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SYMPOSIUM

VISUAL RESEARCH

STRATEGIES

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SPOŠTOVANE BRALKE IN BRALCI GLASNIKA SLOVENSKEGA ETNOLOŠKEGA DRUŠTVA

Pred vami je prva mednarodna številka SED.

Ideja je že stara.

Za predstavitev mednarodno delujočih slovenskih etnologov je namreč obstoječi Bulletin (angleška priloga Glasnika SED) preozek okvir. Po drugi strani pa se slovenska etnologija lahko vključuje v svet edino, če nudi prostor znanim tujim etnologom in tako postane priznan prostor mednarodne izmenjave etnološkega in antropološkega znanja.

Uredniški odbor Glasnika je sklenil, da vsako leto ali po potrebi razširi že obstoječi Bulletin na celo številko in tako uresniči prvotno idejo o mednarodni uveljavitvi slovenske etnologije.

Prva priložnost se nam je ponudila ob svetovnem kongresu Mednarodne unije antropoloških in etnoloških znanosti, ki je bila julija 1988 v Zagrebu in pri katerem je organizacijsko sodelovalo tudi Slovensko etnološko društvo.

Z objavo dela referatov simpozija o vizualni antropologiji, ki so v tej številki prvič objavljeni, bomo prišli k naslovnikom v več kot 75 državah po vsem svetu.

Sponzor naše prve mednarodne številke je Komisija za vizualno antropologijo pri Mednarodni uniji antropoloških in etnoloških znanosti, katere kolektivni član je tudi Slovensko etnološko društvo.

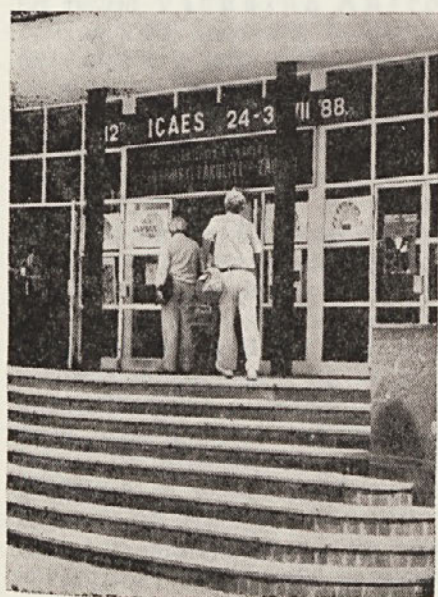
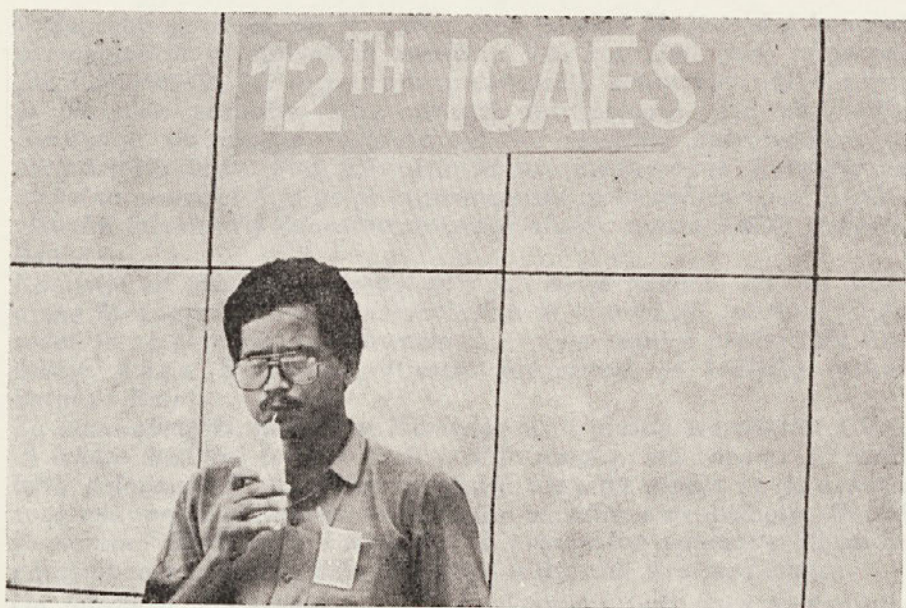
Za naslednjo mednarodno številko Glasnika SED, ki bo sledila dvojni slovenski številki letnika 1989, bomo skušali pripraviti originalne prispevke naših etnologov ki se ukvarjajo z neevropsko problematiko.



20 249/89

SVETOVNI TRENUTEK
VIZUALNE ANTHROPOLOGIJE V ZAGREBU

NASKO KRUŽNAR



SVETOVNI TRENUTEK VIZUALNE ANTROPOLOGIJE V ZAGREBU

NAŠKO KRIŽNAR

V Zagrebu je od 24. do 31. julija 1988 potekal Mednarodni kongres antropoloških in etnoloških znanosti. Več kot 2300 ljudi se je pet dni udeleževalo 117 vzporedno potekajočih simpozijev. Med njimi je bil eden posvečen tudi vizualni antropologiji, pod naslovom: *Strategije vizualnega raziskovanja — vizualna antropologija v osemdesetih letih*. Pod pokroviteljstvom mednarodne Komisije za vizualno antropologijo ga je organizacijsko pripravil in vodil Avdio-vizualni laboratorij Znanstvenoraziskovalnega centra SAZU iz Ljubljane.

Komisija za vizualno antropologijo (CVA) je delovno telo že omenjene Mednarodne unije antropoloških in etnoloških znanosti. Njen sedež je na Univerzi v Montrealu, kjer dela sedanji predsednik Komisije A sen Balicki. (Častni predsednik je indijski režiser Satyajit Ray.)

Za komunikacijo med člani Komisije služi glasilo Newsletter CVA, ki izhaja štirikrat letno v treh jezikih (angl., fran., špan.). V petih letih delovanja Komisije in izhajanja njenega glasila se je utrdila svetovna mreža aktivnosti na področju vizualne antropologije. Dotlej so namreč delovale le nacionalne in regionalne povezave. Zlasti je pomembno svetovalno delo Komisije v deželah Tretjega sveta.

Od lanskega leta izhaja na pobudo Komisije tudi nova mednarodna revija *Vizualna Antropologija* pri mednarodni založbi Harwood Academic Publishers. Glavni urednik je Jay Ruby. Pri isti založbi je izšla tudi prva knjiga iz serije knjig o vizualni antropologiji — zbornik tekstov večih avtorjev, *Anthropological Filmmaking*. Urednik Jack Rollwagen.

Program zagrebškega simpozija je bil predlagan in sprejet na sestanku Komisije v Aleksandriji, januarja 1986, na tako imenovanem interkongresu IUAES. Že s tematsko zasnovo simpozija smo želeli pokazati na številne različne pristope do vizualne antropologije, ki prihajajo do izraza v zadnjem času.

Vizualna antropologija se demokratizira. Dosedanje »šole« antropološkega filma so namreč temeljile na filmu, ki je kot medij razmera dobro raziskan. S pojavom elektronskega video medija in z njegovo dostopnostjo pa se je zgodil zgodovinski metodološki preobrat. Vizualne raziskave so se bistveno pocenile. Krog producentov se je razširil. Toge realizacijske sheme, ki so dotlej obvladovali antropološki film so postale preozke v primerjavi z mobilnostjo video medija, ki je gibčno sledil raznolikim zahtevam raziskovalcev, univerzitetnih učiteljev in vizualcev na splošno. V ospredju je spet vizualna informacija, medij kot vizualna komunikacija in ne medij kot »objektivni znanstveni dokument«, očiščen ideološkosti.

Zagrebski simpozij predstavlja na nek način vrhunec novih, demokratičnih gibanj v vizualni antropologiji, ki so se nakazovala že na nekaterih mednarodnih srečanjih manjših razsežnosti zlasti v Evropi v zadnjih letih (Firence, Marseille, Bolzano, Budimpešta in drugod). Program simpozija je bil razdeljen v 5 sekcij, od katerih je vsaka nudila prostor eni od možnih oblik vizualne antropologije. Sekcije so obravnavale relacije med vizualno antropologijo in vzgojo, med vizualno antropologijo in občinstvom, vlogo vizualne antropologije pri ohranjanju kultur, rezultate vizualnih raziskav (način njihove analize), vlogo vizualne antropologije pri razvojnih študijah, ter končno na plenarni seji strategije vizualnega raziskovanja. Sekcije so uspešno vodili: Asen Balikci, Allison Jablonko, Jay Ruby, Jean Williams, Naško Križnar.

V okviru simpozija je nastopilo 50 referentov iz 17 držav s 4 kontinentov. Ob referatih je bilo predstavljenih 19 filmov oziroma video projektov, v posebnih festivalskih projekcijah za vse udeležence kongresa pa 51 filmov oziroma video projektov. Na vsakodnevne sezname poslušalcev je vpisanih 156 ljudi.

Zaradi pomanjkanja denarja se na žalost ni uresničila prvotna zamisel, da bi predstavili najboljše antropološke filme v zadnjih 5 letih. Morali smo se zadovoljiti s filmi, ki so jih udeleženci prinesli s teboj. Kljub temu smo imeli v Zagrebu dve svetovni premieri. Prva je bil dokumentarec z afriško tematiko *W o d a b e*, iz angleške serije Izginjajoči svet, Televizije Granada, avtorja Davida Wasona, druga pa film *P l e s a l e c i n p l e s*, študija tradicionalne plesne vzgoje na Javi, Patricie Freeland.

Prvič v Jugoslaviji so svoje filme predstavili: Kitajski Inštitut za nacionalne študije, Mark Soosaar (Estonija), Himeda (Japonska), Renato Morelli (Italija), Andrei Simić (ZDA), Hugo Zemp (Francija), Fadiva El Quindi (ZDA), Jay Ruby (ZDA), Knut Ekström (Švedska), Barrie Machin (Avstralija), Daniel Marks (ZDA) in drugi.

Jugoslavijo sta predstavljala dva video projekta Audiovizualnega laboratorija iz Ljubljane.

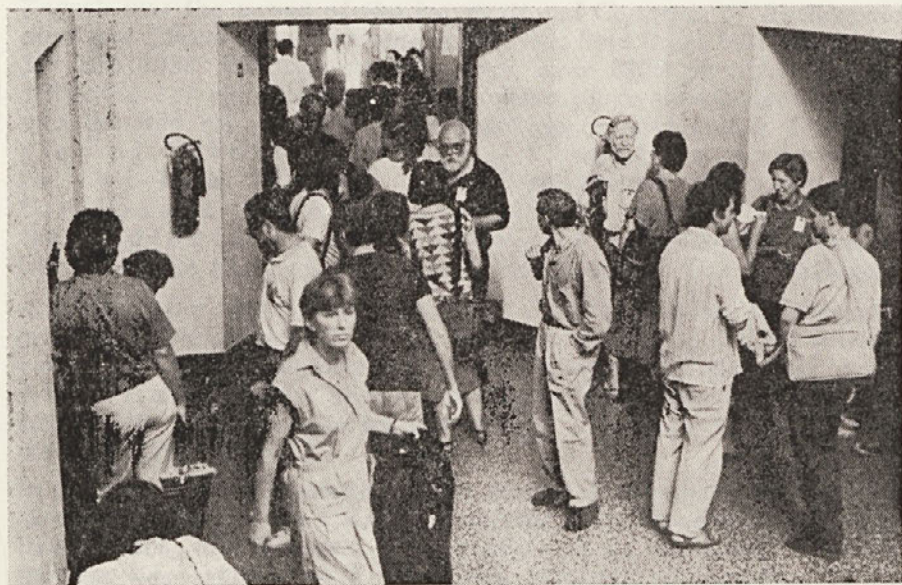
Göttingenski inštitut je v kongresnih prostorih postavil svoj video kotiček, kjer je bilo na ogled 70 etnografskih dokumentarcev iz inštitutske zbirke.

Glavni del simpozija so predstavljali referati, večkrat združeni s predvajanjem filma, videa ali diapozitivov. To kombinacijo smo spodbujali že v razpisu simpozija. Doslej se je namreč večina simpozijev vizualne antropologije odvijala v dveh sklopih. Najprej so referenti čitali referate, nato pa so se (navadno zvečer) nizale utrujajoče filmske projekcije. Ali pa so predvajali filme in nato ob njih diskutirali. Tokrat smo hoteli spodbuditi avtorje, da bi filme ali odlomke vključili v referate kot bistven sestavni del antropološke raziskave. S tem smo želeli pokazati, da je funkcija antropološkega filma predvsem v tem, da pomaga odkrivati antropološko resnico, če to lahko stori bolje kot druga izrazna sredstva.

Več, kot da je evidentiral in utrdil dosedanja gibanja na področju vizualne antropologije, zagrebski simpozij ni mogel storiti. Nihče ni več navdušen nad pompoznimi resolucijami, kot je bila npr. tako imenovana Roucheva resolucija na kongresu IUAES v Chicagu leta 1973. To pomeni, da neka znanstvena panoga samozavestno jemlje odgovornost za razvoj v svoje roke. To se je pokazalo tudi na zaključ-

ni plenarni seji Komisije za vizualno antropologijo ob koncu kongresa. Predlogov za organizacijo regionalnih srečanj in tem zanje je toliko, da bodo morala celo nekatera tradicionalna srečanja postati bienalna. Kaže, da je vizualna antropologija zlasti v Evropi vprežena v prestižno tekmovanje univerzitetnih mest.

V našem glasilu objavljamo 8 referatov z zagrebskega simpozija. Drugi so objavljeni v *Visual Anthropology* in v *Newsletter CVA*. Naslednji kongresi Mednarodne unije antropoloških in etnoloških znanosti si bodo sledili: medkongresa bosta v Lizboni 1990 in v Buenos Airesu 1991, svetovni kongres pa bo v Mexicu leta 1993.



THE GLOBAL MOMENT OF VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN ZAGREB

Zagreb was the venue of the International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, which was held there between 24 and 31 July 1988. Throughout five days, over 2300 participants were attending 117 symposia that were taking place simultaneously. One was devoted also to visual anthropology; it was called *Strategies of Visual Research — Visual Anthropology in the 1980s*. Sponsored by the international Commission for Visual Anthropology, it was organized and run by the Audiovisual Laboratory of the Scientific Research Centre of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana.

A body of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, the Commission on Visual Anthropology (CVA) is headquartered at the University of Montreal, where A sen Balikci, its present chairman, is member of the university staff. The Commission's honorary chairman is Indian film director Satyajit Ray.

In order to facilitate communication among its members, the Commission issues Newsletter CVA, a quarterly bulletin published in English, French, and Spanish. In five years of its existence, the Commission has established a worldwide network of activities in the field of visual anthropology, which is a major improvement upon the previous system of mere national and regional connections. The Commission has been particularly noted for its consultant work in the Third World as well.

The Commission has also initiated the publication of an international journal, *Visual Anthropology*, which has been published by the international publishing house Harwood Academic Publishers since last year. The magazine's editor-in-chief is Jay Ruby. The same publishers have published the first out of a planned series of books on visual anthropology, *Anthropological Filmmaking*, a collection of texts by several authors, edited by Jack Rollwagen. The programme of the Zagreb symposium was proposed and adopted at the Commission's meeting in Alexandria, the so called Intercongress IUAES, in January 1988. It was our intention through the thematic concept of the symposium itself to point to the numerous approaches to visual anthropology that have been asserting themselves lately.

Visual anthropology is undergoing democratization. The former anthropological film schools were based on the film, which is relatively well investigated as a medium. The advent of the easily available electronic video, however, marked a historic turning point in metho-

dology. Visual research has become much cheaper. The circle of producers has spread. The rigid realization schemes that, until then, dominated the anthropological film have become too limited in comparison with the mobility of the video medium that has flexibly followed the varied demands of researchers, university professors, and visual medium users at large. Once again, the focus is on visual information, that is, on the medium used as a vehicle of visual communication and no longer as an "objective scientific document" stripped of ideological elements.

The symposium was divided into five sections; each focussed on one of the possible forms of visual anthropology. They dealt with the relations between visual anthropology and education, the relations between visual anthropology and the audience, the role of visual anthropology in the preservation of cultures, the results of visual research (analytical methods), and the role of visual anthropology in developmental studies. The plenary session was devoted to the strategies of visual research.

The sections were run by Asen Balikci, Allison Jablonko, Jay Ruby, Joan Williams, and Naško Križnar.

50 lecturers from 17 countries scattered on 4 continents presented their papers at the symposium, and 19 films and video projects were shown. Besides, 51 films and video projects were presented to all the participants at specially organized viewings. Daily attendance lists contain 156 signatures.

Unfortunately, the original idea of showing the best anthropological films of the past 5-year period could not be realized, owing to insufficient means. Instead, the organizers had to make do with the films that the participants brought along. Nevertheless Zagreb saw two world premieres. One was David Wason's *Wodaabe*, a documentary film on African themes, from the English series "The Disappearing World" produced by Granada Television, and the other, Patricia Freeland's *The Dancer and the Dance*, a study of traditional dance education on the island of Java.

The list of films that had their Yugoslav premières in Zagreb includes the films made by the following producers and authors: the Chinese Institute for National Studies, Mark Soosaar (Estonia), Himeda (Japan), Renato Morelli (Italy), Andrei Simić (USA), Hugo Zemp (France), Fadwa El Quindi (USA), Jay Ruby (USA), Knut Ekström (Sweden), Barrie Machin (Australia), and Daniel Marks (USA). The Yugoslav production was represented by two video projects of the Audiovisual Laboratory, Ljubljana.

The Göttingen Institute set up its own video display, with 70 ethnographic documentary films from its collection.

The central point of the symposium was the presentation of papers that was often combined with projections of films, videos or slides. Such combinations had been proposed already in the initial phases of the preparation of the symposium. Until last year, namely, the majority of symposia on visual anthropology had consisted of two distinct parts: first the papers, then tiring film projections, usually in the evenings. Or vice versa, film projections followed by discus-

sions. On this occasion, however, we wanted to stimulate the authors to include the films, or sections of the films, into their papers as essential parts of their researches. In this way we wanted to point out that the function of the anthropological film was primarily to help reveal the anthropological truth if it can do it better than other media.

The symposium in Zagreb fulfilled its task properly by identifying and consolidating the current movements in the field of visual anthropology; to do more was beyond its objective. No longer does anyone enthuse over pompous resolutions, such as was, for instance, the so called Rouché's Resolution adopted at the IUAES Congress in Chicago in 1973. This means that one of the scientific branches is self-confidently assuming responsibility for its own development. It manifested itself clearly at the final plenary of the Commission for Visual Anthropology: proposals for new regional meetings and suggestions of new topics were so numerous that they call for a decrease in the number of traditional annual meetings, some of which will have to turn biennial.

In our bulletin we are publishing eight papers that were presented at the symposium. The others are published in the international journal "Visual Anthropology" and in Newsletter CVA.

The oncoming congresses of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences will be taking place in the following order: intercongresses will be held in Lisbon in 1990 and in Buenos Aires in 1991, and the next world congress will be convened in Mexico City in 1993.

NAŠKO KRIŽNAR

SOME NEW TRENDS IN VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ASEN BALIKCI*

The Commission on Visual Anthropology has been in existence for about five years and in this relatively short time we succeeded in establishing the only existing world-wide network linking anthropologists, filmmakers and communication specialists. Our publication record is also reasonably good. The Commission has also contributed to a variety of meetings, festivals and symposia in many countries. The Commission however is a service association and its activities can only reflect professional endeavours taking place in a large number of institutions in many countries. And recently professional activities and contributions have been many and of high quality. In this context I would like to attempt a summary presentation of recent developments in our subdiscipline taking as a baseline the Resolution on Visual Anthropology drawn by Jean Rouch and Paul Hockings at the IXth ICAES. Briefly, the issues raised relate to what has happened in the field of visual anthropology since 1973. What progress if any has been accomplished for each of the six recommendations contained in the 1973 Resolution? What differences can we observe in accomplishments in the West and in non-western countries including the Fourth World? What has been the impact of modern technologies on our field of activity?

The first point of the 1973 Resolution concerned the initiation of a world-wide filming program to provide a systematic sample of "traditional" cultures. To the best of our knowledge no such program has been successfully established and funded on a continuous basis. In 1976 Alan Lomax sponsored by the Wennergren Foundation did formulate the DECADE project which included a world-wide sample of cultures selected on the basis of anthropological criteria. DECADE however was never funded and had to be shelved. In the mid-seventies the National Anthropological Film Center was established at the Smithsonian with the aim of assembling visual ethnographies in several culture areas world-wide. In practice, location filming was not necessarily related anthropological field work, and site selection was done on an ad hoc basis with no reference to a wider sampling strategy. The recording activities of the NAFC were short lived and the institution soon acquired narrowly archival functions. Similarly most of the other ethnographic film making agencies in the West (Institut für den Wissenschaftli-

* ASEEN BALICKI

University of Montreal, Department of Anthropology. C. P. 6128 Succ. "A",
Montreal Quebec Canada H3C 3J7

chen Film, CNRS-Audiovisuel, etc) seem to have followed a flexible ad hoc policy of site selection excluding a programmatic, systematic sampling strategy on a planetary scale. In sum, the first item of the 1973 resolution has not found application.

The second item of the 1973 resolution concerns the location, collection, preservation and indexing of existing ethnographic film records. Available information indicates that such archival endeavours are under way in many institutions in both western and non-western countries. No doubt much material of ethnographic value is still in need of retrieval. Responsibility here is institutional and national. Access to archived material however is still fraught with difficulties. Very few film collections have been transferred on video tape, a highly necessary process that will enormously facilitate both access and diffusion. This we consider a relatively inexpensive, urgent and highly necessary task. Further, catalogues of institutional holdings, when available, often lack in descriptive detail this making data identification very difficult. Two urgent tasks lay ahead: first the establishment of an international ethnographic coding system for ethnographic film possibly following Murdoch's "Outline of Cultural Materials" numeric order, second the publication of an international catalogue of institutional ethnographic film catalogues. This will certainly facilitate access to data.

