian Association of Cinematography (AICS) will be held in Rome from November 13 to 15, 1991. The focus will be on problems concerning visual anthropology, especially in Italy, with debates and screenings. Deadlines for submissions of films and videos is September 10, 1991. For more information and entry forms please contact:

Dr. Emilia De Simoni
Archivio di Antropologia Visiva,
Museo Nazionale della Arti e Tradizioni Popolari
Piazza Marconi 8 - 00144 Roma, ITALY

IIIrd International Festival of Ethnographic Film, Manchester 1992.

Organized locally by the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology. Final dates have yet to be decided (tentatively 4 or 5 days in September). The first one or two days of the festival will be dedicated to a symposium on the "Representation of the New World, 1492 - 1992". Further details of the event, including procedures for submitting films for the three prizes offered (RAI, Basil Wright and JVC Student Prize) will be announced as soon as possible.

The 37th Annual Robert Flaherty Seminar, Wells College - Aurora, New York

August 3-10, 1991

Created for filmmakers, the Robert Flaherty Seminar is open to all who have a professional interest in film and video. The themes to be followed this year include contemporary Arab cinema, concentrating on films from the Maghreb area of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. For more information and fee details please contact:

International Film Seminar, inc.
305 West 21 Street, New York -NY 10011
or contact Sally Berger (212) 727-7262

3ème ATELIER INTERNATIONAL D'ANTHROPOLOGIE VISUELLE

14-19 juin 1991 à Marseille

"Vidéo-écriture(s)/Vidéo-graphie(s)" en l'honneur de Richard Leacock

L'atelier comportera cinq phases:

1- Sessions de conférence-table-ronde
2- Diffusion de documents vidéos et discussions
3- Projections publiques de vidéogrammes
4- Vidéothèque disponible au grand public
5- Soirée du 19 juin: une nuit du documentaire ethnographique

Pour renseignements et inscriptions S.V.P. rejoindre

Pierre-L. Jordan
IMEREC
Centre de la Vieille-charité,
2, rue de la charité
13002 Marseille France
Tél. 91-56-16-44 Fax 91-91-34-01

2IEME SUNNY SIDE

Marseille, 21 au 24 juin

La deuxième marche internationale du documentaire européen se déroulera du 21 au 24 juin 1991 à Marseille. De nombreuses innovations et des outils de promotion seront introduits en 91, entre autres la vidéothèque, le Sunny Blue, des projections privées et un Colloque International sur le documentaire et la distribution vidéo.

Pour de plus amples renseignements S.V.P. contacter Lili Freriks ou Yvan Yastremsky au 3, Square Stalingrad, 13001 Marseille - France Tél 33.91.08.43.15 Fax 33.91.84.38.34

2EME BIENNALE EUROPEENNE DU DOCUMENTAIRE

Marseille du 19 au 25 juin 1991
Cette année le thème principal de la Biennale sera le rôle de l'imaginaire dans le récit du réel.
Il y aura bien sûr la compétition officielle comportant 40 films ainsi que la programmation "Hors compétition" et quelques premières internationales.
Deux Colloques Européens auront lieu: "Quels scénarios pour le réel?" et "Le documentaire en salle".
Pour de plus amples renseignements communiquer avec:
François Niney, Coordinateur
ABCD- 3, Square Stalingrad 13001 Marseille - France Tél. (33) 91.84.40.17 Fax. (33) 91.84.38.34

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Film Releases - MILESTONE Film and Video

Milestone Film and Video will be releasing eight films in the series "The Age of Exploration: Silver Screen Adventures from 1912-1931"

A series of eight films will be released, including three "lost" films: two features by Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack, *Grass* (1925) and *Chang* (1927) and F. W. Murnau and Robert Flaherty,s *Tabu* (1931). Other films released in the series are: *90 Degrees South* (1913), *In the Land of the War Canoes* (1914), *Simba* (1928), *The Silent Enemy* (1930) and *With Byrd at the South Pole* (1930).