The third item of the 1973 resolution concerns international distribution. In only three regions distribution seems well organized, that is the UK, the Nordic countries and particularly North America which has several efficient distribution networks with vast holdings. In most other western countries distribution suffers from a variety of limitations. However it is between the First and Third Worlds that circulation of ethnographic films seems most restricted. Films made by western producers are rarely seen in the countries where they were made and there are no attempts to deposit video copies of the original footage in local institutions. Further, at a time when people in the urban Third World with access to local television are increasingly curious about different life styles, they are offered very little of ethnographic value that may counterbalance Hollywood. Numerous requests from Third World universities and television networks have been expressed concerning loans and programming of ethnographic films. As far as I know there is no institution with broad international responsibilities to promote the distribution and use of ethnographic films in the Third World. Conversely ethnographic films and essentially video productions produced in the Third World find no easy outlets in the First World. Clearly something should be done to improve this sad situation.

The fourth item of the 1973 refers to the need to provide training to both professional field workers and the local people being filmed. There, considerable progress has been accomplished. Training centers have been established in Paris, Los Angeles, New York and Manchester. All four schools are concerned with anthropological field methods and their application to the filming context. Admittedly most of the students are nationals. This again raises the questi-

on of training potential Third World candidates. An interesting alternative is offered by VARAN, a Paris based institutions specializing in the training of mostly non-French students. Further, VARAN organizes training seminars in foreign countries, particularly in the Third World. To my knowledge VARAN is a unique institution, unfortunately instruction is purely technical and seems to exclude a broader anthropological input. Another institution interested to promote video training of indigenous video producers is the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs based in Copenhagen. IWGIA is collaborating with ACACIA productions in Britain in setting video training centers in various indigenous communities. In sum, although considerable progress has been achieved in the West since 1973, no comparable developments have taken place in the Third World.

The fifth point in the 1973 Resolution is crucially important. It concerns the ask of establishing world-wide regional data centers where archiving, research, production, distribution and training would be carried out, with special attention to the needs of the developing nations. This recommendation has important political-ideological implications. Consistently in the past it is western anthropologists who have pointed their cameras at the native peoples. In this process quite often it is the anthropologists who speaks on behalf of the native community. In a sense this is almost inevitable since the anthropological documentary is produced for distribution in the West. However there are indications pointing to a desire to reverse this trend. Several agencies and interest groups in Third World nations have expressed recently serious interest in establishing national Visual Anthropology centers or nationally significant production and archival projects. It is possible here to mention China, India, Brazil, several West African nations, Madagascar, Vanuatu, etc. The advantages seen by the local institutions are obvious. They reside in the substitution of a national or more narrowly local perspective to the ideological biases inherent in western productions. The new productions will be in the national interest. Yet although many good intentions are expressed publicly and privately, few tangible results have been achieved to date. It is as if local institutions are in constant need of foreign encouragement. Who is going to take the initiative for this?

The last recommendation concerns the establishment of an international commission to coordinate the above mentioned tasks. This commission has been established within the IUAES. The commission has requested funding from several Canadian and international bodies. Practically all our grant applications have been rejected. Government bureaucrats express difficulties in understanding what visual anthropology is about. There are always some other priorities. Obviously visual anthropology is still perceived as a marginal discipline.

In sum, it is establishment of the new training centers in the West and the increasing interest in our subdiscipline expressed by many Third World countries that constitute the most striking new

trends. Of course that is not all. In Europe during the last few years Visual Anthropology activities have multiplied with astonishing success: film festivals, seminars and workshops and training sessions follow each other in rapid succession. It may be difficult or impossible to analyse where, when exactly and how the new interest emerged although the old centers in Paris, Göttingen and Florence may have played initially an important role. The contagion spread quickly to other countries and cities. Audiences still seem small and there is a tendency for the same practitioners to meet in different places. Our discipline however has acquired substantial visibility in Europe and presently enjoys some institutional support. East European countries seem to follow the trend, the Estonian festival is going to become an annual event and in November 1988 a new seminar has taken place in Poland. In North America there are no similar developments, public manifestations seem limited to the Margaret Mead Film Festival and the annual meetings of the AAA.

I would like now to briefly indicate two relatively new areas of activity where visual anthropologists could possibly employ their knowledge and skills. The first is development communication, an ill defined sector comprising many disparate elements in reference to Third World nations and Fourth World Groups, the second concerns the storage and transfer of cultural materials with electronic technology in First World institutions.

Development communication arises from the need to accelerate the circulation of information related to a variety of issues and objectives among individuals in a given community, among local communities and at the level of the newly formed nation states. This need is rooted in the basic fact that efficient communications are at the foundation of modernity and the key to rapid change in technology, socio-political organization and education. Development communication is not about building roads and the laying of railway tracks, it concerns the dissemination of knowledge with the help of advanced technologies, mostly electronic, and the establishment of strategies, systems and structures for the massive diffusion of information. The thrust is in the direction of sectorial and planned social change, quite often at the community level but by no means consistently so. Development communication is an effort to brake the intellectual isolation of the community or the nation, almost always it involves the active participation of the people or government agents and institutions.

The objective of different development communication projects can be extremely varied. For instance, the Canadian International Development Agency has sponsored close to 20 such projects in Africa, South and Southeast Asia and Latin America. Funding is substantial, it ranges from a low of \$ 200,000 to over \$ 18 million per individual project. The areas covered are numerous:

- communication support activities in water supply and sanitation (Ghana)

- communications support activities in agriculture, community projects and non-formal education (Francophone Africa)
- media training: TV, radio (Algeria, Zaire, Brazil, South Asia, India, Pakistan, Thailand)
- distance education (Argentina, Brazil, Indonesia)
- social awareness (South Asia)
- communication support activities in health (Pakistan)
- communication support in primary education (Pakistan)
- communication support in community development (Third World)

Most projects emphasize the active participation of women in both media training and development activities. Several projects find application at the grassroots level. Here are a few examples:

- A project in Nepal is taking place in the Surkhet market area and aims to improve communication between the District Women Development Service and the Centre in Kathmandu, focusing on community participation. Local women are being trained in the use of video as a means to express their own needs in order to promote discussion in the village and communicate with decision-makers in Kathmandu. This constitutes a local adaptation of the famous "Fogo process" developed by the National Film Board of Canada in Newfoundland as part of the "Challenge for Change" program.
- In several South Asian countries special development broadcasting units are being established to enable media to sensitize populations to some of the most important development issues in the region: women in development, urbanization and environmental considerations in economic growth, etc.
- In Pakistan a local communications support program intends to promote an awareness of the importance of primary education and to minimize the risk of having traditional parental and community attitudes prevent girls in rural areas from attending school. This motivational campaign promoting primary education through mass media will involve the training of nearly 18,000 community activists.

Briefly, development communication projects seem to follow two formats. In the case programs are generated by the community and then diffused to other communities or up to higher echelons, in the second a regional or national program is projected from above down to the community where it finds application. Remarkably enough most projects concern vitally important issues that may strike at the roots of local culture, or they may be related to important aspects of individual or collective well being. Now the suggestion I would like to make is that a good number of development communication projects should benefit from a visual anthropology input. First any program of social change has to take into consideration the local cultural context. The proposed innovation has to be adapted to or articulated around existing cultural constraints. A good analytic knowledge of the culture is necessary prior

to experiments. And who better than the anthropologist commands such a knowledge? Further, during the active innovation phase, precisely when the new program is presented and introduced in the target community, continuous observations have to be made on audience reactions. These observations have to be carried in a holistic perspective with the aim to reach an assessment of project impact on the dynamic of the local culture as a globality. Again, it seems that the anthropologist is the only professional able to integrate such data. And since many development communication projects concern audio-visual programs, visual anthropologists seem ideally prepared to participate at several levels of project conceptualization, production, implementation and impact assessment. Visual anthropologists don't need to remain in the position of observers, they should become active agents in development communication projects. This is the basic recommendation made by Dr. Binod Agrawal (Indian Space Research Organization — Ahmedabad) in several recent publications, a recommendation I entirely support.

A second new trend of interest to our discipline concerns the establishment of high tech facilities for the collection, storage, retrieval and multiple use of cultural materials of all formats and very definitely including audio-visuals. The intention is to create computerized data banks containing cultural materials concerning particular regions or whole nations. Of course the Domesday project in Britain immediately comes to mind. I would like here to mention a different project entitled SIULLEQ, presently developed mainly by Denmark's Radio. SIULLEQ is a multimedia database, the aim of which is to describe Greenland, the country, its people, history and culture. The system is designed to cater for users in schools, libraries and museums in Denmark and Greenland. The intention is to include in the databank a very large quantity of cultural data for possible use in curriculum development. Now it is our assumption that such a database, no matter how efficient the delivery system, cannot be used easily for pedagogical purposes. The reason is simple, in pedagogy not only data as such but the relationships between different classes of data have to be grasped by the learner. And here the computer is of limited help. For curriculum purposes the cultural data have to be organized around central themes comprising different classes of materials in integrated arrangements. And this is where the visual anthropologist has a role to play. His task is to select the themes, integrate audio-visuals with other data and prepare the programs for delivery. It is probable that other countries will follow the example set by Denmark. It has been recently suggested that similar databanks should be established throughout Europe, facilitating access to the common European cultural heritage and enhancing the feeling of European citizenship. Again visual anthropologists should be able to make important contributions to these exciting projects.

What concluding remarks can one present on the state of visual anthropology today? The wider public still considers the production of anthropological documentaries as the exclusive aim of our sub-discipline. This is easy to understand since many documentaries

produced with the collaboration of anthropologists are aired on television and receive good ratings. Indeed there are encouraging signs for this particular format. It seems that in Europe the lean years are over; in France Jean Paul Colley has diffused recently a group of films on channel 7 and there are many new films planned in Britain by Granada, BBC and Channel Four. Again the British lead the way. We know of no comparable prospects in North America where the documentary, anthropological or not is still out of favor.

Strangely enough visual anthropology is basically an academic discipline yet there are very few purely research projects in the confines of our discipline. It seems that the initial efforts of Margaret Mead in Bali and later those of Sol Worth have very few followers among us. Ethnographic films are highly ideological productions and it was to be expected that Bill Nichols' recent analyses would have inspired further analytic speculation. Apparently this has not been the case with the possible exception of a new film project, "Nanook and his brothers" which aims at the decoding of the various ideologies behind the innumerable films (ethnographic, documentaries and fiction) related to the Eskimos. And very few anthropologists have followed Bateson's lead in film analyses. To the best of my knowledge the vast film archives at the Smithsonian and in Göttingen are only very rarely used for research purposes. Further, some of the native communities we have studied in the past have been deeply affected by the media. In practically all northern Canadian households today the Eskimos watch one of several TV channels, listen to community radio, remain in contact with trappers on the two-way radios, enjoy scarie movies on the VCR or simply listen to cassette tapes. To what degree this new media environment has affected the style of interpersonal relations and the forms of symbolic integration? No anthropologists has dared investigate these issues. Let us hope that at least a few among us will be interested to study, as anthropologists, the profound effects of the modern media at the community level.

NOVE USMERITVE V VIZUALNI ANTROPOLOGIJI

Komisija za Vizualno antropologijo je bila ustanovljena pred 5 leti pri Mednarodni uniji antropoloških in etnoloških znanosti (IUAES). Do danes ji je uspelo vzpostaviti svetovno mrežo antropologov, etnologov, filmskih delavcev in komunikologov. Na spisku Komisije je več kot 1000 članov v 75 deželah. Predsednik komisije A. Balikci v svojem članku okvirno predstavlja razvoj vizualne antropologije glede na resolucijo o vizualni antropologiji, ki so jo sprejeli leta 1973 v Chicagu na IX. Mednarodnem kongresu IUAES.

Prva točka resolucije je predlagala začetek svetovnega programa filmskega snemanja, ki bi sistematično beležil »tradicionalne« kulture. Ta točka ni bila realizirana. Prihajalo je le do ad hoc snemanj v manjšem obsegu in trajanju.

Druga točka resolucije je predlagala evidentiranje, zbiranje, čuvanje in katalogiziranje obstoječih filmskih zapisov. Te naloge se izvajajo po vsem svetu na nacionalni in institucionalni ravni. Vendar je še vedno otežkočen dostop do arhiviranih materialov. Kažeta se dve glavni nalogi: ureditev mednarodnega kodnega sistema za popis etnografskih filmov in objave mednarodnega kataloga institucionalnih katalogov.

Tretja točka resolucije zadeva mednarodno distribucijo. Le-ta je dobro organizirana le v treh večjih regijah: v Združenem kraljestvu, v Skandinaviji in v Severni Ameriki. Ovirano je kroženje filmske dokumentacije med zahodnimi deželami in tretjim svetom. Filmi zahodnih producentov so redko predvajani v deželah, kjer so bili posneti. Tudi video produkcija tretjega sveta redko zaide v zahodne dežele.

Četrta točka resolucije se nanaša na usposabljanje profesionalnih terenskih delavcev. Na tem področju je bil dosežen znaten napredek. Ustanovljeni so bili učni centri v Parizu, Los Angelesu, New Yorku in Manchesteru. Vse štiri omenjene šole skrbijo za prenašanje antropoloških raziskovalnih metod v filmsko proizvodnjo. Na žalost v tretjem svetu ne beležimo podobnega napredka.

Peta točka resolucije 1973 je bistvenega pomena. Zadeva ustanovitev svetovnih regionalnih centrov za arhiviranje, raziskovanje, proizvodnjo in usposabljanje, ki bi bili posebno dejavni v deželah v razvoju. To priporočilo ima pomembno politično-ideološko vsebino. V preteklosti so bili zahodni antropologi tisti, ki so govorili v imenu kultur tretjega sveta. Zdaj pa bi se ta usmeritev obrnila. V zvezi s to pobudo je zlasti potrebno omeniti Kitajsko, Indijo, Brazilijo in države zahodne Afrike.

Zadnja točka resolucije zadeva ustanovitev mednarodne komisije za koordinacijo, kar je bilo uresničeno z ustanovitvijo že omenjene komisije pri IUAES.

Na splošno je v svetu močno poraslo zanimanje za vizualno antropologijo. Prednjači Evropa s številnimi festivali, seminarji, tečaji, itd. Izoblikovali sta se dve novi področji dejavnosti. Prvo so razvojne komunikacije. Moderna družba rabi pomoč vrhunske tehnologije za razširjanje informacij. Pri tem igrajo avdiovizualni programi pomembno vlogo. Drugo novo področje je uvažanje vrhunske tehnologije za zbiranje, shranjevanje in vsestransko uporabo avdiovizualnih materialov. Glavni namen tega je ustanavljanje regionalnih ali nacionalnih bank podatkov. Na evropski ravni bi npr. tak regionalni center omogočal dostop do informacij o skupni evropski kulturni dediščini in s tem pospeševal občutek državljanstva Evrope.

FOR A CRITIQUE OF THE ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM FESTIVALS IN ITALY

PAOLO CHIOZZI*

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, in Italy and elsewhere, there has been a steady increase in the number of ethnographic film festivals in addition to the ones that we can in full right consider "classical": the *Festival dei Popoli* held in Florence, the *Cinema du Reel* in Paris, and the *Margaret Mead Film Festival* in New York. This phenomenon deserves to be observed with some attention for its possible implications on Visual Anthropology and on its development, and to check the role that these events play — or are meant to play — from the point of view of information and of diffusion of the so-called "ethnographic film".

This paper will focus mainly on the present situation in Italy, to avoid giving an exceedingly general and superficial report (but of course some general statement can also be done).

For what concerns Visual Anthropology, the case of Italy is anyhow quite peculiar: there is a certain delay in general, and in ethno-anthropological filmmaking in particular, in comparison to other countries even though, paradoxically, the origine of Visual Anthropology in Italy can be traced back to 1870—80 (Chiozzi, 1987a; 1988); on the other hand, in the field of "Ethnographic Film Festivals", Italy holds a historical record, as the *Festival dei Popoli* of Florence is the first international film festival dedicated to sociological and ethno-anthropological films (Chiozzi, 1987b). Finally it is in Italy, maybe more than elsewhere, that events connected to Visual Anthropology have proliferated in very recent years.

Last but not least, the analysis of the Italian situation will give us a chance to express some general ideas on the *function* of Ethnographic Film Festivals that it would be absurd to limit to the mere role of "showrooms" as it often seems to happen.

2. THE AUDIENCE OF THE "FESTIVAL DEI POPOLI"

When in 1959, in Florence, a small group of social science scholars and of film-lovers gave birth to the first "international festival of sociological and ethnographic film", named *Festival dei Popoli*, nobody I believe expected that initiative to grow to the levels attained in subsequent years. For some time the Festival was only a meeting point for specialists and scholars, but soon the audience began to

* PAOLO CHIOZZI

Istituto di antropologia, Via Proconsolo 12 Firenze, Italia

grow to the surprising number of nearly 30.000 spectators in 6—7 days of screening, in the early 1970ies. Those were the years of the great social and political upheavals connected to the Vietnam war (it was not by chance that the peak was reached for the screening of the film *Introduction to the Enemy* by Jane Fonda and others, in 1974), and the Festival dei Popoli, in Italy, offered the only chance to see "rare" film documents. In the following years, and not only because of the changing tide on the socio-political plane, attendance sensibly diminished and the great audiences disappeared — but not for long. Since the late '70ies, infact, the tendency is again inverted and in the last 10 years the average audience of the Festival numbers about 10.000 spectators in 8—9 days of screening.

But the history of the Festival dei Popoli has already been told (Tasselli, 1982; Chiozzi, 1987b), and it is not our concern here. A more interesting task, in my opinion, is to examine the composition of the audience and its attitude towards specifically "ethnographic" films.

2.1. *The composition of the audience*

As statistics surveys have been conducted only in the last two editions of the Festival (1986 and 1987) a diacronic analysis is unfortunately impossible at present; all we can give is a synchronic picture, while any remark about the tendencies now at work could not go beyond hypothesis to be checked in the future.

The sample observed in the last two years concerns only the audience of the Festival itself, not including the other events that take place every year in connection with it (seminars, retrospectives, conferences, etc.) as an integral part of its programme even if not held in the same place. It has been observed anyhow that those audiences usually follow the films as well, as far as schedules allow it — that is mainly in the evenings. This type of audience — especially in the case of seminars and conferences — is quite specialized and made up of scholars, experts or people particularly interested in the specific issue, usually expressly invited by the organizers. All these people are not included in the sample used, so as not to invalidate the results of the research that was meant to draw the sociological profile of the general audience following the screenings for reasons not strictly connected with professional status.

The data concerning the average age and composition of the audience for 1986 and 1987 are indicated in the following chart:

| | 1986 | 1987 |
|---------------------|------|--------|
| AVERAGE AGE (years) | 33.3 | 30.5 |
| STUDENTS | 27 % | 38 % |
| TEACHERS | 19 % | 15 % |
| EMPLOYEES | 22 % | 13.5 % |
| OTHERS | 28 % | 31.5 % |
| PENSIONERS | 4 % | 2 % |

The most significant data is the increase in the number of *students* (including university as well as high school students), whose attendance grows by 40,75 %, as well as the sharp decrease in the per-

centage of *employees*. While this second data is difficult to interpret (and we'll have to wait until next survey to formulate any hypothesis), the explanation of the first one probably lays in the initiatives taken by the Festival in the last few years to establish a "privileged" relationship with the schools and the University of Florence. Paradoxically the festival dei Popoli, although a 30 year old institution in Florence, was familiar only to certain limited sectors of the population with a special interest in strictly "cinematographic" activities. The new course the organizers are now trying to follow has the aim of transforming the Festival dei Popoli in a permanent cultural institution whose activities are meant to go well beyond the annual appointment of the Festival itself. One of the key-points of this new course is exactly the offer of programmes for schools and university departments of humanities, using the visual materials collected in the film-archive until recently completely unexploited.

2.2. *The attitude of the audience towards ethno-anthropological films*
The "competition" and "information" sections of the Festival dei Popoli may include sociological, political, anthropological documentary films and, more generally, any cinematographic work that can be classified under the wide label of *social documentation* — the specific field of interest so defined by the articles of association of the Festival. This general label refers essentially to the *contents* the films must have to enter the Festival, while the typological distinction reflects mainly the specific chosen approach — in other words, is meaningful in this connection to remind the success of films (of unquestionable ethnographic interest however) like *Trobriand Cricket* by Gary Kildea.

Another element to consider is the need expressed by the audience of a commentary accompanying the images, especially of an anonymous voice-off "explaining" the subject filmed. It doesn't even seem to be considered sufficient a dry commentary, limited — as Heider suggests — to the explanation of the visual mysteries and to the setting of the filmed event in its cultural context; on the contrary audiences seem to prefer a redundant commentary (of the type that in the end adds little to the information given by the images), thus showing a certain *laziness* in the process of decodification and interpretation of the images or, in other words, a considerable degree of visual illiteracy.

In the end, the general impression — in spite of the encouraging data on the consistency of the audience — is certainly negative from the point of view of quality, and one might be tempted to accept the pessimistic conclusion that we are confronted with a largely *immature* audience. This is the reason why I believe it is important to think over the "meaning" of ethnographic film festivals — and not out of fear for their future development, but because I believe that such circumstances force us to reconsider (and redefine) their role.

3. ETHNO-ANTHROPOLOGICAL FILM FESTIVALS IN ITALY

22 Especially in the 80ies, regular meetings dedicated to ethnographic film and visual anthropology have increased in number: maybe they

can't always be called *festivals*, if we reserve this term for events addressed to an audience not confined only to specialists. However, I believe it is correct to include them in this review because they take place regularly and they are in principle open to anyone even if sometimes they are only attended by scholars and experts.

A comparison between the different experiences might give us some useful hint for our reflections.

3.1. *Roma: Materiali di Antropologia Visiva*

The Italian Association for Scientific Cinematography (AICS) has been promoting in recent years several initiatives, sometimes in cooperation with other institutions, in the field of visual anthropology. In 1985, with the cooperation of the National Museum of Folk Arts and Traditions (Rome), the first *Seminar* accompanied by screenings took place; an event meant to become a regular appointment, every two years, for university students and experts. It has a monographic structure and a lot of space is reserved to theoretic and methodological debate.

3.2. *Nuoro: Rassegna Internazionale di Documentari Cinematografici e televisivi*

A strictly monographic event regularly taking place every two years promoted by the Istituto Superiore Regionale Etnografico of Sardinia, with the cooperation of AICS and of a Scientific Committee composed by representatives of Italian (the Festival dei Popoli and the Italian Association for Audio-Visual Anthropology) and foreign Institutions (I.W.F. of Göttingen, BBC and others). The subject of the first edition (1982) was *The Shepherd and its Image*, the second one (1984) was dedicated to *The World Upturned, or the Controlled Transgression*, the third (1986) to *Marriage: Wedding Rituals in Traditional Societies*. The theme chosen for 1988 is *Women and Work in Traditional Societies*. Screenings are accompanied by seminars on the subject chosen for the year and on the methodology of audio-visual documentation.

3.3. *Palermo: Settimana Mediterranea del Film Antropologico*

An annual event since 1984, is promoted by the Laboratorio Antropologico of Palermo University. It is a review of ethno-anthropological films produced in the Mediterranean area often including, however, other productions. For this reason it doesn't have yet a very specific "identity".

3.4. *Orbetello: Agrifilmfestival*

Its specific subject is agriculture, and since 1985 it includes an ethno-anthropological section organized by the Department of Anthropology of the University of Siena. Although the peasant world is the constant theme, there is a tendency to propose every year a monographic selection of documentaries accompanied by a seminar.

3.5. *Sud Tirol: Antropologia visuale della regione alpina*

A retrospective film festival that will take place every two years. The first edition was held in Bolzano in 1987. It is the youngest but

most promising festival because of as well defined "geographical" choice which will allow a comparison between different approaches to visual-anthropological documentation and research in the same area.

3.6. *Guardia Sanframondi: Incontri Cinematografici Internazionali con le Tradizioni Popolari*

A yearly event since 1987, it includes documentary as well as fiction films dealing with folk traditions.

4. SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

If we want to classify the various events with reference to their audiences, we must divide them in two groups: the ones explicitly addressed to a wide non-specialized audience with the declared, or undeclared, intent of spreading the knowledge of ethnographic film, and those conceived on the contrary as "study seminars" for scholars and filmmakers, with the occasional participation of small numbers of interested people, like university students.

In the first case the choice of visual materials might be influenced by the need to offer products of a good formal level (i. e. in some way "spectacular"). In the second, at least in theory, it should be easier to present research materials. But another general point is to consider: the risk of these numerous events overlapping or repeating one another. This is certainly a problem and I believe the only solution would be to stress the "specialized" character of some of them. The brief review given under point 3. reveals that there is actually a tendency to characterize some events by limiting their geographical and/or cultural field of interest (Mediterranean area in Palermo, Alpine region in Sud Tirol), or by selecting a monographic theme (Nuoro and Orbetello); but in some cases, maybe for lack of organization or of scientific awareness, this seems to remain only an intention.

We must consider here, however, the consequences this process of specialization (that from several points of view we are to wish always more intense) might have on the attitude of the audiences. A monographic film festival has many advantages if it is meant to support a discussion between experts, but it often turns out to be a disaster from the point of view of audience attendance.

This *ambiguous* character of ethnographic film festivals demands some reflection on their role, their functions and their perspectives.

5. ETHNOGRAPHIC FILMS AND THEIR AUDIENCE: WHAT TYPE OF RELATIONSHIP?

The various Italian festivals were mostly born to fulfil needs of "scientific communication", in the sense that the first official motive is to offer filmmakers and anthropologists chances to meet and exchange ideas. The only exception is maybe the Guardia Sanframondi festival who, while other festivals are usually promoted by

scientific institutions, is organized directly by the Municipality "within a wider programme of cultural events" in direct connection with local folk traditions, and is therefore addressed in the first place to the local population, even if higher ambitions are not altogether dismissed.

Only in a few cases a wider audience is involved, and this poses a question that we must have the courage to ask: does the "little tribe" of visual anthropologists, already frequently meeting during international festivals — where it often happens to see the same things really need all these additional occasions to exchange ideas? I doubt it. But most of all I want to stress the fact that this alters the concept of festival itself, that must be understood as an occasion to socialize particular experiences. A visual document, in anthropology, has three main functions that we can indicate with the terms *preservation, research, communication* (Chiozzi, 1984). An "ethnographic film festival" has a meaning only if it is aimed, *in the first place*, at developing communication, which doesn't mean only to promote meetings of experts and scholars; nor on the other hand would a festival be useful conceived just as a "show-window", a ritualized event leaving almost no trace once the curtain is drawn. The focus of our attention must be the *relationship with the audience*, keeping in mind the afore-mentioned considerations (2.1 and 2.2) about the relative "immaturity" of the audience — a fact that will put out the enthusiasm that might be lit by the *quantitative* success scored by some festivals.

5.1. *The Festival dei Popoli: from "seasonal ritual" to permanent institution*

It is always difficult to generalize, and even more so in this context where we are faced with a problem so complex that even its terms are difficult to define. Therefore I don't intend to give here any answer of universal value; I shall only present an experience that deserves some reflection and discussion, also to compare it possibly with other ideas and experiences.

For several years the organizers of the Festival dei Popoli have discussed the destiny and the future possibilities of the Festival, the role it was meant to have both as an international event (therefore in relationship to the documentary filmmaking and academic circles) and as a cultural institutions part of a specific context, the city of Florence (therefore in relationship to other Florentine institutions and to its audience). Their doubts were caused by the awareness that something "was not working": it seemed meaningless to go on proposing a Festival that was only a "seasonal ritual" — whether a "collective rejoicing" or a "initiativ ritual". The passive attitude of the audience and a decrease of interest shown by specialists made clear that a vicious circle was about to be entered risking to transform the Festival in an isolated event, an end to itself, where the main concern would in the end have become the search of a *scoop* of some sort — like the first screening of particularly attractive works which would momentarily raise a great audience determining a positive reaction of the press, thus giving some self-satisfaction to the organizers and to some filmmakers.

Was there any purpose in continuing along that line? or should the Festival have tried to become something different? and if that was the point, how was it going to change?

The Festival was born with definite and declared cultural and scientific ambitions, not excluding the will to work also for an effective popularization of socio-anthropological knowledge. But, as mentioned, those ambitions were gradually being forgotten for an inevitable process of wearing out caused by the ritual repetitive character of the traditional concept of *festival*. The question thus became more radical: which function should the festival have today in relationship to its audience, or better, to its two different types of audience? The solution was not easy to find, because it seemed clear that the question could be answered only by "overturning" the idea of festival itself.

In the first place the question of choosing between a lay or an expert audience is no longer posed: the two are no longer considered opposed and it has been decided that the Festival must be addressed to both, through a programme at two different, but complementary, levels. But, especially, a choice of quality has been made transforming the Festival in a *permanent institution*, that is active all year round and not only at festival-time.

How was this done? In various different ways:

a) the development of the film and video archive

A greater number of documentaries has been acquired and their use has been rationalized, especially by putting them at the disposal of institutions like universities, secondary schools, ethnographic museums, etc.;

b) retrospectives and monographic sections

In the course of the year different initiatives are promoted, and not only in the city of Florence. An example might be the project on "Cinema and History" still in course at present and meant to become an annual event, including the screening of documentary and fiction films as well seminars organized by an International Scientific Committee. In addition the Festival organizes abroad retrospectives on Italian social-documentary films;

c) publications

the Festival has always promoted a certain degree of publishing activity, that is now being strengthened by regular publishing the "proceedings" of the most important conferences organized, or by promoting other publications in the field of the Festival's competence (mainly visual anthropology, cinema and television);

d) research projects

the Festival promotes also research activities, directly or in cooperation with other institutions. At present, research work is being done through a project on urban anthropology and the possible applications of audio-visual techniques in this particular field;

e) production

the Festival is taking the first steps also in the field of production, but its activity is at present limited to television programmes (in cooperation with the most important Italian commercial TV network).

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Paolo Chiozzi

O KRITIKI FESTIVALOV ETNOGRAFSKEGA FILMA V ITALIJI

V zadnjih letih se je v Italiji in tudi drugod močno povečalo število festivalov etnografskega filma, ob tistih, ki so že »klasični« (Festival dei Popoli, Cinéma du Réel, Margaret Mead Film Festival). Ta pojav zasluži, da ga pozorno obravnavamo v povezavi z možnimi vplivi na razvoj vizualne antropologije in da preverimo vlogo tega pojava pri razširjanju t. i. etnografskega filma.

Članek se nanaša v glavnem na situacijo v Italiji, ne da bi stvari posploševali, v kolikor se posplošitve ne bodo vsiljevale same od sebe.

Kar zadeva vizualno antropologijo, je italijanski primer nekoliko nenavaden: etno-antropološko filmanje na splošno je tukaj v določenem zaostanku v primerjavi z drugimi deželami, čeprav, paradoksalno, lahko začetek vizualne antropologije v Italiji sledimo tja v leta 1870-80. Po drugi strani drži Italija zgodovinski rekord tudi na področju festivalov etnografskega filma. Festival dei Popoli v Firencah je namreč prvi mednarodni festival posvečen sociološkemu in etno-antropološkemu filmu. In končno, prav v Italiji se je v zadnjih letih, bolj kot drugje, vizualna antropologija naenkrat močno razcvetela.

Zato nam analiza italijanskega primera daje možnost očitati nekaj splošnih idej o funkciji festivalov etnografskega filma, ne samo o njihovi vlogi nekakšnih filmskih izložb.

V 80 letih je število festivalov v Italiji naraslo na 6 tematskih festivalov mednarodnega značaja, ob že znanem Festivalu dei Popoli. Te festivale delimo v dve skupini. V prvi so tisti, ki so namenjeni široki, nespecializirani publiki, v drugi pa tisti, ki so bolj študijske narave. V prvi skupini se pojavlja težnja po spektakularnosti, v drugi pa je pozornost usmerjena v prikazovanje raziskovalnega gradiva. Problem je, da se na vseh teh »festivalih« srečujejo vedno isti ljudje.

Vizualni dokument v antropologiji ima tri glavne funkcije: arhiviranje, raziskovanje in komunikacija. Festival etnografskih filmov ima smisel, če je usmerjen v komunikacijo, v iskanje stika med antropologijo in publiko.

To vlogo je v Italiji najbolj izpopolnil Festival dei Popoli, ki se počasi spreminja v stalno ustanovo, aktivno celo leto. Ob komunikacijski vlogi razvija še naslednje usmeritve: filmski in video arhiv, retrospektivno in monografsko sekcijo, publiciranje, raziskovanje in proizvodnjo.

ETHNOLOGICAL FILMMAKING AT THE INSTITUT FÜR DEN WISSENSCHAFTLICHEN FILM (IWF) GÖTTINGEN

BEATE ENGELBRECHT*

Up to the present the *Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film* (Institute for Scientific Film) at Göttingen has been the most important producer of ethnological films in West Germany. The history of its origin and development as well as the numerous discussions of the work of the institute reflect both the development of Ethnology in West Germany in general and the growing importance of ethnological films as a means of research and communication.

THE RISE OF THE INSTITUTE FOR SCIENTIFIC FILM

The beginnings of the Institute for Scientific Film reach back to the time before World War II. It can be seen as a successor of the *Reichsanstalt für Film und Bild in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* (RWU), the work of which ended in 1945 with the occupation of Berlin.

Shortly after the war two *Institute für Film und Bild in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* (FWU) were founded with which a department for university and research was affiliated. The latter succeeded the university department of the former Reichsanstalt (RWU) and had its headquarters at Göttingen. The Institute for Scientific Film became finally an independent institution in 1956. Gotthard Wolf, former director of the Institute, pointed out that:

"The main object of the Institute is to further the use of Film in science in every possible way. This includes the production, publication and distribution of films. The Institute also has a responsibility for supporting research institutions in their execution of scientific work by providing research films and technical assistance. The development of technical and scientific cinematographic and analytical technique is a special concern. Suitable research films need to be published and made available to the scientific world at large and part of the Institute's work consists of building up and maintaining its archive, handling the distribution of films, and preparing and publishing related printed matter." (Wolf 1975:)

Nowadays the institute has more than 100 employees. Scientific films covering all areas of the sciences, such as Biology (including Botany and Zoology), Medicine (including Psychology and Veterinary Medicine), Technology and Cultural Sciences (such as Ethnology, Archaeology, History, and Geography) have been published.

* BEATE ENGELBRECHT

Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film, Nonnenstieg 72, D-3400, Göttingen, FR Germany

BEGINNINGS OF SCIENTIFIC FILMMAKING IN ETHNOLOGY

Ethnologists early recognized the advantages of film documentation for their work and put it down in a position paper at Paris in 1900. Later on this paper served as the fundament of the ethnological filmwork at the IWF.

The position of German ethnologists concerning film as a medium of documentation can be seen in their statement on ethnological film given in 1960.

"The topic of ethnological sciences, which is the culture of nonliterary people, has always been subject to changes in its contents as well as in its phenomena. At the present time, this change is occurring more rapidly due to the impact of western civilisation on the one hand to the free will of the peoples concerned on the other hand; this means that traditional forms and contents of primitive cultures are being blotted out. This is why ethnological science is losing its vibrant foundation...

Modern technology helps the ethnologist to document ongoing phenomena today not only in still photography but even as activities by the means of film.

The ethnological films which have been scientifically edited to date have shown the superiority of cinematography over older methods, ... There are no other alternatives for working on activities except via film analysis. But above all the film allows to record such processes that are still present today among primitive people but will have disappeared forever in a few years time. Therefore, films representing a kind of secondary reality have an importance which today could not even be estimated in its significance for further ethnological research." (Rutz 1962: 7)

One recognized the rapid transformation of cultures, which brings about the obliteration of various topics of ethnological research, and therefore seized the opportunity of collecting as many documents as possible.¹ Filming represented a means of quickly documenting at the last minute what would soon be gone.

Ethnological analysis could be done later. Film was seen as a copy of reality; the rules how to make ethnographic films developed by Günther Spannaus gave the impression that it was possible to act objectively during filming.

Spannaus himself, who had already worked freelance at the RWU in Berlin and then was the first consultant for ethnology at the IWF, noticed a remarkable discrepancy "... between the deep respect for filmmaking in theory and its insignificance for ethnological expeditions in practice" (1961: 70), which could primarily be explained on technical grounds. This changed fundamentally in midcentury because of the introduction of 16mm security films and due to the construction ever lighter 16mm cameras.

At the beginning the main ambition of Spannaus was the elimination of the shortcomings of former ethnological films. He saw these shortcomings on the one hand in the "potpourri-like arrangements of only fragmentarily recorded actions" (1961: 71, 75), which indicated that ethnologists who filmed did not know anything about

the structural means of the film. On the other hand dissociation from documentary film seemed important to him though he conceded a certain relevance for the scientific ethnological film. Nevertheless he refused most of the structural means of documentary and even more of feature film as far as their value for scientific ethnological film was concerned. At the same time he postulated "the cooperation with ethnological specialists who have experiences in filmmaking and therefore are conscious of the possibilities and limitations as well as of the dangers of filming for ethnographical research" (1961: 72).

To remove the deficiencies of ethnographic film in West Germany, Spannaus developed his "Rules for Documentation in Ethnology and Folklore through the Film" (1959) and carried out introductory courses on primary techniques, structuring and the topics of scientific filmmaking, in which the rules were taught also (1961: 76). Some of the Spannaus' rules are still valid, for example: that the processes to be filmed should at first be documented

ethnographically, i. e. before starting to shoot, a plan should be worked out carefully;

that the presence of a film team alone leads to distortions that should be fixed in writing wherever possible;

that a film documentation should also include a careful report of all technical and ethnological data which are important for filmmaking;

that usually only representative extracts from a process can be documented by filming; nowadays, representative should be understood in terms of important rather than representing the ideal type;

that the duration of a shot and the camera angle are of importance; that all movements of the camera have their own significance; that one can recognize in the recorded scenes what should be recognized. Basically that means nothing else than that one has a clear idea of what is meant by film language and that one should use it to clarify the contents of the film.

However, many thoughts of Spannaus on which the rules were based must, according to our present understanding of science in Ethnology, be regarded as obsolete or even wrong:

It has to be refused to change the filming situation for technical reasons (light problems etc.) to such a degree that one can regard the filmed process only as posed. It should be taken care that the course of events is not repeated several times for technical reasons, since this would lead to a serious disruption of the whole setting. However, it must be taken into consideration in which way a partnership during film production between the persons being filmed and those filming can lead to a new quality e. g. in the demonstration of highly technical processes.

Every film topic as well as every group being filmed requires its own style, that is one can give neither a general rule for structure and contents of films, nor for guiding the camera, nor for cutting.

In spite of all efforts at objectivity the results of scientific fieldwork can finally only reflect the fieldworker's own subjective view.

The more obvious his subjectivity is, the easier one can evaluate the scientific range of his products. This is all the more true for ethnological filmmaking. The film can therefore never be regarded as an "objective permanent visual record of phenomena".

It is therefore possible today to film without keeping the presence of the camera hidden from the viewer. Reactions to the camera can serve moreover to make the filming situation more transparent.

Due to the subjectivity just mentioned, the comparison of films with the same topics is only rarely possible and today no longer a main concern of ethnological filmmaking.

In formulating his rules, Spannaus had obviously dealt with the structural means of the film of his times. He analyzed their influence on the viewer so as to be finally able to judge their potential use in scientific filmmaking. He did not reflect on ideas concerning the nature of science per se, as there did not seem to exist any necessity for this, at that time.

ENCYCLOPAEDIA CINEMATOGRAPHICA

In addition ethnological filmmaking in West Germany was influenced with far-reaching consequences by the establishment of the Encyclopaedia Cinematographica (EC). Soon after World War II Gotthard Wolf, director of the institute and originally in engineer, tried to work out a plan how films of scientific documentary contents could be archived systematically so as to be more easily available for research purposes. At this time he saw the main problem in the fact that films documenting a wide ranging subject would be very complex. Therefore the different activities could not be presented in sufficient detail for scientific research. As a solution to this problem Wolf proposed to subdivide a documentation of an larger subject into its smallest thematic units. Such subunits would be easy to produce for the scientists and furthermore were most suitable for comparative analysis.

This idea of Gotthard Wolf was soon supported by numerous scientists in West Germany and abroad. Already in 1952 the Encyclopaedia Cinematographica (EC) could be officially founded as an international institution. The name indicates that one aim of scientific film production was the establishment of an encyclopaedia of films, which should be put at the disposal of scientists for research purposes. (Wolf 1967: 9-14)

"The task of a scientific encyclopaedia of films is the registration and recording of significant scientific activities and patterns of behavior in animals, plants and substances, and, last but not least, in humans, ..." (Wolf 1967: 23)

Unquestionably Wolf's main interest was an exact analysis of the activities captured on film and their comparison. A precondition of this was that the films represent reality to a high degree. This was to be guaranteed by special methods of film recording as well as of film editing. Wolf was completely aware of the fact that the film medium has its own language and that one must know exactly the influence of this language on the viewer. Everything that could

lead to misrepresentation of the purpose of a film had to be avoided in the production of scientific films and inevitably led to restrictions in the means of structuring a film (Wolf 1967: 25—29; 171—195). It is to be noted that deficiencies in recording technique at that time (unmoveable camera, problems in the production of sound-films, the high costs of colour material) were not seen as such (*per se*), but were discussed scientifically and thus substantiated.

From the very beginning the postulated smallest thematic unit was a great problem with regard to Ethnology, Wolf himself stated:

“In most cases the difficulty results from the problem that one has to fear that by subdividing a film one would disturb a higher context, which in total represents more than only the sum of the different subjects.” (Wolf 1967: 29)

“Which way one would choose in every single case, that is, whether the single process or the higher context will be seen as the smallest thematic subunit, can only be determined by exactly weighing the scientific facts against the aims of the encyclopaedic collection. Sometimes this decision cannot be reached without arbitrariness” (Wolf 1967: 30)

Anyway it is a fact that ethnologists from West Germany and abroad obviously acted according to the scheme of the smallest thematic unit in their work and thus produced hundreds of films for the encyclopaedia, the famous 5-minute-films. Thematically, the main emphases of ethnological filmmaking was laid on material culture on the one hand on rituals on the other. Topics concerning social interaction or with *emic* content (in terms of comments of the people filmed) obviously did not come into consideration. Wolf's belief that it is easier to film the smallest thematic unit than a complex subject, seems to be verified. Thus in 1967 Wolf could conclude:

“From these results one can draw the conclusion that the guidelines for ethnological scientific work for the encyclopaedia have proved to be right.” (Wolf 1967: 122)

Today one can observe that the rigid schematizing of film topics on the one hand of techniques of filming and film editing on the other hand has led to a standardization of cultural phenomena filmed which reflects reality in no way. It is especially remarkable that the main topic of ethnological research, *Homo sapiens*, has got lost in the meantime.

These deficiencies could not even been removed by introducing an accompanying text providing information on the filmed group as well as on the topic of the film and the situation during film work. Nevertheless, these texts, also being part of the teaching films, are unquestionably an invaluable complement to ethnological films at the IWF.

In spite of the mentioned critics, the concept of the EC does not contradict ethnological film work in general. EC-films are scientific films of a special kind: ethnological as well as other topics are treated for documentary purposes. That means that an existing chronology is preserved, that a synchronous sound is guaranteed and that an intended influence on the viewer leading to a subjective opinion should be avoided. Film work should be preceded by a longer term of field research or at least be accompanied by it. The choice

of subjects and, in connection with this, the length of the film depends on the author. Already in the 1960s it was recognized at the IWF that new subjects of ethnology must be dealt with:

"The future development of the ethnological film will go far beyond a pure documentation of those techniques that are dying out and of traditional processes and will lean toward psychological and sociological aspects... It would furthermore be desirable to record the attitude towards new working situations, towards machines and fabrics. Perhaps one day we will be approaching that kind of documentations often mentioned as desirable: such as one day in the life of a worker, craftsman or farmer, which until now has not been possible to achieve." (Wolf 1967: 142)²

GERMAN ETHNOLOGY AND THE ETHNOLOGICAL FILM IN THE 1960s

Today, after more than twenty years, it is fascinating to see that in the 1960s the rules developed by Spannaus as well as the concept of EC did not seem to have contradicted ethnological work in West Germany in any aspect.