Gypsy Video Archive - Gypsy Andalusian Sociocultural Center, Granada

Luis Perez Tolon and Elisenda Ardevol (Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona) have been working with the Gypsy community of Granada since 1984. Recently they have been collaborating with the Gypsy Andalusian Sociocultural Center in Granada developing research projects in visual and social anthropology. The center aims to promote Gypsy history, culture and interethnic understanding. Its purpose is to contribute to the general welfare of the Gypsy community and improve their future role in Spanish society. The goal of the archive is to collect films and videos that are representative of Gypsy culture and its various representations around the world. We are also soliciting information about media representations of Gypsies as well as contributions to the Archive. For more information please contact

Luis Perez Tolon and Elisenda Ardevol
Centro Socio-Cultural Gitano Andaluz
c/o Cuestra del Hospicio, s/n
18010 GRANADA, Spain
or: Professor Andrei Simic
Dept. of Anthropology, Center for Visual Anthropology
University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA 90089-0032

LABORATOIRE D'ANTHROPOLOGIE DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE SAO PAULO

Le département d'anthropologie de l'Université de Sao Paulo implante actuellement son "Laboratoire d'Anthropologie" (LA).

La collection de vidéos constitue une ressource essentielle de ce laboratoire. Elle met à la disposition des étudiants et professeurs de nombreux documents pour leurs travaux.

Notre matériel audio-visuel est déjà en place et fonctionne bien. Cependant, dû à nos restrictions budgétaires, nous faisons appel à nos institutions amies pour nous envoyer des catalogues et cassettes-vidéo dans les domaines d'ethnologie et anthropologie urbaine. Nous intéresse aussi tout matériel sur l'utilisation du film et du video dans la recherche anthropologique.

Nous restons à votre entière disposition si vous désirez plus d'informations et nous vous remercions tous d'avance pour l'aide que vous pourriez nous apporter.

Call for entries:

THE MARGARET MEAD FILM FESTIVAL

The Margaret Mead Film Festival will celebrate its 15th year from September 23-26, 1991. Submission deadlines for films (1/2" or 3/4" cassette) are January 1 -May 7. Film topics range from cultural survival in indigenous communities to personal portraits. For more information and submission forms for film entries please contact the Mead Festival Office at (212) 769-5305, or fax at (212) 769-5329

Archivio Fotografico Toscano "AFT - Journal of History and Photography"

Subscription rates (2 issues per volume): US $ 35, including air mail post. Single issues (1985-89) US $ 20. Subscription information and forms may be obtained from:

Archivio Fotografico Toscano
Via Ricasoli, 7
I-50047 PRATO (Florence) - ITALY

Resources at the Anthropological Laboratory, Palermo

The Anthropological Laboratory of the University of Studies of Palermo, directed by Rita Cedrini, was founded in October 1982. The Laboratory is involved in publishing, seminars, filmmaking and documentation. The Laboratory organizes seminar meetings for a small number of cultural anthropologival students on theories and methods in visual anthropology. In the March seminar of 1991 the anthropologists Asen Balikci, Fadwa El Guindi and Jay Ruby participated. Among the initiatives of the Laboratory, an annual film review, the "Settimana Mediterranea del Film Antropologico" is published. Each issue focuses on different topics relevant to the field of visual anthropology. The Laboratory also has compiled an archive of images (about 600 hours of recording) on traditional religion and lifeways.

CORRECTION

The author, Colette Piault, is not responsible for the Review of Manchester's Film Festival published in the Fall 90 issue (p.48-49) under her name. What has been published are only excerpts chosen and edited from her paper (15 pages in its original form) by our editors without the authors agreement. We regret the error and wish to extend our apologies to Colette Piault (and our readers).

Recherche de Documents sur le Nomadisme

Dans ce cadre d'un exposition sur le nomadisme, le Musée de la Civilisation du Québec aimerait utiliser des documents audio-visuels, films, vidéos, etc. Si vous avez réalisé un document de ce type, nous apprécierions en prendre connaissance. Prendre contact avec la chargée de recherche Andrée Gendreau, Musée de la Civilisation, 85 rue Dalhousie, C.P. 155, Succ. B, Québec (Québec), Canada G1K 7A6 Telephone (418) 634-2158

Search for Audio-visual Materials on Nomadism

Within the framework of an exhibit on nomadism to be presented at the Musée de la Civilisation du Québec, we are seeking to identify audio-visual documents, such as films, videos, etc. If you have prepared such materials, we would very much appreciate receiving information about the documents. Contact Andrée Gendreau, Musée de la Civilisation, 85 rue Dalhousie, C.P. 155, Succ. B, Québec (Québec), Canada G1K 7A6. Telephone (418) 634-2158