In 1963, Gerd Koch, author of more than 120 films published in the EC, wrote on his work in 1963:

"In principle, films of this series are supposed to contain only observational material for research into activities and events, that is to say, facts not influenced by opinions formed at the time of taking the pictures nor by subsequent technical processing (cutting and editing, fading, sound commentary). Moreover, a film of this nature should contain only the facts directly related to the subject, without any embellishments, emotional effects or other means used by feature films. Although the activity in question should in principle be covered at a length sufficient for observation and evaluation, many of the ethnological films of the Encyclopaedia are quite short because of the nature of the subject itself. ... Since I carried out my field work in the Ellice Archipelago by myself and therefore had no assistance with filming, it was technically impossible to shoot sound films. Moreover, the films of this Encyclopaedia are in general silent, following the principle of deliberate avoidance of commentaries, unless the sound is an essential part of the whole ceremony as, for example, in the case of dancing." (Koch 1963: 156—157)

Only in the early 1970s German ethnologists began to raise doubts concerning the conception of EC films. The criticism was especially directed toward the rigid adherence to the previously established rules.³ The IWF seemed to get more and more inflexible in the face of a dynamically developing medium and a changing science. It is, however, remarkable that most of the German ethnologists attacked the IWF soon with constant and, up to now, unaltered criticism without developing new theories on filmmaking themselves and without observing, on the other hand, what in fact had happened at the IWF in the meantime (Böhl, 1985; Weise/Wendl 1988: 36).⁴ Recent productions have been judged in such a harsh

and critical way that this in fact objectively led to misinterpretations. A more neutral approach to IWF publications seemed to be impossible in West Germany.

CHANGES IN THE WORK OF THE IWF

At the IWF one knows perfectly well that there are many different ways of making ethnological films. There is no doubt that they all have their place and more so their necessity. But according to its statutes the IWF only has the task of producing scientific films for university teaching and scientific documentation. Within this framework ethnologists of different theoretical and thematic orientations have numerous opportunities of publishing ethnological films accompanying their research. At the same time, the IWF sees it as its task to save film material for scientific research purposes which has not been produced on the request of a scientist but was recognized later as important for science.

Thus the material published at the IWF derives from three different sources:

- so-called "in-house material", which at the request of an ethnologist is produced together with the scientist by an IWF film team.⁵ These projects are financed in co-operation with other institutions, e. g. the German Scientific Association, the Volkswagen Foundation and so on.
- so-called "external material", which is filmed by ethnologists themselves during their field work.⁶ These projects are financed also in co-operation with supporting institutions.
- so-called "purchased external material", which is bought following the evaluation of an ethnologist because it is considered scientifically of great value.⁷

Great importance is attached to the fact that scientists decide themselves on the contents of films and its scientific truth. The strongest influence on choice and structure of the subjects ethnologists do have when they film themselves, that is when the camera is guided by themselves. But in these cases they are often confronted with the problem that the realization of complex film ideas proves to be quite difficult.

At the present ethnological film projects are consulted at the IWF by four ethnologists, two of them employed for a limited time. Sometimes they participate in major film expeditions as film directors and look after the editing of the respective material. More frequently they advise on the editing of external material, which has been filmed by other ethnologists or has been bought. Accordingly their influence on the structure of the films is very divers. The direction of the influence depends on the individual consultant as well as on the organization and the topics of the projects themselves.

From what has been said it becomes clear that at the IWF there does exist a diversity in various aspects: The IWF produces teaching films as well as documentation films; both in-house material and external material is edited in co-operation with numerous ethnologists; several ethnologists are employed at the IWF. This diversity renders impossible a rigid adherence to old rules, as for example those of Spannaus. On the contrary, ethnologists at the IWF unani-

mously share the opinion that there cannot be any definite rules. Every project, every film, requires its own style. It is also their opinion that ethnologists from the most varied scientific leanings should have the opportunity to publish their ethnological films at the IWF. There cannot be any formation of an school of German ethnological film concerning the IWF. It is, however, a fact that the IWF is bound to the scientific teaching film and to the scientific documentation film as possible publishing forms.

The scientific documentation film, which could also be named EC-film, has changed continuously during the past decades. First signs of this change can be seen in documentation on folklore subjects of the 1960s produced by the IWF itself.⁸ This work has been continued in the films documenting Eipo culture (West Irian)⁹ in the middle of the 1970s, in an ethnomusicological film project among the Batak of Sumatra at the beginning of the 1980s,¹⁰ followed by films documenting the death ritual among the Dajak of Borneo in the middle of the 1980s¹¹ and in a still running project documenting the folk-culture of Lower Saxony (West Germany).¹²

It would be too far-reaching to discuss here in detail the changes in the production of films at the IWF. To my mind such an analysis is the task of ethnologists not being employed at the IWF. However, I would like to cite Franz Simon, an ethnologist at the IWF. In 1966 he advised on the shooting and the editing of the film "Supper at a farmer's family".¹³ With regard to this film he wrote:

"If one wants to document a work process, a methodological separation into a) work as technique and b) work as behavioral situation often becomes necessary. That means in the case of "work as technique" a separation of a process of the whole setting. Thus, one dispenses with the context. (...) Such a monostructural presentation can only be a strictly limited compromise and by all means needs a clear and complete disclosure of this circumstance.

From this situation in which we had to accept severe restrictions the desire arose to try to make a film documenting the highly diverse interactions of this family. This meant to lay hold of a complete and comprehensible activity in which all or nearly all of the family members participated. Furthermore, this action should be predictable, that is, one should be able to calculate it in order to make possible a well directed realisation as far as film technique is concerned. From these considerations resulted the plan to film a common meal of the family.

It was also intended to try by this filmwork a methodological clarification of the documentary work as to such topics. In numerous discussions the edited film was judged positively, the path pursued was welcomed because the film started where other means of documentation have their limits. To record a situation, which can only be understood and documented as the playing together of numerous single elements of human behavior as the constant flow of the sequences of interactions and of the dynamic, is a task especially for filming. Thus, film is primarily focussed on the "How". (1984: 356—357)

These statements should neither stand for a new guideline of the Institute nor should they represent the final say. Both Ethnology as

a science and the film medium have their own dynamics, making the continuous discussion of ethnological filmmaking essential. Only this can lead us to being constantly aware of the difficulties and problems, as do the permanent discussions on ethnological fieldwork. The changes in ethnological filmmaking in German-speaking countries and thus, at the IWF, too, can equally be seen in the publication of so-called external material:

One might mention the films on double Ikat from Bali by the Swiss ethnologist Urs Ramseyer.¹⁴ Being shot in 1972/73 they have a total length of 140 minutes and demonstrate this highly complicated technique in an easily understandable way. The films have led to a revival of double-Ikat productions on Bali on the one hand, and have met with common interest especially of such people interested in textile craftsmanship. Here, a mediation between cultures takes place in a rather direct way.

One might further mention the films from 1973/74 on male initiation at Japanaut, Iatmul, Papua New Guinea¹⁵ by film producer Hermann Schlenker. They have been edited at the IWF in cooperation with the ethnologist Jürg Wassmann from Basle. The films have a total length of 165 minutes and show a male initiation ritual at Iatmul lasting for several weeks in a very impressive way. This ritual has an enormous importance for the identity of the Iatmul. That it was possible to shoot this material and to publish it as a scientific document might in future be of great importance for Iatmul culture.

From a present-day view it is hard to understand that ethnologists in former times only rarely used the second category of films produced by the IWF, the teaching films. Only recently one seems to remember them. In this category of teaching films very different kinds of scientific films can be published: The film "Fachi — Oasis of the Saharan Kanuri"¹⁶ by Peter Fuchs gives an overview of the culture of the Saharan Kanuri in the Oasis Fachi. The film "The Longhouse in Tumbang Garu — Ngadju-Dayak, Indonesia, South Kalimantan"¹⁷ by Franz Simon and Sonja Balbach portrays the life in a longhouse. The film "Saline Luisenhall, Arbeitsalltag in einer Siedepfannensaline"¹⁸ by Edmund Ballhaus shows the normal working day in a salt work, still using techniques from the times of early industrialization. And finally the film "Mami Wata — The Spirit of the White Woman"¹⁹ by Tobias Wendl and Daniela Weise demonstrates a possession cult in its various forms of expression.

It is primarily this category of the so-called teaching film which enables the ethnologist to show facts according to his own scientific knowledge. Within this category it is possible to point to interrelations of facts especially making use of commentaries (or even of subtitles) which might be difficult to express by means of the film only. Films of general subjects have their place at the IWF in this context since long — an opportunity which ethnologist should apply to more often.

It is the aim of ethnological film production at the IWF to produce a scientifically well-founded documentation, which later on should be put at the disposal of scientists as well as — and especially so — of the people filmed as a historical document. On the other hand scientifically well-founded general films (teaching films) should add

to the understanding of other cultures. It is clear and desirable that there will be further discussions in future on how these goals might be reached. Never can a scientific institute claim to have had the final say.

Discussions will be necessary, too, because the advancement of video-techniques will raise totally new aspects concerning ethnological film. More and more scientists will use video to record activities and phenomena for research purposes. Even today it can be seen that in future we will no longer be able to edit the coming amount of visual documentation material and present it to a broad public. There does already exist a special archive of film sources in which films and video-records are stored for scientific research and documentation purposes without being edited. This source archive will gain importance in the very near future.

GERMAN ETHNOLOGISTS AND THE ETHNOLOGICAL FILMMAKING OF TODAY²⁰

At present a change of generations is taking place in German Ethnology, which also implies a change in the understanding of science itself. It would lead us too far to take up the recent history of German ethnology. But it must be mentioned that the younger generation has difficulties in understanding Ethnology as a merely observing science and in viewing the people with whom they work as pure research objects. Today they do their work thinking in terms of partnership. They are aware of the danger of exploitation of the people under research. This new approach leads German ethnologists to see so many difficulties in ethnological field research that they tend not to carry out any field research at all. Thus, they hope to escape the colonial relationship between the ethnologist and indigenous people. However, to my opinion field research alone can lead to a relationship in the sense of partnership between people from different cultures.

The discussion of ethnological filmmaking in West Germany suffers from this situation. But it also profits from it. Discussion suffers because there are far too few German ethnologists carrying on field research which means that there is missing a basis for ethnological filmmaking. Discussion profits as to the quality of films and the transparency of their genesis. Today Visual Anthropology is seen as an important and necessary part of Ethnology. Young ethnologists, being familiar with media like film and TV from their earliest childhood ponder intensively over how filmmaking could be used for ethnological purposes. In this respect it becomes obvious that the younger and the older generation of ethnologists does not necessarily agree on the definition purposes too. Being aware of the amount of problems young ethnologists have joined together in a study group on ethnological filmmaking within the German Ethnological Association. Together it is tried to work out how ethnological filmmaking in West Germany could be developed in future. It is to be expected that this intensive dealing with ethnological film will lead to new impulses in West Germany. Even in future the IWF will not be able to disregard its welldefined task which does not allow the production of every possible kind

of ethnological film. Nevertheless ethnologists at the IWF are following the discussions of ethnological film with the greatest interest, hoping to receive new stimuli. A scientific discussion of the ethnological film cannot be the task of the IWF which sees itself as a kind of service industry. Even in future it will be the film authors themselves who will confront the IWF with new scientific knowledge and thus will contribute to the fact that ethnological film in Germany will continue to gain in relevance.

¹ Wolf 1972: 17

² See Wolf 1982: 16

³ Baer (1971) dealt with the different goal of the School of Paris and asked for consideration of mutual human relations within ethnographic scientific films.

Koch (1972) essentially supported the encyclopaedic idea, however, he postulated the adjustment of both the thematic units as well as the subject of a film to ethnological necessities.

Schlesier (1982) referred to a similarity between the problems of field research and those of ethnological filmmaking which is due to the inherent subjectivity in each statement of the scientist. This subjectivity could only be reduced by an exact knowledge of the processes to be filmed.

Koloß (1973) was concerned with the subjectivity typical for the film. He reflected also the original task of ethnological filmmaking, that is "collecting of data of ethnological relevance" (S. 45)

⁴ The most recent stock-taking of the activities of the IWF has been done by Rolf Huisman. He concluded: "But in the IWF a positive change in the concept seems to have taken place. This is shown by its attempts always to document the activities in their social context (...). Such efforts indicate that in the future a culturally holistic film documentation will make its way." (1978: 500)

⁵ e.g. Toba-Batak, Sumatra, Secondary Burial (E 2804)

⁶ e.g. Bali, double-Ikat (E 2416, E 2417, E 2418, E 2419)

⁷ e.g. Iatmul, Middle Sepik, New Guinea, Initiation (E 2812, E 2813, E 2814)

⁸ e.g. Central Europe, Tyrol — Supper at a farmer's family (Franz Simon/camera: Horst Wittmann/sound-engineering: Werner Eberhardt: filmwork carried out in 1966) (E 1958); South-East Europe, Romania — Sunday-mourning (Mourning on Sundays) in Desa (Franz Simon/A. Amzulescu/camera: Horst Wittmann: filmwork carried out in 1968) (E 1966)

⁹ This filmwork was connected with a great international research project, carried out by German scientists and funded by the German Scientific Association. The initiator of the project has been Gerd Koch, an ethnologist from Berlin. Only part of the Eipo material had been filmed by the IWF team (Franz Simon/Manfred Krüger). Large amounts were filmed by the scientists themselves and are therefore classified as external material.

¹⁰ This project had been initiated by the ethnomusicologist Arthur Simon from Berlin and had been carried out in collaboration with a team from the IWF (Franz Simon/Manfred Krüger)

¹¹ This project was directed by Sonja Balbach, ethnologist from Frankfurt in collaboration with the IWF team (Franz Simon/Manfred Krüger)

¹² This project was proposed by the Institute for Scientific Film and the Institute of Folklore of the University of Göttingen and has been funded by the state of Lower-Saxony. Film topics had been specified by the Commission for Folklore of Lower-Saxony and the work is carried out in collaboration with many colleagues of the IWF by Edmund Ballhaus, who has been employed especially for this purpose

¹³ E 1958, filmwork carried out in 1966

¹⁴ E 2416, E 2417, E 2418, E 2419, Camera: Peter Horner, edited by Dore Kleindienst-Andrée

¹⁵ E 2812, E 2813, E 2814, Edited by Dore Kleindienst-Andrée

¹⁶ D 1322, Camera: Peter Fuchs, edited by Dore Kleindienst-Andrée. Film work carried out in 1976; published in 1979

¹⁷ C 1608, Camera: Manfred Krüger. Film work carried out in 1984; published in 1986

¹⁸ C 1664, Camera: Manfred Krüger. Film work carried out in 1986; published in 1987

¹⁹ D 1678, Camera: Tobias Wendl, edited by Beate Engelbrecht. Film work carried out in 1986; published 1988

²⁰ Concerning the ethnological film in Germany the following book will be published in the nearer future: Peter Fuchs (Ed.) 1988

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Beate Engelbrecht

ETNOLOŠKO FILMANJE V INŠTITUTU ZA ZNANSTVENI FILM V GÖTTINGENU (IWF)

Inštitut za znanstveni film v Göttingenu (IWF) je najpomembnejši producent etnoloških filmov v Zah. Nemčiji. Njegova zgodovina odseva tako razvoj etnologije, kot tudi rastoč pomen etnološkega filma pri znanstvenem preučevanju in komunikaciji.

Začetki inštituta segajo v čas pred II. svetovno vojno. Današnja organizacijsko obliko in samostojnost pa je IWF dobil leta 1956. Gotthard Wolf, nekdanji direktor IWF je o njegovi vlogi zapisal: »Glavna naloga IWF je pospeševati uporabo filma v znanosti na vse možne načine. K temu sodi proizvodnja filmov, pisanje o njih in distribucija filmov. Inštitut mora podpirati raziskovalne institucije pri njihovem znanstvenem delu z zagotavljanjem tehnične pomoči pri izdelavi filmov.«

Danes IWF zaposluje 100 uslužbencev. Znanstveni filmi pokrivajo vsa glavna področja znanosti, kot npr. biologijo, medicino, tehnologijo in humanistične znanosti (etnologijo, arheologijo, zgodovino in geografijo). V zadnjem času je IWF deležen številnih kritiki s strani etnologov. Glavni očitke je naperjen proti pretežno naravoslovno usmerjeni metodologiji snemanja znanstvenih filmov, ki je bila sprejeta v petdesetih letih. Na IWF se zavedajo, da obstaja več načinov izdelovanja etnoloških filmov. Toda v skladu s statutom je IWF predvsem producent znanstvenih filmov za univerzitetno poučevanje in za znanstveno dokumentacijo. Znotraj tega okvira imajo etnologi različnih teoretskih in tematskih opredelitev vso možnost, da filme prilagodijo svoji raziskavi.

IMAGE ET COMMENTAIRE EN ANTHROPOLOGIE FILMIQUE

CLAUDINE DE FRANCE*

La question du commentaire des films ethnographiques, et plus généralement des films documentaires, préoccupe à juste titre la plupart des anthropologues cinéastes ainsi que bien des spectateurs de ce genre de films. Nombreux sont, en effet, les réalisateurs que s'interrogent sur le caractère nécessaire ou non du commentaire, sur sa fonction et sur sa forme, ses proportions au sein du film et, d'une manière plus générale, sur les rapports de diverses sortes qu'il entretient avec l'image.

Ce que je me propose d'exposer ici même concerne une recherche en cours sur ce thème, menée, sous ma direction, par l'équipe de la Formation de Recherches Cinématographiques (Université de Paris X-Nanterre), et dont je présenterai quelques résultats d'ordre essentiellement théorique. Un ouvrage est en préparation, qui se composera d'un texte et de vidéocassettes comprenant des extraits de films démonstratifs, certains déjà existants, d'autres réalisés par l'équipe dans le cadre de cette recherche.

PROBLEMES DE STRUCTURE

Image et commentaire

Les rapports entre image et commentaire ne sont, par bien des côtés, qu'une réplique des rapports entre le geste et la parole, l'action et la réflexion et, à ce titre, ils se situent au coeur des problèmes du développement des processus cognitifs et de l'acquisition du langage chez l'individu, comme de l'évolution de la culture au sein de l'humanité. Je ne puis que renvoyer aux travaux de Jean Piaget dans le premier cas (*La Psychologie de l'intelligence*), à ceux d'André Leroi-Gourhan dans le second (*Le Geste et la parole*).

La cinématographie ayant d'abord été muette, puisque le registre d'expression sonore était au départ refusé à l'image animée, on serait tenté d'établir un parallèle facile entre l'antériorité de l'image sur le commentaire au sein de l'évolution du film documentaire, et l'antériorité de l'action — du moins sensorimotrice — sur le langage au sein du développement psycho-cognitif de l'individu. Ce serait ne tenir aucun compte du fait selon lequel le cinéma est l'outil d'expression d'individus possesseurs du langage et chez lesquels, par conséquent, tout acte figuratif peut s'accompagner à chaque instant de la parole — fut-elle intériorisée dans ce que l'on appelle le « langage intérieur » — ou de l'écriture, chez les peuples de culture écrite tout au moins. Or, n'oublions pas que sur le plan

* CLAUDINE DE FRANCE

Université de Paris X Nanterre, 200 Avenue de la République 92001 Nanterre Cedex, France

de l'évolution des techniques d'expression, le cinéma fut précisément inventé par des peuples de culture écrite. Dès l'invention du cinéma existait donc la possibilité d'accompagner l'image animée d'une trace écrite de la parole, sous forme de «cartons», le registre verbal n'étant pas fermé comme il l'est chez l'enfant la toute première année de son existence.

Autrement dit, dès les débuts du cinéma, le commentaire est techniquement possible. Seule est impossible, jusqu'en 1930, l'ouverture du registre oral, c'est-à-dire la forme parlée du commentaire, intégrée à l'image. Car existent dès l'origine des formes externes à l'image, ou hors-film, les unes sous l'aspect de traces écrites, telles que livres, articles, plaquettes, catalogues, etc.; les autres orales, telles que la projection d'images accompagnées d'une conférence semi-improvisée dont le discours ne laisse pas de trace, et dont on trouve encore de nos jours un exemple dans les conférences d'explorateurs paraethnologues de «Connaissance du monde» en France.

Cette possibilité technique permanente d'un commentaire étant établie, il reste à savoir si elle s'est accompagnée, dès le début, d'une concrétisation. La réponse est affirmative. Elle s'exprime en quelque sorte par une loi de coexistence de l'image et du commentaire: il n'y a jamais d'image — ou de film achevé — sans commentaire, sous quelque forme que ce soit. Et même lorsqu'un film semble dénué de tout commentaire oral ou écrit, existe en dernier recours le titre du film, forme ponctuelle et incontournable du commentaire, qui accompagne globalement l'ensemble des images. C'est pourquoi l'on peut parler à son propos de *commentaire macro-thématique* (wholistic theme commentary). Un film ne peut en effet se passer de titre. Même les tout premiers films Lumière en étaient pourvus: d'abord sur un catalogue séparé, puis intégrés au film sous forme de génériques (exemple: *L'Arrivée du train en gare de la Ciotat*). Plus proche de nous, je citerai l'exemple de *Children playing under the rain* de Timothy Asch (1974), film tourné chez les Yanomami, dont le commentaire se limite précisément au titre. Le titre du film remplit deux fonctions essentielles:

- la première est distinctive et de caractère négatif: elle permet en effet de distinguer un film de tous les autres (il s'agit d'une fonction proprement structurale);
- la seconde fonction est qualificative et de caractère positif; elle permet d'identifier globalement l'action ou le thème concernés par les images du film: ce que ces dernières montrent, suggèrent ou cachent.

Ces deux fonctions minimales du titre laissent entrevoir qu'à la possibilité technique du commentaire s'associe une nécessité fonctionnelle.

Si la présence d'un commentaire est inévitable — même réduite au titre — tout n'est plus qu'une question de rapports d'équilibre ou, plus généralement, de coordination entre l'image et le commentaire, entre leurs fonctions d'information et de présentation respectives. Mais qu'existe-t-il de commun entre l'image et le commentaire, sur le plan de leurs fonctions d'information et de présentation, qui permette de les comparer et de dégager des rapports d'équilibre entre ces deux registres, en d'autres termes, de dégager une économie de leurs relations?

Parmi toutes les fonctions possibles de l'image et du commentaire, deux peuvent au moins être retenues, qui rendent ces deux registres comparables: ce sont les fonctions très générales de mémorisation et de sollicitation. J'en donnerai un bref aperçu.

Selon que l'image et/ou le commentaire cherchent avant tout à tenir lieu, pour le spectateur, de «mémoire extériorisée» (pour reprendre l'expression de Leroi-Gourhan) ou à capter et retenir l'attention de ce même spectateur, est privilégiée la fonction de mémorisation ou celle de sollicitation. Mais du même coup se développent, sur les plans visuel et verbal, deux stratégies de présentation de l'information, c'est-à-dire deux mises en scène opposées.

La mise en scène de la mémorisation procède essentiellement par accumulation d'informations en vue de leur stockage. Tendant à constituer un véritable grenier d'images et de paroles, elle tire un parti extrême de la loi d'encombrement selon laquelle, dans toute forme de présentation, «montrer une chose, c'est en montrer une autre simultanément» (je renvoie sur ce point à mes propres travaux in *Cinéma et anthropologie*). De plus, elle vise plus ou moins explicitement un spectateur analyste du film, en mesure de l'examiner indéfiniment grâce à des projections répétées. Appliquée au commentaire — et c'est ce qui nous intéresse directement — cette stratégie de mémorisation a pour résultat, sous sa forme la plus excessive, un flux quasi ininterrompu de paroles, ou de textes (sous-titres, cartons, etc.), bref, une surabondance verbale qui porte soit sur ce qui est montré sur l'image, soit sur ce qui est indirectement exprimé par cette dernière. C'est ce qu'illustrent des films désormais classiques tels que *Sous les masques noirs* de Marcel Griaule (1938) filmé chez les Dogon, *Bougainville* de Patrick O'Reilly (1934—1953) tourné aux Iles Salomon; ou encore *Initiation à la danse des possédés* de Jean Rouch (1948), enregistré chez les Songhay-Zarma du Niger.

La mise en scène de la sollicitation, en revanche, procède avant tout à un renforcement de la sélection de l'information en vue de séduire le spectateur éphémère d'une unique projection. Elle tire grand parti de la loi d'exclusion propre à toute forme de présentation selon laquelle «montrer une chose, c'est en cacher une autre simultanément» (pour ce qui est de cette loi mise en scène, je renvoie aux travaux de Xavier de France, *Éléments de scénographie du cinéma*). Appliquée au commentaire, cette stratégie de la sollicitation a pour résultat un désencombrement verbal, le commentaire étant réduit parfois au strict minimum, de manière à éviter les effets de redondance descriptive ou la surcharge d'expression symbolique. En fournit un exemple le film de Jean Rouch *Un lion nommé l'Américain* (Mali, 1968) qui fait suite à *La Chasse au lion à l'arc*, et dont le commentaire est tout à l'opposé par son économie verbale.

Indépendamment de ses fonctions très générales de mémorisation et de sollicitation, le commentaire de films ethnographiques remplit des fonctions cognitives plus spécifiques, de caractère méthodologique, qui le mettent également en situation de comparaison avec l'image. En effet, tout comme l'image, et en la concurrençant, le commentaire constate et valorise comportements ou représentations mentales; dans le prolongement de ce que montre, suggère ou cache l'image, et en la complétant, il explicite ou problématise

fonctions, valeurs, structures et significations. Je ne m'étendrai pas davantage sur ce point, qui mériterait de trop longs développements. Je souhaiterais avant tout mettre l'accent sur ce qui rend le commentaire comparable à l'image sur le plan de la mise en scène du réel, autrement dit sur l'aspect «scénique» du commentaire, et qui permet de considérer que son étude relève, tout comme celle de l'image, des sciences de la présentation. Pour ce faire, une définition plus précise du commentaire est indispensable.

Je ne donnerai pas de définition stricte du commentaire, qui risquerait de nous enfermer dans un impasse. Je préfère indiquer certaines fonctions de relation qui lui sont propres. Le commentaire assure une double fonction de relation, parce que se déployant toujours simultanément sur deux axes :

- une première relation, manifeste et consciente, d'application à l'action concernée par le film, sur laquelle il exerce une réflexion quelconque par un processus d'intériorisation de cette même action qui tient lieu de matière abstraite;
- une seconde relation, sous-jacente et plus ou moins consciente, de coopération entre le commentateur et le spectateur, ce dernier jouant, sans même le savoir, le rôle de contrecommentateur potentiel, c'est-à-dire d'inquisiteur escompté par le réalisateur du film. La coopération consiste en ce que le commentaire du film anticipe, par un processus d'extériorisation de la réflexion, les éventuelles interrogations du spectateur (contre-commentateur) relatives à l'action ou aux images de l'action : à ce qu'elles montrent, cachent ou suggèrent.

Du fait de cette double relation, le commentaire est à tout instant l'amorce d'un dialogue plus ou moins avoué entre plusieurs commentateurs, l'un réel (émanant du film), les autres virtuels (émanant des spectateurs). Dans ce contexte, le titre du film, commentaire global, apparaît comme une coopération minimale entre le réalisateur et le spectateur, dont il faut dissiper les premiers doutes quant au contenu d'ensemble.

Ainsi, dans l'évaluation d'un commentaire doivent toujours être pris en compte deux types de relations simultanées :

- l'une entre le commentateur (qui commente?) et la «matière» de sa réflexion, c'est-à-dire l'action concernée par l'image (le quoi commenté);
- l'autre entre le commentateur et son spectateur contre-commentateur potentiel (pour qui commenter?) dont il anticipe les interrogations.

Le commentateur est de ce fait soumis à une double contrainte : satisfaire un destinataire dont les préoccupations sont variables, et éclairer une action elle-même médiatisée par l'image. Cette médiation est d'une grande importance. En effet, la matière sur laquelle le commentateur exerce sa réflexion — l'action — est elle-même mise en scène par l'image. Le commentateur se trouve donc dès l'origine en situation de concurrence avec l'image, et spontanément conduit à développer une mise en scène propre de l'action, que je qualifierai de *supra mise en scène* verbale. Celle-ci tend à se superposer à la mise en scène de l'image, dont elle révèle les ambivalences, élimine ou accentue les ambiguïtés, en dissipant les incertitudes du spectateur ou en suscitant ses interrogations.

Les deux mises en scène, iconique et verbale, entrent dans des relations fonctionnelles de coordination informative allant de la concurrence pure et simple, autrement dit de la redondance, à la complémentarité, selon que le commentaire se propose d'être une présentation verbale du sensible en évoquant par la parole ce que montre, masque ou exclut du champ filmique l'image (montrable non montré); ou qu'il s'applique au non sensible qu'exprime ou suggère l'image sans pouvoir le montrer (non montrable).

C'est la raison pour laquelle les fonctions de présentation du commentaire peuvent être étudiées à l'aide des catégories d'analyse de la mise en scène (ou catégories «scénographiques») élaborées en vue de l'étude de l'image. Il existe bien un terrain de comparaison entre ces deux grands registres de la présentation que sont l'image et le verbe qui l'accompagne. Tout comme l'image, mais par le biais de l'évocation, le commentaire montre, cache, souligne, estompe, suggère, etc.

La double mise en scène de l'image et du commentaire est d'autant plus frappante que le commentaire se veut descriptif. On est alors en présence d'une double description de l'action, la mise en scène de l'image et celle, parallèle, du commentaire, rivalisant pour le partage d'un même territoire informatif. C'est ce que met bien en évidence l'étude de films ethnographiques tels que *Initiation à la danse des possédés*, *Bougainville* ou *La Chasse au lion à l'arc*. Mais, ainsi que j'ai tenté de le démontrer à diverses reprises, même dans les cas les plus flagrants de double description iconique et verbale, la coïncidence informative entre les deux registres de présentation n'est jamais absolue, la mise en scène de l'image et celle du commentaire se servant mutuellement de tremplin (je renvoie dans ce cas précis, à mon article «Le Destinataire du rite et sa mise en scène dans le film ethnographique»).

Par ailleurs l'image, inépuisable, déborde toujours le commentaire sur le plan de la mise en scène, par ce qu'elle estompe (objets au second plan, à l'arrière-plan, dans la pénombre ou dans le flou), et dont ne peut venir à bout le commentaire. De son côté, le commentaire déborde l'image par ce qu'il suggère et que ne montre pas l'image, en raison du caractère invisible ou abstrait de ce qui est suggéré par la parole, et dont l'exemple le plus simple est l'identification des personnes, humaines ou divines. C'est ce dont témoignent notamment la plupart des commentaires de rituels (voir à ce propos *Bougainville*).

Le film ethnographique offre une vaste gamme de mises en scène possibles de commentaires et constitue une sorte de microcosme diachronique des rapports entre l'image et le commentaire. Toutefois, la tendance informative et réaliste prédominant en cinéma ethnographique, certaines mises en scène plus expérimentales lui sont interdites, en vertu de la loi de présentation suivante: en cinéma ethnographique le commentaire est audible ou n'est pas. De ce fait, le commentaire est le seul registre du film nécessairement souligné.

Le commentaire, registre autonome

Bien que son existence même dépende de celle de l'image, le commentaire peut être étudié pour lui-même, car il constitue un registre

autonome. En effet; à diverses mises en scène de l'image peut correspondre un même commentaire, et inversement, à une même mise en scène de l'image peuvent correspondre de multiples commentaires, comme le prouvent maints exemples. Je citerai le cas, désormais classique, du film de Chris Marker *Lettre de Sibérie* (1958) dont l'une des séquences propose plusieurs commentaires successifs, d'orientations idéologiques différentes, pour la même succession d'images montrant une scène de rue d'une ville sibérienne. Témoigne également de l'autonomie du commentaire le fait que son destinataire ne correspond pas nécessairement à celui de l'image et du film tout entier. Tel est notamment le cas lorsque le commentaire émane de l'une des personnes filmées et qu'il porte immédiatement sur l'action filmée et non sur l'image. Le commentaire prendra par exemple la forme d'un entretien enregistré au magnétophone au cours d'une libre conversation antérieure au tournage, utilisé par la suite comme commentaire post-synchronisé des images. C'est ce qu'illustre *Un indien ordinaire* d'Yvonne et Michel Lefebvre (1971), consacré aux problèmes quotidiens d'un jeune couple de l'Assam.

Ainsi que je l'ai laissé entendre tout commentaire est le lieu d'expression d'une méthode d'investigation du réel (aspect méthodologique) et d'une mise en scène du réel (aspect scénique). Mais il est également le lieu d'exposition d'une action filmée qu'il décrit ou narre, et le témoin d'une participation ou d'une absence de participation du commentateur à cette action. Aussi peut-on parler d'un aspect «scénarique» du commentaire (relatif au scénario). Ces trois aspects (méthodologique, scénique et scénarique) ont des effets tantôt convergents, tantôt divergents. Les possibilités de divergence légitiment précisément la dissociation de ces trois aspects au plan de l'analyse. C'est ainsi que l'auteur du commentaire peut apparaître sur la scène du montré (présence «scénique» sur l'image), même s'il s'agit d'une brève apparition, sans être pour autant agent participant de l'action filmée (non participation «scénarique»). Un exemple: Marcel Griaule, auteur principal du commentaire de *Sous les masques noirs*, apparaît sur l'image, bien que n'étant pas agent de l'action filmée, dont les protagonistes sont les Dogon. On observe également des cas de divergence entre l'aspect méthodologique et l'aspect scénique du commentaire lorsque, par exemple, le commentaire présenté au spectateur revêt les apparences d'un monologue de la personne filmée (scénique) alors qu'il a été obtenu au cours d'un entretien semi-directif avec le cinéaste (méthodologique). Tel est le cas du commentaire de l'héroïne de *Salamou 1969* (Nicole Echard) consacré aux travaux hebdomadaires d'une jeune potière haoussa du Niger.

PROBLEMES D'EVOLUTION

Evolution du commentaire et contraintes instrumentales

Si, abandonnant provisoirement les questions de structure, on aborde celles de l'évolution du commentaire et de ses tendances, on constate que les contraintes de l'instrumentation jouent un rôle considérable dans cette évolution. On ne peut en effet dresser une typologie des

commentaires, à partir de la mise en évidence de leurs traits dominants, sans tenir compte de critères d'ordre technologique marquant leur appartenance à un stade particulier de l'instrumentation audiovisuelle. Trois stades doivent être retenus: l'enregistrement muet; l'image post-synchronisée; l'image et le son synchrones. Se manifestent ainsi clairement les raisons pour lesquelles certains films ont joué un rôle considérable d'innovation dans l'histoire du cinéma documentaire — voire du cinéma en général — par la manière originale dont ils ont exploité, quant au rapport entre l'image et le commentaire, une découverte technologique (par exemple l'enregistrement synchrone dans *Chronique d'un été* de Jean Rouch et Edgar Morin, 1961) ou une technique devenue classique (par exemple l'enregistrement différé et la post-synchronisation du son dans *Moi, un noir* de Jean Rouch, 1957).

Si l'on examine de près l'évolution du film ethnographique et du documentaire de reportage, ce dernier antérieurement puis postérieurement à la naissance de la télévision, on constate que l'image et le commentaire évoluent de pair, se transformant ensemble, tous deux soumis aux contraintes et aux possibilités techniques de l'instrumentation audiovisuelle. Toutefois les progrès de l'instrumentation ayant essentiellement affecté les techniques d'enregistrement visuelles et sonores, l'évolution du commentaire demeure en dernière analyse indirectement dépendante de celle de l'image. C'est ce dont témoignent par exemple les bouleversements apportés, au début des années 1960, par l'introduction de l'enregistrement synchrone de l'image et du son: les personnes filmées jusque là muettes, comme dans *Bougainville*, ou parlant en différé devant l'image d'elles-mêmes, comme dans *Moi, un noir*, ont pu s'exprimer simultanément sur l'image par le geste et la parole. De là est venue la transformation progressive du commentaire, lequel, d'extérieur à la scène d'action des personnes filmées et différé, s'est mué en commentaire immédiat émanant des personnes filmées, interne à la scène de l'action.

On pourrait se demander si les effets qu'exerce indirectement l'instrumentation sur la mise en scène du commentaire affectent également sa fonction informative ou cognitive. Il semble que la réponse soit positive, bien que l'influence de l'instrumentation sur la fonction cognitive du commentaire soit à bien des égards plus différée, indirecte et diffuse que celle qu'elle exerce sur sa mise en scène. Quoi qu'il en soit, on observe, lorsqu'est introduite une innovation technique, que l'ouverture de certains registres de la présentation (par exemple la parole) à des participants du film qui en étaient jusque là privés (par exemple les personnes filmées) étend par transfert l'ensemble des fonctions de commentateur (constater, expliquer, évaluer, former, etc.) à d'autres participants. Plus intéressant encore: au-delà du simple transfert de fonctions — ou en raison même de ce transfert — s'observe parfois, à la faveur d'un bouleversement technique, l'apparition de nouvelles fonctions méthodologiques du commentaire. C'est ainsi que s'est progressivement développée, dans les années 60—70, la fonction «problématique» du commentaire, consistant à formuler questions et hypothèses. Cette nouvelle fonction s'est développée sous la double impulsion scénique intermédiaire:

— d'un transfert du rôle de commentateur, du cinéaste (le «montreur») aux personnes filmées (les «êtres montrés»);

— d'un passage de la forme monologuée à la forme dialoguée. C'est ce qu'illustre avec éclat *Chronique d'un été*.

Une loi d'évolution du commentaire peut être déjà formulée, qui s'apparente par bien des côtés à la loi de récapitulation des stades chez l'enfant, découverte par Jean Piaget au cours de ses travaux en psychologie du développement cognitif, ainsi qu'aux processus de remaniement de l'ensemble des moyens d'expression de l'humanité lorsqu'interviennent des bouleversements technologiques, processus mis en évidence par André Leroi-Gourhan dans *Le geste et la parole*.

Concernant une transformation des structures de la présentation, dont la présentation filmique n'est qu'un cas particulier, cette loi pourrait être qualifiée de «régression provisoire et de redistribution des registres de la présentation». En effet, lorsque s'ouvre, grâce à un progrès de l'instrumentation, un nouveau registre de la présentation, se crée tout d'abord un déséquilibre au sein de la structure des registres jusque là disponibles, le nouveau venu tendant à s'imposer et à dominer l'expression, cependant que les anciens registres sont provisoirement inhibés. Puis s'instaure progressivement un nouvel équilibre: les anciens registres réapparaissent aux côtés du nouveau et les rôles se redistribuent de manière souple et variable entre chacun d'eux. La présentation tend alors à devenir polymorphe.

Mais il aura fallu, pendant que s'opérait l'assimilation du nouveau registre, réapprendre l'usage de chaque registre sous des formes nouvelles.

Ce mécanisme a pu être observé à propos du commentaire de film chaque fois que se transformait brusquement l'instrumentation (passage du muet au post-synchronisé; du post-synchronisé au synchrone). C'est ainsi que dans les toutes dernières années de l'enregistrement sonore post-synchronisé en cinéma documentaire (années 1950), le commentaire revêt des formes extrêmement variées et sophistiquées, par exemple dans les films français de Georges Franju, Chris Marker, Alain Resnais, Agnès Varda. Or, l'apparition en 1960 de l'enregistrement sonore synchrone va provisoirement refouler ces formes complexes de commentaire extérieur et savant, au profit d'un commentaire spontané, émanant des personnes filmées elles-mêmes, et le plus souvent recueilli au cours d'entretiens filmés (années 1960 et début des années 1970). Mais progressivement réapparaîtront les formes plus anciennes de commentaire au sein de combinaisons nouvelles, de plus en plus savantes, entre tous les registres, anciens et nouveaux, rappelant ainsi la situation polymorphe des dernières années de l'enregistrement post-synchronisé.

Un nouvel équilibre s'est créé entre les registres, dont les films documentaires des années 1970—80 sont l'illustration. Je citerai en exemple deux films récents: *Les Chemins de la soie* de Marc-Henri Piault (1988), consacré à l'évocation ethno-historique des manufactures de production de la soie dans les Cévennes, et *Classified people* de Yolande Zauberman (1987), traitant de l'apartheid en Afrique du Sud.

Tendances

Pour ce qui est des tendances les plus remarquables de l'évolution du commentaire, elles peuvent être envisagées sous le triple aspect du méthodologique, du scénique et du scénarique. Dans l'attente d'une plus vaste synthèse, qui démêle les rapports d'implication existant entre ces trois aspects du commentaire, j'esquisserai brièvement quelques filiations.

Sur le plan méthodologique, le commentaire évolue *grosso modo* de la manière suivante: le commentateur est à l'origine observateur, individuel, non participatif; son commentaire est monographique, prémédité, affirmatif; il porte sur le contenu observé, observable ou explicable de l'image et s'adresse essentiellement au spectateur du film. Tel est le cas entre 1930 et 1960. En raison des innovations techniques successives, le commentateur deviendra progressivement un être observé ou un observateur participatif, impliqué dans une interaction stimulatrice, engagé en coulisse ou sur scène par l'interview, la conversation, la discussion, etc. Son commentaire deviendra à son tour semi-improvisé, voire totalement improvisé, souvent problématique (interrogatif et dubitatif) et comparatif. Il portera non seulement sur le contenu montré ou exprimé par les images, mais aussi sur la relation d'observation avec les êtres filmés, c'est-à-dire sur la méthode employée, l'enquêteur-cinéaste lui-même se mettant en question.

Sur le plan scénique, le trait peut-être le plus significatif est le cumul progressif des rôles du commentateur. A l'origine, il est simple auteur ou co-auteur caché du commentaire (années 1930); puis il est aussi commentateur-parleur, car il prête sa voix au commentaire, parfois même montreur-filmeur, c'est-à-dire réalisateur et caméraman (années 1950); enfin il est montré sur l'image par intermittence ou en permanence (années 1960—70—80). Autrement dit le commentateur, à l'origine extérieur à la scène centrale du film (voix off), s'y intègre peu à peu sous une forme ou sous une autre. Son commentaire d'abord monologué, adopte de plus en plus le ton de l'improvisation, ou s'insère dans un dialogue filmé. C'est dire que de différé (antérieur ou postérieur à l'action filmée) il devient dans bien des cas immédiat (contemporain de l'action filmée), et s'adressant aux autres personnes filmées tout autant qu'au spectateur.

Sur le plan scénarique enfin, ou plan de l'exposition de l'action filmée par le commentaire et de l'implication du commentateur dans cette action, un trait d'évolution ressort nettement: le renversement de la dominante descriptive, impersonnelle, anonyme au profit de la dominante narrative, personnelle. Le commentateur, de savant devient conteur: Jean Rouch a montré la voie en ce domaine.

D'une manière générale, si l'on tient compte des trois aspects méthodologique, scénique et scénarique du commentaire, son évolution exprime la tendance, chez l'auteur du film, à déléguer progressivement ses pouvoirs d'information, tels que les véhicule la parole, aux êtres qu'il observe et montre. Et lorsqu'il ne se dépossède pas du commentaire, en tant que parleur, il sacrifie à la fonction rhétorique de sollicitation en usant de la narration. Enfin, acceptant d'être confronté à d'autres commentateurs que lui au sein du même film, l'auteur du film abandonne l'extériorité scénique, anonyme et con-

fortable du commentateur classique en voix off, et s'expose de plus en plus sur la scène du montré, dévoilant les coulisses de son observation, dont il relativise ainsi les résultats.

Il semble que se dessine une nouvelle étape dans l'évolution du commentaire, marquée sur le plan méthodologique par une délégation des pouvoirs informatifs du commentateur, non plus seulement aux personnes filmées, mais également au spectateur, qu'il soit ou non analyste de l'image. Depuis le début des années 1980, en effet, des innovations techniques dues à l'association de l'informatique et de la vidéographie (couplage de l'ordinateur et des dispositifs de montage) ont été introduites au sein, non plus des instruments d'enregistrement, mais des instruments de montage des images. Ainsi deviendrait-il possible de dissocier totalement, non seulement les divers registres de la présentation concernés par un film (images, paroles, musique, sons non verbaux, etc.), mais aussi les divers éléments propres à chaque registre (fragments de plan, plans, séquences; gestes, opérations, phases de l'action filmée) et de les multiplier à l'infini. Il en résulterait la possibilité pour chaque spectateur de concevoir des commentaires *optionnels a posteriori*, fondés sur la libre association de multiples commentaires à de multiples images, et sur la conservation de ces variantes. Serait par là même offerte la possibilité de confronter indéfiniment, à partir de l'observation différée, commentaires entre eux, images entre elles, commentaires et images librement associés.

Sans doute peut-on voir dans cette évolution l'expression d'une attitude épistémique relativiste plus ou moins consciente. De ce point de vue l'évolution du commentaire ne ferait que s'inscrire dans un courant plus général de la mentalité scientifique contemporaine.

Claudine de France

SLIKA IN KOMENTAR V VIZUALNI ANTROPOLOGIJI

Z vprašanjem komentarja k etnološkim filmom in dokumentarnim filmom nasploh se ukvarjajo vizualni antropologi in gledalci tega žanra. Številni ustvarjalci se sprašujejo, ali je komentar sploh potreben, kakšni naj bodo njegov namen, oblika in obseg in razmišljajo o različnih razmerjih med komentarjem in sliko.

V prispevku govorim o raziskavi tega problema, ki jo pod mojim vodstvom opravljamo s skupino za kinematografske raziskave pri Univerzi Paris X v Nanterre. Predstaviti želim nekaj teoretičnih izsledkov. Pripravljamo tudi knjigo s kaseto, na kateri bodo posneti poučni primeri že obstoječih dokumentarnih filmov, nekatere pa bomo posneli tudi sami v okviru naše raziskave.

ETHNOGRAPHIC FILMS IN THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA CINEMATOGRAPHICA

PETER FUCHS*

The *ENCYCLOPAEDIA CINEMATOGRAPHICA* (EC) is a scientific encyclopaedia in the form of 16 mm films and videos. The EC was founded in 1952 by Gotthard Wolf in collaboration with Konrad Lorenz and other comparative ethologists. These facts are reflected in the EC's brief, which Wolf expressed in the following way: "The task of the scientific film encyclopaedia is the description and setting down in permanent form of the types of behaviour of animals, plants, materials and also humans, in other words the production of non-stationary illustrations designed to promote the physiology of motion or ethological research in their broadest possible sense" (Wolf 1967: 23). At the present time the EC covers the disciplines of Biology (Zoology, Botany, Human Ethology, Physiology, Microbiology), Anthropology (Ethnology) and Technical Sciences (including the History of Technology). The basic element of the EC is the EC film unit, whose contents comprise one theme, one single phenomenon. These film units in the EC are arranged according to both a vertical and a horizontal principle. In Anthropology it is the ethnic groups (and local groups) that represent the vertical principle, while the horizontal principle is made up of the activities. The encyclopaedia scheme means that comparisons can be made between a number of different ethnic groups and how they handle the same activity, or on the other hand a study can be made of all the activities filmed within one single ethnic group. The ultimate objective of the EC is to record all activities from all cultures that lend themselves to film documentation. It is probable that this objective will never be reached in its entirety. But it would be sufficient to have a representative sample of world cultures one day.

It has become clear that the concept of the monothematic EC unit fits in well with the intentions of many ethnographers. This is proved by the large number of films that are offered to the EC for publication every year. Not many ethnographers are ambitious enough to produce high-prestige films for showing to a broad public. Most use film as a medium for visual documentation as part of a research project. Ethnographers usually select individual, specific themes for shooting. The research methods of modern Ethnography require the scientist to deal with only a small number of subjects, and to make a large number of detailed shots of these.

* PETER FUCHS

Institut für Volkerkunde, University of Göttingen, Theaterplatz 15, D-3400 Göttingen, FR Germany

Such films mostly remain unknown to the scientific public. After the author has used them for his written publications, he may perhaps show them occasionally in a lecture, if he is lucky they may be accepted by an institute or a museum, but their usual fate is to moulder away in the ethnographer's own office cupboard. The EC gives research films of this sort the chance to be published and disseminated worldwide, provided of course they fulfill the requirements as to contents and form. Most EC films are composed of shots that ethnographers have made in the course of their field-work. The decisive criterion for the acceptance of a film by the EC is its scientific importance: the aesthetic quality of the shots is not taken into account. Where the content of a film is exceptional, even amateurish and technically inadequate shots are accepted. This does not however mean that the films in the EC are of a low technical and aesthetic level. The opposite is the case, and a large number of the EC films are up to the highest professional standards.

The EC is a collection of research films, of scientific ethnographic films, or, let us better say, of scientific ethnographic film documentations. Thus it must have clear criterions for this kind of films.

The main criterion is, that a scientific ethnographic film documentation must satisfy the following requirements: unity of place, time, group and action or event, together with strict obedience to the chronology of the event in the final version of the film. Artificial manipulation in either shooting or cutting is not permitted. A scientific film also rules out the use of staged scenes.

Unity of place and group means that all shots in the film have to be made at the same location and with the same group. Unity of action means that all takes were actually made in the course of one single event. The requirement of strict chronology in film sequences means that the sequence of events as they actually occurred must also be kept to the film. A scientific film documentation has to avoid the use of rapid cuts to build up excitement in the viewer, and must also avoid so-called "dynamic" camera work. A camera that is always in motion, or rapid jumps from take to take, considerably reduce the scientific worth of a film. There are quite a number of very popular ethnographic films whose scientific potential is for this reason extremely small.

A good scientific ethnographic film should not consist of a sequence of unconnected takes. There are films that are nothing better than "animated slides", because the author has not taken the trouble to learn the special "scientific language" of film. The essential feature of the "scientific language" of the ethnographic film is a complete capturing of the creative visual moments of an event. It is through these that the characteristic content of this event finds expression for the culture in question.

A scientific ethnographic film must also contain a written description of the cultural context in which the filmed event took place, together with precise details of how the shots were made. Film is a source whose importance and usefulness depends upon how thoroughly its method of production is described. Ethnographic films without any accompanying text are of little use to research, the formation of theories or as historical documents.

There is a controversial discussion on the "objectivity" and the "content of reality" of ethnographic films. Anthropologists have argued that it is nonsense to talk of film as an objective medium.

The picture in the frame does not show the whole of the event, but only that section of it that the ethnographer in charge of filming (or his cameraman) has decided to shoot. The cutting of the film brings into existence a new time dimension, which is not the same as the real time of the event. Colours and sounds can usually be only incompletely recorded by film, and smell is not recorded at all. The full significance of the event that has been filmed, the way the persons being filmed think and feel about the event and many other things are largely beyond the powers of visual reception.

One cannot therefore state that film gives an "objective" and "true" picture of reality (Schlesier 1972, Dauer 1980, Koloss 1983, Taureg 1983). To draw the conclusion from this that a film shot has nothing to do with reality whatsoever seems to me however to be too hasty. To achieve an approximation to reality with the help of film is a worthwhile and practical objective. Film is only limited in its scope, like all other scientific methods. It gives the ethnographer the opportunity to supplement and broaden his own powers of perception with its help. The essential feature of scientific ethnographic film documentation is the precise and systematic recording of events. Systematic means that the shooting is conducted in a logical and consistent manner, so that the final composite version after cutting produces a unitary whole out of the individual pieces of action that have been shot. The relationship of the individual parts to one another and their relationship in turn to the whole of the filmed event must be clearly recognizable. The action in a systematically shot film must therefore be provided with the fullest chronological details. A film of this sort is a help for the researcher, lending written ethnographical records (which it cannot of course replace) additional supplementary visual documentation.

The ethnographic monographs of today are the historical sources of tomorrow, and it is from this historical aspect that ethnographic films should be seen and preserved.

The organization of the EC is comparable to that of the editorial board of a scientific journal. The editor is assisted by two co-editors.

The working guidelines of the EC and the acceptance of films offered to it are decided by the Editorial Board composed of scientists from the disciplines represented in the EC. All persons whose films are accepted by the EC become members of it. The EC is international. It was founded in the Federal Republic of Germany, but institutions and scientists from other countries soon started to play a part. 215 anthropologists from 22 countries have collaborated with the EC to date. The great majority of films offered to the EC come from national film institutes that have themselves financed the films in question; it is however also possible for individuals to offer their films to the EC. The EC itself neither produces nor finances films. The EC's collection amounts to about 1,500 film units in the Anthropological Section. The General Archives of the EC are in Göttingen (in West Germany). EC archives (complete and

partial) can also be found in Austria, Brazil, Canada, France, Holland, Hungary, Japan, Portugal, Switzerland, Turkey and USA.

Apart from research, a wide variety of EC films are also used for university teaching purposes. The monothematic EC film unit, with its limitation of subject, is very suitable for the presentation of a particular problem in a university lecture. On average 4.000 loans of ethnographic EC films are made to universities per year. About 13.000 copies have been sold. Ethnographic museums also use EC films for their exhibitions more and more. For example the ethnographic museum in Osaka (Japan) possesses comprehensive archives of ethnographic EC films and uses for the most part EC films in its well known "Ethnographic Videothek". A new development is the use of EC films in so called "adapted technical projects" in the Third World. In this context EC films are used that deal with irrigation techniques, methods of catching fish etc., that is hoped can be transferred from one region, where they have for a long time been successfully used, to another: in other words, transfer of technology from one ethnic group to another. The EC film with its lengthy uninterrupted shots, its undramatic cutting sequences and its detailed presentation of one subject at a time is ideally suited to give an indigenous population a visual display of new technology and to arouse interest.

EC films can be bought and borrowed from all national EC archives. Access to them is however confined to noncommercial users. In cases where commercial film producers are interested in EC films, which is an increasingly common occurrence, these are asked to apply to the individual copyright holder.

As far as ethnographic films are concerned, it is not the case that a film unit's entry in the EC register implies a permanent position that cannot be modified or changed. On the contrary it is much to be desired, in the case of a single ethnic group, that the same themes should be shot a second time after a longer or shorter passage of time, for example in the course of a re-study. In this way a comparative study can be made of the extent and direction of cultural change. The EC supports all proposals of this kind. In this connection, it is also the case that old ethnographic films can be registered in the EC, particularly when they represent the very first film documents of the culture in question. The Bushmen and the Ainu have been for example the subjects of historical film documentation of this kind to be published in the EC.

Ethnomedical films occupy an increasingly important position in the EC. EC film units that document a certain illness or form of treatment in a precise and detailed manner, or which concentrate on the methods of treatment used by a particular medicineman, have proved to be of a great value in ethnomedicine.

The standard of scientific ethnographic film documentation has greatly risen in the recent years, a happy development that has however brought some unfortunate consequences with it. The success of certain ethnographers, whose films have received great acclaim at congresses, has discouraged many others from even thinking of making a film. Critical voices also warn against the damage that

can be done to scientific ethnographic film documentation through the placing of exaggerated hopes on the results achieved by film in fieldwork. The EC tries to correct the balance here by setting the scientific content of the film as the decisive criterion. There is room for many different approaches to cultural phenomena by the way of film, and the EC is one of these, no more and no less.

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Peter Fuchs

ETNOGRAFSKI FILMI V ENCYCLOPAEDIJI CINEMATOGRAFICI

Encyclopaedia Cinematographica (EC) je znanstvena enciklopedija v obliki 16 mm filmov in video posnetkov. Ustanovila sta jo Gotthard Wolf in Konrad Lorenz s sodelavci leta 1952.

Najprej je bila namenjena analizi pri fizioloških in etoloških raziskavah v najširšem smislu. Zdaj EC vključuje biološke, antropološke in tehnične discipline. Osnovni element EC je filmska enota, ki vsebuje eno temo, en posamičen pojav. Enote so urejene vertikalno, kar v etnologiji odgovarja etničnim skupinam, in horizontalno, kar odgovarja posameznim aktivnostim oziroma kulturnim elementom. Na ta način je mogoče primerjati iste aktivnosti, ki jih izvajajo različne etnične skupine ali vse aktivnosti znotraj ene etnične skupine. Glavni cilj EC je posneti vse aktivnosti vseh kultur, ki jih je mogoče posneti na film.

Sistem EC odgovarja številnim etnografom, ki nimajo želje, da bi izdelovali visoko ambiciozne filme za širšo publiko. Največkrat uporabljajo film kot sredstvo vizualne dokumentacije, kot del njihovega raziskovalnega projekta. Takim raziskovalnim filmom daje EC možnost, da postanejo dostopni tudi drugim po svetu.

Organizacijo EC lahko primerjamo z uredniškim odborom znanstvenega časopisa. Sestavljajo ga predstavniki vseh znanosti, ki so zastopane v EC. Čeprav je EC nemška ustanova, deluje mednarodno. 215 antropologov iz 22 držav je doslej sodelovalo z EC. Antropološka sekcija šteje okoli 1500 enot. Glavni arhiv je v Göttingenu, podružnice pa so v Avstriji, Braziliji, Franciji, Holandiji, Kanadi, na Madžarskem, na Japonskem, na Portugalskem, v Švici, Turčiji in v ZDA.

Filmi EC se precej uporabljajo pri univerzitetnem poučevanju. V ta namen je vsako leto izposojeno okoli 4.000 enot. 13.000 kopij je bilo že prodanih.

V zadnjih letih se je močno povečala kvaliteta raven znanstvenega filma. To je sprožilo dva skrajnostna pojava. Velik uspeh nekaterih etnografov z oddelčnimi dokumentarnimi filmi je številnim drugim vzel pogum, da bi sploh še razmišljali o filmu. Po drugi strani pa kritični glasovi svarijo, da se etnografskemu filmu lahko napravi medvedja usluga, če od njega pričakujemo prevelike koristi pri znanstvenem delu. EC skuša obe skrajnosti uravnotežiti na ta način, da za glavno merilo postavlja znanstveno vsebino filmske enote.

TRADITION AS ILLUSION

THE ANALYSIS OF A VIDEO RESEARCH PROJECT¹

NAŠKO KRIŽNAR*

In 1987 I went three times to the village of Ležaje, which lies in Bukovica, North Dalmatia, about 40 km from the Adriatic coast. My colleagues from Zagreb had invited me to join them in the production of an interesting video film about the last shepherds who practice transhumance in the region of Bukovica.² There is only one sheep-farmer left in Bukovica who still drives his flock to graze on the high pastures of Velebit for four months every year. Our video cameras followed his flock from its winter pastures on the coast all the way until its return from the highland pastures. However, it was my very first visit to Ležaje that is in fact responsible for this paper.

We first visited the village at the time of the Orthodox Christmas, that is, at the beginning of January 1987.

All the inhabitants are Orthodox. All the eleven families of the village bear the surname of Ležaja.

When we first came there, we wanted to document the winter pasturing of the flocks as well as Christmas customs, if it was possible.

Although our team was not big, four people altogether, it was clear that our presence disturbed the inhabitants and affected the spontaneity of their behaviour. How was this manifested?

I had known, from works on the subject, the framework of the celebration of the Orthodox Christmas, called "badnjak". Naturally, I expected to see a local, modified, form of the celebration; at worst, I was even prepared to believe that the custom was no longer practised. Verbal information about the subject surprised me. It namely turned out that the inhabitants of Ležaje are familiar with the rich form of traditional Christmas celebration, but our informants insisted that all that referred to the past and that nowadays no one believed in old customs any more. That is why I did not find it suspicious when the villagers in whose home we spent most of the time discreetly denied us their hospitality in the afternoon of the "badnji dan" (the day before Christmas).

We returned to Ležaje on the next day, which was Christmas. To my great astonishment, we discovered evidence of the celebration in several houses. The remains of the oak logs were smoldering on the hearths and the floor round the hearths were strewn with Christmas straw. Christmas candles and "žizak", a kind of eternal

* NAŠKO KRIŽNAR

Audiovisual Laboratory, Researching Center of Slovene Academy of Science and Art, Novi trg 5, 61000 Ljubljana, Yugoslavia

flame that is lit on Christmas Eve, were burning in the houses. We had obviously wrongly assessed the degree of the custom's preservation. I assumed we were faced with the following:

1. We had neither as a team nor as individuals acquired the confidence of the villagers necessary for us to be invited to join their family circles at Christmas.
2. This means that in their system of values the "badnjak" is still considered an important holiday that is not accessible to everyone, and therefore the moment of celebration requires proper intimacy.
3. In spite of our ouvert curiosity to find out how the celebration is carried out and what actually takes place, the informants themselves were not able to distinguish everyday events from ritual ones in order to call our attention to the latter. Whenever we asked them about a particular detail, they retorted it was nothing out of the ordinary and that all that was done, like the baking of bread, the slaughtering of sheep and goats, the making of fire on the hearths, was done in the same way as every other day. They ascribed all that might have indicated superstition to their ancestors, for they, so they said, did not practise it any longer.

In these events I could discern an authentic situation in which a traditional custom is steadfastly kept alive due to its ability to literally hide itself in the everyday way of life. To an outsider such a custom appears as sheer illusion.

I decided to study the phenomenon more thoroughly. On the one hand I was becoming interested in the factography of the Ležaje Christmas celebration, its anthropological truth and its comparison with the general model of the Orthodox Christmas, while on the other hand I wanted to find out if the video camera, too, would find the custom an illusion.

During 1987 I went to Bukovica three more times and built such a close relationship with the inhabitants that the family of Lazar. Ležaje invited me to join them in the celebration of Christmas in 1988. They also gave me permission to shoot a film of their family holiday.

Before I start describing my experience in shooting the film, let me briefly present the model of the Orthodox Christmas as it is described in yugoslave ethnological studies.

The ancient (Serbian) religion was based on animism. With the advent of Christianity, the old notions and holidays merely got new names, while the magical and the demonic lived on in folk customs. The strongest of all the elements is the cult of ancestors, which manifests itself most prominently on the "Badnji dan" (the day before Christmas). In a broader perspective, this is a cult of nature with traces of totemism.

Events essential for the traditional celebration of Christmas take places on the following days: *the "Badnji dan"* (6th January, the day before Christmas), *Christmas* (7th January), *God's day* (8th January) and *the "Božić mali"*, or "Little Christmas" (New Year's day according to the Orthodox calendar, coming 8 days after Christmas). The most important of these are the Badnji dan and Christmas.

The central event of the festivities is the "badnje večje", or Christmas Eve. Each household makes special preparations for it. The basic components of this celebration are Christmas bread, the "pečenica" (a roast pig or sheep), Christmas straw and the "badnjak" (an oak log). These ritual objects are full of symbolism which, however, is subject to different interpretations in different regions. Ethnologists are unanimous in that the "pečenica" appears in the symbolic role of the corn demon, the straw in the role of the corn spirit, in this way symbolizing the field with crops, and the "badnjak" in the role of the forest spirit of vegetation. The killing of the animal (pig, cock or sheep) that will become the "pečenica" is a substitute for killing the corn demon, in other words, a remnant of the custom of immolating a totemic animal, which is Indo-European legacy. All the activities related to the oak log, or the "badnjak", are remains of a special kind of tree veneration. Great attention is paid to the way the oak is cut down and then handled on the hearth. It is felled by a boy, a shepherd or the master of the house just before sunrise on the "Badnji dan". The log is brought into the house on Christmas Eve ("badnje večje"), when the family are gathered round the hearth. They treat it as a human being. It is hewn into a slightly anthropomorphous shape. They offer it food and drink. The master of the house strews straw on the floor round the hearth and everybody lies down on it. The children behave like chickens on this straw. Although the "pečenica" is ready, the family fast, for the invitation to dinner is extended only to the spirits of ancestors.

This practice is clearly pagan. Although Christmas is essentially a Christian holiday, this is manifested only in the rite of lighting the "žizak", the eternal flame burning in oil, and in the lighting of candles on Christmas morning. In both cases those who light the candles and the flame cross themselves in the Orthodox manner.

Another ancient component of the Christmas celebration is waiting for the first visitor, called "polaženik", and his arrival on Christmas day. This is actually a part that has been agreed upon beforehand and which obliges its performer to stick to the traditional magical scheme. The "polaženik" may be a person (man, woman or herdsman) or an animal (hen, sheep or ox).

The archaic custom of treating the "polaženik" to a feast now takes the form of Christmas dinner which is a festive way of stopping Christmas fasting, still in use everywhere. At dinner it is obligatory to eat Christmas bread and the meat of the "pečenica".

As I have mentioned, I was invited to spend Christmas with Lazar Ležaja's family, which is one of the eleven families who make up the village community. Lazar's wife is called Ljuba and his sons, who attend primary school, are Davor and Damir. The extended family includes Lazar's mother Milica. Lazar is a member of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. He used to work as a watchman in near argil factory, but for several years now he has been on compulsory leave because the factory closed down.

These details about Lazar are essential for understanding certain events that took place within the framework of the Christmas celebration and which were enacted by Lazar as master of the house.

As a communist and as a former watchman (the job considerably increased his reputation in the village), he felt obliged to properly present the local cultural curiosity, that is, the Christmas celebration, to our video team. To be honest, however — the custom acquired its status of curiosity only due to our persistent interest in it (which I have already mentioned).

My collaborator and I arrived at Ležaje on Tuesday, 5th Jan. 1988, that is, two days before Christmas. We were accommodated in the couple's bedroom, in the new concrete house. The family use three buildings to live in, and in all three of them, but mostly in the yard, preparations were under way for the Christmas celebration.

The oldest building is a smoke house, called "kuča vatrelica", which is a one room stone-built and stone-covered house with an open fire-place and no electricity. It is here that they always bake bread and gather to celebrate Christmas. The whole family used to live here once. The second building, in which Lazar's mother Milica now lives, is a bit younger and has a kitchen that also serves as a living-room with a bed in it. Until the concrete house was built, the whole family had lived in this kitchen. Although they now have a "modern" house with two bedrooms, living-room, kitchen and cellar, they still spend most of the time at the grandmother's house, which is warmest, especially in winter, because the fire is constantly laid in the stove. When Lazar's children get ready for the school in the morning, they have breakfast in this old kitchen. The "modern" house is heated only on great holidays and its "modern" living-room serves only to entertain guests, watch television, briefly, for prestigious events.

The lively exchange of scenes of events was one of the more interesting aspects of our shooting. The three days were busy with activity from morning till night, with constant changes of scenes, but always within the radius of the three buildings and yard, without considering the village exteriors.

Before we started shooting, I let Lazar inform me in detail about what was going to happen in the three days to come. He quickly got used to letting me know in time what the next event would be and where it would take place in this way I managed to avoid any retakes and interruptions of action. If a certain event is not presented on the final tape, it is either because it is not essential or because I did not manage to shoot it owing to rapid and surprising course of events. In this way all of us, the protagonists as well as the video team, together contributed to the "direction" of the documentary.

While editing the video, I tried to present the events in a chronological order, because I find it to be critical to the understanding of the "Badnjak".

I have already mentioned that my colleague and I arrived at the scene of events two days before Christmas, which greatly surprised Lazar, who had thought we were interested only Christmas Eve (the "badnje večer"). So it was already on 5th Jan. that we could start shooting the preparation for the Christmas celebration, that is, the killing of the first goat and the fetching of brushwood. Technologically speaking, neither activity outwardly differs from everyday

activities of the villagers. I find this extremely important for understanding of further events. Whoever expected ritual events to differ in form from everyday ones would be mistaken. On the contrary, the whole structure of ritual consists of purely everyday activities that are charged with ritual meaning only because they are part of a traditional festive scheme.

It is customary to kill two animals for Christmas. One is cooked and the other roasted (that is why it is called "pečenica", a roast). It was surprising that Lazar had slaughtered one goat already two days before Christmas. It was supposed to be cooked on Christmas morning. In other households they usually kill both animals in the "Badnji dan". I soon found out why Lazar had been in such a hurry. He is highly appreciated as a slaughterer by the villagers. He killed more than ten goats and sheep at his neighbour's houses on the "Badnji dan". So it would have been difficult for him to find time to kill his own goat on the last day.

Fetching brushwood is a very important task in the village of Ležaje because they use a large number of hearths and stoves for baking bread and roasting meat. To carry brushwood, men borrow donkeys, while women carry brushwood on their backs. Before the "Badnjak", it is necessary to look for new supplies of fuel, which they will need to bake Christmas bread and roast meat and to make open fires on Christmas Eve.

The busiest activity takes place on the "Badnji dan" (the day before Christmas). The whole village is a little excited and busy with frantic preparations. The villagers help each other. They arrange for neighbourly assistance in the drive-off and tending of the flocks, the cleaning of entrails of slaughtered animals, the killing of animals, etc. Only towards noon, when the baking and roasting begin, does everyone turn to work at his own fire-place.

Early in the morning, Lazar killed the second goat and prepared it for spit-roasting. Only after he had finished slaughtering his neighbours' animals, he set off to fetch the "badnjak" from his lot near the village. Before shooting this event we had not discussed the details. I must have been rather naive for having secretly expected that Lazar would approach the cutting of the oak with a magic gesture, one of such as are mentioned in ethnological reference books. Nothing of the kind. The very departure did not fit the model. Instead of leaving before sunrise, we went to the wood around 11 a. m. Therefore I was all the more surprised, once back in the yard, when Lazar split the oak log into halves, shaped the so-called "beard" on the bigger "badnjak" and then poured the log with wine of which he had drunk a mouthful from a one-litre enamelled pot. Lazar knew I was surprised although I was standing behind the camera at that moment. He showed his awareness by directing a provocative look at the camera, which he would not otherwise do. Still today I do not know the meaning of both his gestures, the pouring of wine over the oak log and provocative look at the camera. Is the pouring of wine a tradition, something that Lazar saw his father do, or is it an instantaneous inspiration of his, an improvisation, creation of a new custom component? (Because of the camera perhaps?) Anyway, the scene just mentioned is one of the most powerful moments of truth in our video film.

Hearths play an important role in the celebration of the "Badnjak" in Ležaje. The village still has a few ancient smoke houses ("kuća varenica"). Those that were demolished have been replaced by new, modern ones. I think that the Ležajas can not live without open fires, either technologically (baking and roasting) or emotionally (the celebrations of the "Badnjak" and of family holidays). Without fireplaces it would be impossible to carry on the tradition of Christmas Eve with the oak log and the straw.

Two key scenes take place on the hearth on the "Badnji dan". First come the baking of bread under a metal cover and the roasting of goat on the spit in the morning. Characteristic components are loaves of bread, ashes, live coals, smoke and the smell of roast meat. The husband and wife as well as the children are busy doing this. Identical scenes can be seen in the neighbourhood.

The second scene of course, is Christmas Eve, the so-called "badnje večer". From the cameraman's point of view, I had known the set from the morning shooting, but I did not know the details. I was only afraid that the presence of the camera would spoil the authenticity of the event, despite the closeness we had developed in the last two days. If I take a second look at this scene today, I find it hard to determine the line between a particular kind of pathos expressed by the protagonists, and a certain distance they showed that might have been due to the presence of the camera. Lazar, in his function of master of the house, directed the proceedings well.

When he brought the oak log to the hearth, he surprised me again, this time with the only sentence of any length that he had uttered during the shooting: "Good evening! I bid you merry Christmas, God's Day and St. Stephen's day!" I have a feeling that he had studied this sentence long in advance and that, generally, he had spiritually prepared himself most carefully especially for this hearth scene.

All of a sudden there appeared numerous next door children who had probably been sent by their parents in order to "appear on television". However, their presence can also be explained by the nature of friendly relations cultivated among neighbours, for some are like brothers and sisters to each other.

While I was shooting Christmas Eve at the hearth I did not intervene, I asked no questions, I was only watching through the camera. Nobody felt any pressure directly from me for any special performance. I think they were downright astonished when I turned off the food they had eaten on Christmas Eve, the fast day (lean diet) by the hearth and being filmed.

The components of Christmas Eve as we are getting to know them through our film might be discussed at length. The emphasis would again be on the structure and timing of the activities. Since this is not reconstruction and because I saw evidence of the Christmas celebration last year, I can safely say that the activity taking place in Lazar's house on Christmas Eve, as shown on the film, is a typical Christmas activity in the village of Ležaje.

Its components are: the "žizak" (eternal flame burning in oil, which is lit in the afternoon of the "Badnji dan" and put out on Christmas morning), the spit-roasted goat in the corner, the bringing of oak

logs on to the hearth and, parallel to that, the utterance of the greeting mentioned before, the family's settling down around the hearth, the strewing of straw round the hearth and walking round the hearth in doing so, sitting on the straw, the circling of wine containers from mouth to mouth from which the children are not excluded, and the tasting of the roast goat's foot called "papučnjak". Lazar's family did not eat meat on Christmas Eve; they had eaten a humble supper before the hearth scene.

Lazar brought two oak logs to the hearth; the same happens in every house in the village. He put the big oak log ("Veliki badnjak") to the right of the fire and the small one, called "Priložak", to the left. It used to be a custom once to offer the big oak log some of the food they had eaten on Christmas Eve, the fast day (lean dishes: cod stew, potatoes, fritters called "fritule", all fried in oil).

Christmas day started early in the morning with the cooking of goat in the kettle above the hearth. This was the grandmother's task. Lazar then used the cooked meat to prepare goat soup in the "modern" kitchen, where the last act of the Christmas celebration began. I was particularly interested in the lighting of Christmas candles. A big glass jar (usually one where pickled gherkins are preserved) is filled with maize corns and two candles are put in it. One is a Christmas candle and the other is dedicated to the dead. In some houses a red wollen thread is wound round the Christmas candle.

I have gathered a lot of information about these Christmas candles from ethnological documents as well as from informants. According to tradition, Christmas candles used to be lit on Christmas morning by means of the brand of the oak log that had been burning on the hearth throughout the night.

The Christmas candle usually burns till evening; in the past, it was put out by drops of wine dripping from a piece of bread soaked in it. The other candle is left to burn out. Traditionally, the lighter of candles used to cross himself in the Orthodox way. I wondered what Lazar would do.

He did not cross himself. He lit the candles with a match.

Evidently there is the absence of religious (Christian) elements in the celebration of the "Badnjak". I wonder if this is the reason that season customs have so long survived in Orthodox parts of Yugoslavia, in spite of their persecution by the communist regime, which was especially common immediately after the war. The regime was much harder on customs based on the Catholic religion. These were particularly forbidden to communists. At present, the establishment is more tolerant of expressions of religious confession, but communists are still not allowed to participate publicly in religious ceremonies. Did Lazar as a member of the League of Communists show some of the naive political sensibility by eliminating the very last religious element from his Christmas performance?

Lazar, his wife Ljuba and his mother Milica seat down to Christmas dinner. The main course was goat soup and cooked goat meat. In the middle of the meal, the first Christmas guests, Lazar's elder brothers from the town, entered the room. Other families in the village get similar visits that day. Visiting of relatives has a strong

tradition and we may presume that it replaces (or continues) the former rounds of the "polaženiki". This statement can be based on the fact that it was only after the arrival of his relatives that Lazar served also cold roast goat meat, the "pečenica", which used to be offered to the "polaženiki" once.

Up to this moment the film has shown 16 shots, or events that took place in three days. What is the result of this video observation? We have encountered several strata of information about the "Badnjak" celebrations in Ležaje.

The first stratum is verbal information about earlier celebrations that are no longer practiced though still remembered. This information can be used for making a historical reconstruction of the "Badnjak" model, but it is not appropriate for the method of visual documentation.

The second stratum is contemporary practice that is carried on and can be seen. This is what we have been able to shoot.

Third comes contemporary practice about which the informants are ready to talk, but is for several reasons inaccessible to outsiders. It cannot be filmed without breaking ethic norms.

The fourth stratum of information is the practice that informants will neither mention nor would be willing to show to outsiders. This is the most secret part of the custom, which borders on religion. We chanced upon an instance of this, in Ležaje, in connection with traditional fortune-telling from the shoulder-blade of immolated animal. The pater familias of a stock-raising family who still practice transhumance with their sheep flocks secretly collected the necessary bones and took them to his wife who was in the meantime watching their flocks of sheep on the winter pasture. (Fortune-telling from animal bones is a woman's task!) Of course, he refused to admit it when we asked what he would need the bones for.

Our experiences and the documentary clearly show the tripartite structure of the "Badnjak" celebration:

1. *the preparation*
2. *the event*
3. *the outcome*

The preparation includes manual work (slaughtering of animals, baking of bread, oak cutting) as well as spiritual preparation which is manifested in renouncing from food, that is, in fasting at the very moment when food is abundantly available on Christmas Eve. The event culminates in the only formally cult event, that is, in the bringing in of oak logs and the strewing of christmas straw around the hearth, perhaps also in the passing around of the pot of wine. The outcome is the arrival of guests (the "polaženiki") who inaugurate the merry feasting and relaxation with food and drink.

This tripartite segmentation is strongly reminiscent of the structure of the liturgical spiritual drama, which entered European culture in the 10th century through a simple dramatization of a Christmas scheme (*Officium* or *Ordo pastorum*). The elements of this scheme are *pathos*, *actio* and *theophania*.

62 The reality of the celebration of the "Badnjak" in the village of Ležaje greatly differs both from the general model of the Orthodox

christmas and from the oral legacy about ancient "badnjak" celebrations in the village. The custom today is somehow void and impoverished, but its structure remains solid and distinct. We can speak of a modified, but living, custom that proves its strength by virtue of its ability to adapt itself to the times. It may be surprising how the whole celebration is embedded in everyday life where the custom has found its natural habitat. Where there is nothing of cult and ritual left, EVERYTHING is cult and ritual.

NOTES

- ¹ The Orthodox Christmas "Badnjak" (Naško Križnar, 3/4 PAL, 31 min.)
² Video film was realized in the year 1988 and presented on the Symposium Visual Research Strategies (XII ICAES, Zagreb, July 24—31 1988). Its title is THE LEŽAJA FAMILY 1987 (Nada Duić-Kowalsky, Tomo Vinšćak, Naško Križnar, 3/4 PAL 26 min.)

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Naško Križnar

TRADICIJA KOT ILUZIJA

Analiza vizualne raziskave

V referatu so opisane izkušnje, pridobljene pri snemanju in analizi video filma **Pravoslavni Božič Badnjak**, iz proizvodnje Avdiovizualnega laboratorija ZRC SAZU (1988, 3/4 PAL, 31 min.).

V vasi Ležaje (Bukovica, severna Dalmacija), med prebivalci ortodoksne vere, je praznovanje Badnjaka še živo ohranjeno. Na pomembnost tega praznika je bila ekipa posredno opozorjena na ta način, da so ji domačini pri prvem poskusu (leta 1987) diskretno odpovedali gostoljubje, češ, da se na ta dan pri njih nič posebnega ne dogaja. Sele po navezavi tesnejših prijateljskih stikov smo bili povabljeni, da lahko posnamemo vse dogajanje okoli Badnjaka, to je v dneh od 6. do 8. januarja 1988.

V video filmu je prikazano božično praznovanje v družinskem krogu Lazarja Ležaje, v 16 sekvencah. Vsaka od njih je značilen sestavni del sodobnega praznovanja badnjaka, ki ga lahko razdelimo na priprave, na sam dogodek na predbožični večer in na razrešitev praznovanja s prihodom polazenikov. Iz strukture filma je tako jasno razvidna kronologija celotnega običaja in stopnja njegove ohranjenosti v primerjavi s splošnim modelom praznovanja pravoslavnega Božiča.

Pri raziskovanju s pomočjo video kamere smo se srečali s številnimi nivoji informacij. Prvi nivo je besedna informacija o starem načinu praznovanja, ki se danes ne prakticira več. Drugi nivo je sodobna praksa, ki je veljavna danes in ki jo je edino mogoče posneti. Tretji nivo je sodobna praksa praznovanja, o kateri so informatorji pripravljeni govoriti, ne dovolijo jo pa snemati. Te prakse ni mogoče posneti, ne da bi prekršili etične norme. Četrty nivo informacij je praksa o kateri nočejo informatorji niti govoriti, niti jo pokazati nepoklicanim.

Pri snemanju je bila uporabljena metoda opazujoče kamere, podoba konteksta šega pa je bila ustvarjena s klasičnim anketiranjem. Namen uporabe video kamere je bil fiksirati ključne dogodke šega, kot se odvija danes v vsej svoji banalnosti. V prizorih klanja koze, sekanja hrasta, polaganja »badnjaka« na ogenj, božičnega kosila, itd. ni mogoče videti nobene ritualnosti. To je tudi razlog, da se je šega lahko ohranila pri življenju. Dobesedno se je skrila v vsakdanje dogajanje. Kjer ni ostalo nič kulturnega in ritualnega, je VSE kulturno in ritualno.

VIDEO AND OBSERVATION OF COMPLEX EVENTS — THE NEW REVOLUTION IN ANTHROPOLOGY

BARRIE MACHIN*

We take the data from which anthropologists make analytical statements as unproblematic. The methods used to collect data are largely unquestioned, yet what constitutes so-called primary data has already been analytically reconstituted. An article by Tambiah is a case in point. The whole notion of observation itself is the starting point for obscuring what actually constitutes knowledge. The very nature of the social production of knowledge in the activity of fieldwork demands a re-examination of what constitutes anthropological data and observation.

Not only are the methods used by anthropologists largely ignored or left out of fieldwork accounts but also the reflexive and interactive nature of fieldworkers is left largely unexplored.

The use of video forced me to consider the importance of working out new strategies for field-research and of making such strategies overt. It forced me to further question the nature of fieldwork.

In the first instance video offers a radical new departure from previous practice because with the instant playback facilities available in the field one finds oneself immediately involved with informants in the interpretation and meaning of 'data'. This is quite different from the covert practise of note-taking. This consideration led me to articulate a strategy for filming complex events. This is a move in the right direction but it still leaves the actual processes of interaction by which such data was collected — unexamined.

There are important factors influencing field interactions. There is the whole question of the routinization of fieldwork competence, but above all I argue that the use of video — which can lead to a truly emancipatory fieldwork practice forces one to realize that our real focus of attention should be the actual social production of knowledge. Video offers us the opportunity to expand our strategies for fieldwork and observational filmmaking and more importantly it offers a real break — through in making possible the observation of the social production of knowledge which is, in reality, the central activity of anthropology.

My starting point for this article comes from Tambiah's: "A Performative Approach to Ritual" (1981) a complex but stimulating theoretical paper on the nature of ritual, with particular reference to Sri Lankan exorcisms.

During the course of the paper Tambiah gives a definition of ritual:

Ritual is a culturally constructed system of symbolic communication. It is constituted of patterned and ordered sequences or words and acts, often expressed in multiple media, whose content and arrangement are characterized in varying degree by formality (conventionality), stereotyping (rigidity), condensation (fusion), and redundancy (repetition). Ritual action in its constitutive features is performative in these three senses; in the

* BARRIE MACHIN

The University of Western Australia, Department of Anthropology, Nedlands 6009, Australia

Austinian sense of performative wherein saying something is also doing something as a conventional act; in the quite different sense of a staged performance that uses multiple media by which the participants experience the event intensively, and in the third sense of indexical values — I derive this concept from Pierce — being attached to and inferred by actors during the performance (p. 119).

Without going into the customary summary and critique of ritual theory suffice it to say I found this meaningful in the context of my own fieldwork. But as I read on I became increasingly aware of how abstract the whole thing was.

There seemed to be a rather large gap between Tambiah's analysis and the ritual corpus to which he was referring. What reality did his analysis claim to represent?

I did not recognize the ritual performances upon which his analysis was supposedly based. The limited descriptions in this article did not seem to me to belong to the same world of exorcisms which I had studied and filmed in Sri Lanka. I was very aware of the shortcomings of his data because I had worked in the same area.¹ In general the literature on Sri Lankan exorcisms is very incomplete. I have read most of it and it is lacking in a number of respects. Perhaps the most important omissions stem from the fact that it appears that few ethnographers have had the stamina to sit through complete rituals. This means that their accounts of rituals are difficult to follow. Even Wirz (1954) a main source for these exorcisms seems to suffer from this defect. In general one cannot find complete ordered descriptions of all the major rituals, and many significant details are lacking. The literature also suffers from lack of theoretical coherence.²

I began to think of the way we take for granted the conceptual groundwork of general anthropological accounts and forget the processes from which they appear to be derived, that is: observation, organization analysis, and textual performance. Most critically the nature of observation, particularly of complex events, is taken for granted.³

What was the epistemological status of the observations to which Tambiah was referring?

Geertz has said what anthropologists do is write. This may indeed be the case. But what is it they write about? What they mainly do is fieldwork and their writing original ideas and theories derive from this activity. What this activity actually comprises has been largely neglected and appears to be almost a taboo topic of discussion. Rabinow has put it this way:

"Rarely have anthropologists regarded fieldwork as a serious object of study, it is tacitly accepted as their major activity" (Rabinow 1977 in Ruby 1980).

All analysis derives from fieldwork and hitherto sacred participant observation yet most anthropologists do not discuss the way their primary data was produced. We are asked to accept what are in fact already analytical notes as primary observations. The means by which such "observations" are derived are largely regarded as unproblematic.

Ruby says:

An examination of the ethnographic literature for the past 75 years reveals a fairly consistent lack of systematic and rigorous methodological statements and discussions of the relationship between the research and the researcher (Ruby 1982: 8).

And Ridler:

Ethnographic realism in writing, in other words, like the realism of illustrative ethnographic films, achieves its contours by the concealment of its own mechanisms, in which the anthropologist's experience (and not simply experience in the field) constitutes a primary datum. In this non-reflexive mode, analysis grasp its subject through a "discontinuation of modes of description and discourse". (1983: 6)

But it is the experience in the field which is of utmost salience to the nature of anthropological knowledge.

So we can say that the actual practice of fieldwork as a means or organising data has been relegated to the backstage of anthropological performance.

There are several factors to consider here.

1. The factors which influence this social production of knowledge.
2. The routinization of competence.
3. The social production of knowledge in the field — actual *praxis* which can affect the collection of information.

Few anthropologists have considered some of the basic factors of influence. Rosenthal (1968: 668) lists five categories of interactional effects between the experimenter, and his or her subjects: the biosocial, psychosocial, situational, modelling and expectancy effects. The biosocial effect refers to the sex, age and race of the investigator. Experiments of different sexes seem to approach "the same experiment quite differently, and young subjects are less likely to say unacceptable things to older investigators". He says:

In one study the effect of the characteristics of the subject on the experimenter, the interaction between the experimenters and the subjects was recorded on sound film. Only 12 % of the investigators smiled even a little at male subjects, but 70 % smiled at female subjects... men and women really were not in the same experiment at all.

Such psychosocial effects are due to the differing personalities and needs of the experimenters. The higher the status of a person the more respondents confirm the expectations of the research. Differences in "warmth" result in more pleasing responses. Situational effects are the results of differing experience during an experiment. Early confirmation by a few subjects of *a priori* assumptions leads an investigator to change his or her behaviour in such a way as to further confirm and support the original hypothesis. Modelling and expectancy have similar results. Rosenthal mentions the famous case of Hans the horse, who was able to answer complex mathematical calculations because of his sensitivity to cues given unconsciously to him by the human observers of his performances.

ROUTINIZATION OF COMPETENCE

And then there is the fact that we do not actually remember what our method was and cannot report it. We cannot report it because of what I chose to call the routinization of competence. This is more obvious in a simple example.

I ride a bike with great ease. In order to ride a bike I don't have to remember each time how I do it. I remember at the age of 8 or 9 trying to learn and working out all kinds of theories of bike riding which were immediately tested against reality. Many pratfalls later I was immediately successful. Straightaway I forgot the details of how I reached this pinnacle of achievement. And it becomes increasingly difficult to remember learning the further one gets from the event. The more complex the learning the more problematic. Fieldwork skills are even more complex and can involve so much knowledge, experience and emotions, which are already based on previously incorporated skills and therefore even more difficult to explain and make conscious once again.

In Sri Lanka my attention was drawn to this problem by the general inability of ritual experts to explain what they were doing. This is something to a greater or lesser degree that all fieldworkers have reported. It was much more of a problem for me in Sri Lanka than in any other fieldwork situation I have encountered. Native fieldworkers in Sri Lanka have reported the same problem. A recent examination of experts in our own culture found the same thing: experts were the least able to explain their knowledge. And we are in exactly the same position with regard to fieldwork.

In anthropology we acquire skills in the field which rapidly become unconsciously incorporated into our overall strategies for research. Each new situation calls on earlier knowledge and experience which has often been earned with great difficulty but stored away once acquired, and ignored as essential constituents of the interactive and participant experience.

What we take for granted is built on complex conscious and unconscious learning. It is in fact often extremely hard to recall actual learning processes in the field because of the way such learning occurs i.e. armed with the notion of observation we pursue our momentary interests largely casting aside the events which produce and surround our acquisitiveness. The lack of specificity of fieldwork makes the social experience of fieldwork even more likely to be inaccessible.

What currently passes as method is simply a recipe for staging action in the field, it relates to no scientific paradigm and has little to do with actual praxis.

These reflections led me to attempt to provide an account of my "observational" fieldwork and filming in Sri Lanka and the strategies I developed to video and uncover the structure and process of ritual exorcism.

PROCEDURES FOR OBSERVING AND RECORDING COMPLEX RITUALS WITH VIDEO

Admittedly my recall for what actually happened in the field has already lessened considerably, but I am aided by notes I took near

the time and by the very nature of the type of fieldwork I undertook which forces a degree of accuracy which is unusual in normal fieldwork. Here I refer to the revolutionary nature of anthropological fieldwork with a video camera. Advances in science often follow technical improvements and in my view video is a radical new instrument for anthropology, I believe this because it makes one's observations instantly available to oneself and one's informants and partly because of the enhancement of attention it produces in the operator — something Rouch refers to as "Cine-trance" (Yakir: 1978).

What follows is a description of my Sri Lankan or detective work fieldwork practice and participative filming.

I started out of course with an examination of the literature, in particular I read Wirz and several versions of Kapferer's book so I had a good general grasp of what probably happened in healing rituals in S. W. Sri Lanka.

Once in the field I had to locate performers (there are some difficulties here associated with the Sinhalese caste system).

1. Having located an exorcist group I attended my first ritual and filmed it. I won't describe my first series of practical disasters this is the subject of another paper. But suffice it to say that some people advise delaying filming until several rituals had been attended. In my view filming should start straightaway for practical reasons. These are public performances and one's presence is not very intrusive, certainly less so than a notebook. I should point out that I had already a relationship with the performers themselves.

At this first performance my daughter took photographs and notes while I filmed.

2. The next day we replayed the ritual to myself and then showed the exorcists. Immediately this gave me the opportunity to examine my own observations and to question the performers. The problem then arose that performers of the same group, that is *experts* had different levels of knowledge and different interpretations of the same event. This was even true of the two leading *eduras* or spirit doctors.
3. The next step was to go over the film numerous times with the priests in order to discover the overall details of the basic pattern of the ritual and its mythological explanation. These rituals are irritatingly complex, but I believed that there would come a point when the whole thing made sense and followed a logical order and meaning whether or not any particular expert was able to explain the ritual. These are normal fieldwork assumptions.
4. One thing I discovered was that because the exorcists were not used to seeing film they became confused they often mixed up bits of the ritual mistaking some sequences for others. We began to correct this by starting out asking for a summary account of the whole ritual and then telling the exorcists which point of the ritual we were viewing.
5. Another technique we quickly adopted was to ask other exorcists from a different group to view their competitor's

rituals. Again asking them for an overall account first — this gave us different interpretations but also oriented the informants to the film.

6. By the time we filmed another ritual, I had employed a native english speaking informant who embarked immediately on textual translations.
7. At the next ritual my daughter without specific instruction started keeping a minute by minute notebook of the ritual events. We were thus able to correlate our notebook with the number counter on the portopac and screen, an invaluable cross-check, for in several accounts in the literature the order of events was in question and without film informants as I have said, got the timing of ritual stages.
8. Thus armed with notebook and time schedule we went through a film many times with ritual experts, and translation.
9. We also interviewed several ritual experts about the structure of rituals and demonic cosmology to get a fuller picture and clear up difficulties of interpretation.
Our first period of fieldwork was in Tangalle we then moved to Udapila new Weligama. In Tangalle the ritual emphasis was on the ritual for safe-labour, in Weligima it was primarily Iramudun and Mahasona the ritual to the prenoon demon and the cemetery demon used for a variety of sickness. Exorcists in each area seem to specialize in specific rituals.
10. By this time we had "invented" a performance time grid which proved invaluable. What we had arrived at was something very like some of the shooting scripts I've written for ficitional film. In Udapila we worked with three groups focussing mainly on performers whose rituals made more sense and who were better informants. We also had a clearer idea of the course of events. Here my daughter improved her notebook recording. We filmed with notebooks, performance-grid and interpreter.
11. We also began to tape-record rituals at the same time as filming as an additional aid in the transcription of ritual text which is in itself a mammoth task. One of the common complaints of observers of these rituals is the difficulty of hearing the ritual songs and the jokes which occur mainly during the masked performances which take place after midnight. Exorcists themselves find it difficult to report on this because they have learned the performance by heart and few of them can quote textual selections. This in itself is significant not simple because of the complex nature of learning but because they see the ritual as a whole, with the magical cures stemming from teh whole.
12. We arrived at a situation where the exorcists themselves began supplying information at key points in the ritual. I think this arose in response to our lengthy questions in front of a television screen. (We also interviewed members of the patient's family and audience although this was not the primary focus).
13. During the latter period of fieldwork we were aided in our task by another assistant who was fluent in English, Sinhala and Pali. He was invaluable in a variety of ways; for translation later and at each performance he was able to gather information not only about the ritual itself but also about the families paying

for the ritual and about conflicts that appears to relate to the patient's disorder.

In sum, at the rituals themselves we ended up using the following system of observation.

1. Notetaker
2. Cameraperson
3. Commentary from ritual experts, i. e. priests
4. Two informants observing the ritual and social relations at the ritual as well as finding out about past events. Actually at the filming of the Suniyam ritual we were graced with the presence of a Sinhalese professor of social anthropology Gananath Obeyesekere.

Ideally I would add to these basic accoutrements a second camera held by another anthropologist to film the audience and some of the other activities which occur in the ritual context and a native informant giving a running commentary and interpretation into a tape recorder.

I think these are the minimal personnel for the observation of a complex event like a ritual. On top of this it is necessary to go through the prior detective work. And built into this from the start was all the previous learning I'd acquired in previous fieldwork and filming and in the routinisation of creating relationships in the field.

As a consequence of having constantly to refer back to complete recordings I believe that the films I have been able to create are superior analyses and descriptions to written accounts. I also believe that previous attempts at the description of complex events like ritual have been inadequate.

This method was a complex cooperative effort between myself, my daughter, exorcists and other native informants. As a consequence the camera is in continuous relationship with the people who could not be involved in the actual editing as MacDougall does with film, but because of the instant playback facilities of video, Sri Lankans were always involved in the production of the films.

As a consequence of their cooperation in determining what Heider has called "whole bodies whole acts" we produced analytical cultural scores which were recombined filmically to produce documents in which the codes of exorcists and the analytical codes of the anthropologist combine in both an act of translation and interpretation.

IS THIS ENOUGH?

Having gone this far in describing some of the strategies I adopted as a consequence of using video as a central tool for fieldwork investigation. I think I should have monitored these processes much more thoroughly from the outset. In other words I was still operating with the old model of data in mind in which the social interaction is merely a means of acquiring "objective" data.

There are three components to getting close to this method and making it explicit.

1. Monitoring in great detail the actual pathways of the detective work
2. Monitoring one's subjective responses

3. Making the actual process of interaction the central focus of investigation, this last point I cannot emphasize enough because I believe it represents a radical shift of emphasis in anthropology and I could only have grasped this through using video. It is only possible, in its fullest potential, through the use of video.

I am not talking here simply and vaguely acknowledging the importance of reflexivity. That in itself is not enough.⁶ Sure we must be reflexive, yet we must incorporate the Other. As Ridler in a recent article on ethnographic film says:

If a central and distinctive contribution of the discipline has been the exploration of the techniques of participant-observation — a methodology in which the interaction of anthropologist and informants furnishes the material for analyses of social constructions, then clearly the concerns of reflexive and participatory film are the heart of the anthropological project. (1983: 4).

He points out that ethnographic films often fail to incorporate the other in a fully reflexive and participatory experience in which narrative or detachment intrudes.

McDougall has drawn attention to the problem of the "pure observer" detached by the camera:

In his refusal to give his subjects access to the film, the filmmaker refuses them access to himself, for this is clearly his most important activity among them. In denying part of his own humanity, he denies a part of theirs. If not in his personal demeanor, then in the significance of his working method, he inevitably reaffirms the colonial origins of anthropology... The traditions of science and narrative art combine in this instance to dehumanize the study of man. It is a form in which the observer and the observed exist in separate worlds, and it produces films that are monologues (in Ridler op. cit.: 11).

A consequence of this viewpoint which is a continuing point of debate among visual anthropologists has often been to incorporate or make obvious the relationship between the anthropologist and the partners in the venture. (Sometimes this has led to giving natives total or partial control of the filming itself with varying and uncertain results).

The way in which this debate is conducted assumes that the process of interaction must be made obvious in some way. Yet such homilies to reflexivity gloss over the real difficulties of such a new endeavour in anthropology. We have not begun to produce a reflexive anthropology which incorporates an understanding of observer effects or the routinization of fieldwork competence. This is because our focus in anthropology has been entirely misdirected. To arrive at this point I had to go through the process of understanding to which video leads. It offers a truly participatory method and it leads to the possibility of making the social production of knowledge, of meaning, the central focus of attention in anthropology — and here is the breakthrough. Once this is grasped then we have the possibility of a reigning paradigm which was offered to us by Kuhn via Polyani and Evans Pritchard — if knowledge and theories are socially produced in our own as well as other cultures then a truly emancipatory anthropology will organize itself around

this central project in the future — Video offers us a radical new departure from the past. It offers not only the means to practice observational film... the means to cooperate in dialogue with other people, it also offers us the means to observe the very processes of social interaction the social production and constitutive processes of thought and interpretation which is the central goal of anthropology.

That which has hitherto been rendered harmless through anecdote, the amusing after dinner stories are the central datum of anthropology. That which has hitherto been central, is in fact, peripheral to our enterprise.

NOTES

This is rare in anthropology. It is often considered unprofessional anthropologists are territorial. This ethic protects the fieldworker from criticism and prevents the questioning of his or her data.

* An exception to this is Kapferer (1983). There are five major rituals Mahasona, Iramudun, Rateyakuma, Sanniyakuma and Suniyama. There are no full descriptions of Iramudun or Suniyama in the literature. In my opinion this means that my films and their scripts stand on their own as ethnographic descriptions and at a certain level as theoretical statements.

* Courses in fieldwork methods do not tackle this problem. All this is inconsequential, if it doesn't lead to something more tangible, less trendy. In my view method cannot be separated from epistemology and the routine nature of process because of the experiential and reflexive nature of anthropology itself.

* There has of course been a discussion of male bias in anthropology but little has been said of other interactive effects. Even this discussion has glossed over real effects.

* I would suggest that such an informant is an essential feature of all fieldwork.

* Homilies about reflexivity can be delivered quite easily even by anthropologists marred by the taint of the inductive approach. Leach (1982) for example in his recent introduction to social anthropology argues quite strongly against the straw man of science. Anthropology and physics, for example, are engaged in similar conceptual processes. Leach might best be described as a nihilist in that he appears to operate deductively but has an abhorrence of general theory. His relativism is implicitly ideological.

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Barrie Machin

VIDEO IN OPAZOVANJE KOMPLEKSNIH DOGODKOV — NOVA REVOLUCIJA V ANTROPOLOGIJI

Podatki iz katerih antropologi izvajajo svoje ugotovitve, se nam navadno ne zdijo problematični. Metode, ki se uporabljajo za zbiranje podatkov, se nam ne zdijo vprašljive, čeprav se je že dosti razpravljalo o tem, kaj pomenijo t.i. primarni podatki. Kaj pravzaprav sestavlja **znanje**?

Prava narava družbene produkcije znanja na področju terenskega dela zahteva stalno ugotavljanje iz česa je sestavljen antropološki podatek. Ne samo, da se zanemarljivo pomen antropoloških metod v okviru terenskega dela, ampak je popolnoma neraziskano področje razmišljanja in interakcije samih raziskovalcev.

Uporaba videa me je prisilila, da sem začel več razmišljati o izdelavi nove strategije terenskih raziskav, oziroma da sem se poglobil v vprašanje narave terenskega dela.

Že na prvi pogled video ponuja radikalno novost v primerjavi s preteklo prakso. Takojšnji pregled posnetkov nas sooči z možnostjo, da informator interpretira in oceni pridobljene »podatke«. To je močno različno od prakse z beležnico in svinčnikom.

Ta ugotovitev me je vodila pri oblikovanju strategije filmanja kompleksnih dogodkov. To je premik v pravo smer, ki pa še vedno pušča neraziskane številne dejavnike, ki vplivajo na zbiranje podatkov. Tu je celotno vprašanje postopkov in pristojnosti terenske raziskave, toda predvsem ugotavljam, da uporaba videa, ki lahko vodi v emancipacijo prakse terenskih raziskav, sili k ugotovitvi, da je naša glavna pozornost usmerjena k sami družbeni produkciji znanja.

Video nam omogoča, da razširimo strategije terenskega raziskovanja in vizualnega opazovanja in kar je še važnejše, omogoča resnični prelom pri vlogi v družbeno produkcijo znanja, ki je v resnici glavni predmet antropološkega preučevanja.

VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY AS TEACHING STRATEGY

RICHARD THORN*

In talking about Visual Anthropology as Teaching Strategy I must make certain things clear at the outset. First, I am referring to the use by undergraduate students of the audiovisual media of video, tape-slide, and radio, as one of the means by which they record field data, and the primary means by which they communicate some of their findings to a nonspecialist audience.

Secondly, they themselves are non-specialist, and a large proportion are mature students. They are taking a Humanities degree, not a degree in anthropology. They are novices, not only in anthropology, but also in the practical use of media, and even if they take visual anthropology courses every year, they will also be taking courses in other disciplines as part of a modular Humanities degree. My aims, therefore, are:

1. To use anthropology as a means by which students can take a critical stance with respect to their own culture.
2. To use practical experience of audio-visual design and production to raise issues about *written* communication, and to encourage decision making processes which are more public than those which accompany writing. Group working has a number of tutorial advantages, being both more public, and providing mutual support among students who very often find the novel demands of fieldwork and audio-visual production very daunting.
3. To achieve an interpenetration of theory and practice, and of medium and message, in ways which permit a high degree of tutorial intervention in the students' learning process at precisely those points where, for the student, the realities of academic decision making are most evident, and tutorial advice most effective.
4. To raise the issues surrounding the popularising of the findings of an academic discipline — in this case, of anthropology *via* broadcast ethnographic films.

Two recent developments in England have been, first, the collaboration between the Royal Anthropological Institute and the National Film and Television School to create two fellowships for the training of graduate anthropologists in film techniques; and, more recently, the establishing at the University of Manchester of the Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, which, again, will train postgraduates in film and video production.

* RICHARD THORN

Bristol polytechnic, Department of Humanities, St Matthias, Oldbury Court Road, Fishponds, Bristol BS 16 2JP, England

The crucial notion here is "training" rather than "education", as, essentially, the process is one of adding technical skills to the repertoire of people already equipped with knowledge of a discipline and its methodology. This is an excellent and long-overdue development in England, but I should like to talk about a different kind of interface between technical process and a body of knowledge — one where each can provide a constant critique of the other, as part of a learning experience.

For this to happen most effectively, I think it's important, from the student's point of view, to be introduced to the two simultaneously. In this way, instead of learning a received notion of "film language", and then seeing how it may be adapted for anthropological purposes; instead of regarding the book-based academic discipline of anthropology as the prime mover, the student, by being presented with a dialogue *from the outset* between ideas and their possible modes of expression, may, thereby, see the problematic nature of each enterprise, as well as of the relationship between them. And this will be a *starting point*, rather than something to be argued about after struggling to acquire a "firm grounding" in the discipline.

It is in this way that, for the last fifteen years at Bristol Polytechnic, we have been developing ways of using visual anthropology as a teaching strategy with Humanities students, whose programmes and rushes tapes are creating an archive of contemporary culture which we have established with the Bristol City Museum.

In the time available I can do no more than present 3 specific examples of the kind of educational objective our students achieve as a matter of routine. These are illustrated by 3 short clips from their work.

CLIP 1: ON THE BUSES

Clip 1 is from our first level course, on which students are receiving a basic introduction to the medium, and to anthropology. Here we reverse the normal pattern for specialist anthropology students who tend to learn about other cultures first. Our students start by experiencing the problems associated with studying an aspect of their own culture.

As Paul Atkinson has pointed out, a crucial problem is "the effort of will and imagination to... suspend one's own commonsense, culturally given assumptions".¹

This making of everyday life "anthropologically strange"² is far from easy for the student, but neither is it easy for the tutor to demonstrate directly. But here the student's own video-recordings give a common point of reference. Thus one can point out the potential strangeness, the problematic nature, of the way in which passengers cause a bus to stop, the formalities involved in boarding and paying one's fare, and the small-scale social interactions among the passengers, and sometimes including the driver. Occasionally, as here, the reaction of a passenger to the camera takes us directly into debates about "reality", about disturbing the social situation we're studying, about ethics.

Questions central to the methods of social anthropology are not only emphasised by the use of media, but also the media provide the tutor with direct means of addressing the specific case being studied.

CLIP 2: WORKING AT CROMBIES

In an interview³ I recorded with Chris Curling and Melissa Llewelyn-Davies about their work on Granada Television's *Disappearing World* series, we discussed the problem of filming people sitting about doing nothing. The problem being, of course, that "doing nothing" can actually be doing a great deal — but not in a visually obvious way. Clip 2, from a second-level project, is episodic — hence the fades to black — and the central short episode in this clip shows a small workforce, including the student researchers, sitting having a coffee break. Nothing is *obviously* going on, but the students soon recognised the coffee breaks to be one of their most important sources of information.

The coffee breaks provided the students in the early days with their best opportunity for establishing their relationship with those they were studying. The workforce was small, without any immediately obvious hierarchy, but the students quickly realised that joking, for example, gave excellent evidence of the actual underlying hierarchy of the firm. They hadn't found it easy to obtain that information by direct questioning. By leaving the camera running, and including themselves in the shot, they were saying a lot about the researcher's relationship to the situation being studied. Furthermore, their decision contrasted sharply with "normal" documentary procedure, and was taken after much debate about issues to do with both anthropology and programme-making.

CLIP 3: PURDOWN PERCEPTIONS

If the first clip was partly about the problems of making one's own culture anthropologically strange, the third is an instance considerable strangeness having to be rendered comprehensible. This second-level project was undertaken in a local hospital for mentally-handicapped people.

The issue I want to illustrate is that of reflexivity made inescapable by the use of video equipment. The students realised that the impact of themselves and their equipment on the situation had to be included in their account of it, and they decided to ask a colleague to accompany them with a lightweight camcorder, to film them filming.

The students' strategy may not be an especially novel line to take for anyone with experience, but, as a teacher, I found that their consideration of what Hammersley and Atkinson have called "the existential fact... that we are part of the world we study"⁴ was greatly underpinned by their experiencing the necessity to make the decisions integral to the medium of video.

I am obviously not implying that these issues are absent when research does not include audio-visual media, but, from a tutorial

point of view, the students using video are far less likely to neglect them, because they can "see" the issues which confront them.

Finally, I would repeat and emphasise that these are not specialist anthropology students who would be receiving a traditionally broad grounding in the discipline. Neither am I arguing that traditional courses fail to achieve these various learning objectives.

What I AM arguing is that Humanities students anthropology is a means to an end — that end being a reappraisal of their own culture, in the context of a degree programme which is all to do with learning about that culture.

Visual anthropology raises issues in a peculiarly effective way, from both a learning and teaching point of view. For instance, Jonathan Spencer, in a forthcoming paper on Anthropology as a Form of Writing,⁵ raises questions about the form in which evidence and conclusions are presented. For Humanities students on an otherwise book and writing-based degree, these are crucial questions.

The use of audio-visual media inevitably challenges all their cultural assumptions about the primacy of written communication, as fundamentally as anthropology itself challenges the rest of their cultural assumptions. Hammersley and Atkinson,⁶ in their very valuable book *Ethnography: principles in practice*, discuss ways of writing ethnography, but undergraduate writing, being such a "private" activity, is not easy to tutor. Not so when audio-visual production is involved. And every point made in Hammersley and Atkinson's chapter applies equally to audio-visual forms of communication. But with students working in teams, and the teams operating in a workshop context, every major stage of project work is subject to this relatively "public" scrutiny, culminating in assessment, when we include an element of self-assessment. The "publication" of the audio-visual programme before an audience of peers, tutors, museum staff, and importantly, the *subjects of the research*, provides invaluable feedback, when the communication aspect of the total project is problematised. Problems range from straightforward misunderstanding or lack of comprehension, to the issues implied by the realisation that the subjects of the research will witness the programme (though not the log, diary, and research report). In fact, part of the research bargain is that the programme will not be played outside the hounds of the course without the subjects' approval.

Spencer⁷ has argued for a much more radical inclusion of the subjects of research in the enterprise, and Brody⁸ provides a useful case study of an attempt to do this in the making of a programme. Whether or not anthropologists generally accept the implications of this position, it is an issue which is as much part of the debate as any other. Indeed, my experience is that it suggests itself very early on even (especially?) to naive students. As with all the other issues mentioned in this paper, I would argue that, from a learning point of view, it is better that students consider them as part of the learning process *ab initio*, as being an essential part of what it means to learn anthropology.

Through acquiring audio-visual skills concurrently, many of the central methodological issues of social anthropology become a matter of experience for students in a way which forces them into making

decisions — which are the best evidence of learning. And their unedited recordings provide their tutor with points of reference which we can share, collaborate about, and thereby come to some kind of agreement as to the "reality" which they are seeking to analyse and understand.

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- ¹ Atkinson 1981, p. 100
- ² Inc. cit.
- ³ Thorn 1985
- ⁴ Hammersley and Atkinson 1983 p. 15
- ⁵ Spencer forthcoming
- ⁶ Hammersley and Atkinson op. cit. chapter 9
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Bristol Polytechnic

Richard Thorn

VIZUALNA ANTROPOLOGIJA KOT UČNA STRATEGIJA

V svojem prispevku avtor analizira izkušnje pri poučevanju avdiovizualnih medijev s pomočjo vizualne antropologije. Njegovi študentje so začetniki tako v antropologiji kot na področju praktične uporabe medijev. Zato je avtorjev cilj uporabiti antropologijo kot sredstvo s pomočjo katerega študentje zavzamejo kritično distanco do svoje lastne kulture.

Vizualna produkcijska praksa povečuje javnost odločanja bolj kot pisana beseda. Skupinsko delo je v oporo študentom, ki sicer s strahom pristopajo k taki novosti, kot je avdiovizualna produkcija. S svojo metodo dosega avtor prepletanje teorije in prakse, medija in sporočila, na način, ki omogoča višjo stopnjo mentorske intervencije v učnem procesu. To se dogaja točno v tistih trenutkih, ki so za študenta odločilni in ko je hkrati mentorsko delovanje najučinkovitejše. Ne nazadnje se z obravnavano metodo povečuje zanimanje za rezultate antropologije kot akademske znanosti, s pomočjo predvajanja etnografskih filmov.



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