

THE MARRAPODI FILMS
INFORMANT AND DOCUMENTARY USES OF THE CAMERA

Bennetta Jules-Rosette

Discovering the logic of events and their relevance to participants is a central task of ethnographic reporting. Informants' descriptions of social scenes may be regarded as "raw data," as well as instructions to the ethnographer about how to interpret and describe them. This paper will discuss some uses of informant-made visual materials as a means for obtaining members' descriptions of various social settings and for comparing them with the accounts of outside ethnographers.¹

The production of informant films discussed here took place during a comparative study of indigenous religious groups in an African peri-urban community. Members of two of the community's churches provided narrative and filmed ethnographies of work and ritual activities in their own and other groups. The sequencing of these accounts, the techniques used to establish central events and activities, and the ways of locating activities in a larger social context are unique to the informant accounts in contrast to outside interpretations. Focusing on some of these differences suggests ways in which informant products may be used as an ethnographic resource.

A Shanty Suburb: The Ethnographic Context of Filming

Marrapodi is a suburb of Zambia's capital, Lusaka. In the mid-50s, members of several indigenous African churches began to migrate into the area. The largest single immigration was that of the Apostles of John Masowe, a Rhodesian church founded by a Shona prophet (Sundkler 1961:323-325). The Masowe Apostles left the Rusape district of Rhodesia with their founder and traveled across South Africa to Port Elizabeth in 1947 and 1948. Their separatist policies made them a target for governmental concern. By the late 1950s, there was pressure to expel them from the Korsten suburb of Port Elizabeth where they had established lucrative basketweaving, tinsmithing, and cabinet making trades (Kileff 1973:28-29). In 1962, the church members were expelled from South Africa and resettled in the Seki Tribal Trust Land near Salisbury, Rhodesia. Many Masowe followers, however, found this location inconvenient and continued north to Lusaka to establish a new community.

The Masowe mass migration set the tone for the social and economic life of Marrapodi. The Masowe Apostles developed a life style of industrious work and intensive worship. Their example was soon followed by other independent African churches. The Maranke Apostolic Church, founded by the Shona prophet John Maranke, sent its missionary emissaries into then Northern Rhodesia as early as 1948. Many Maranke members trace their initial arrival to the late 1950s and early 1960s (Jules-Rosette 1975b). While the Masowe church remained incapsulated among its Shona

followers, Maranke leaders made zealous efforts to gain local membership.² Zambian Bemba joined along with Luba and Lunda migrants from the Zaire, creating an ethnically diverse religious group in an "urban" village.

Both the Maranke and Masowe churches combine Christian beliefs and practices with their own unique rituals. Both are polygamous and Sabbatarian. Each group places, albeit differently, a strong emphasis on faith healing and divine inspiration. Their members live in insulated communal households. Many members of the Maranke group also live as nuclear families and come together daily for prayer and religious instruction. While they do not intend to establish an ecumenical organization or formal economic ties, members of the two groups occasionally work together in church-owned cottage industries. The Masowe group owns the bulk of these industries, but the Maranke church and others have since begun autonomous businesses.

The Concept of a Visual Survey

One of the basic objectives in studying the community was to conduct a preliminary descriptive survey of the religious groups constituting much of its population. John Collier, Jr. suggests that visual surveys may be used both to study an entire community and to inventory individual households.³ The Marrapodi team began filming in both private and public contexts. Informants were selected from Maranke church members, among whom previous research had been conducted (Jules-Rosette 1975a). They accompanied two American students on community "walkabouts." These walkabouts were small visual tours around the community resembling the daily patterns of community interaction that would have taken place without a camera. Informants chose the locations and the procedures for filming. They were shown how to use and reload Kodak Ektasound cameras, then were left free to map their way through the community.

The Informant Films

The informant films included a series of three-minute sequences shot simultaneously with videotape and still photographs made by the American students. They covered tinsmith and cabinetmaking workshops, home settings, the local market, the playground and the main thoroughfare of Marrapodi. Informants filmed mostly in the southern section of the town where the Apostolic religious groups are concentrated. In addition to the walkabout sequences, informants also filmed ritual events: a confession service, a weekly ceremony, and a rural prayer retreat.

The informants divided their filming between ritual and secular scenes. Yeshale, a junior grade baptist (ritual leader) and special singer among the Maranke Apostles, refused to film during rituals because of his intensive involvement in leading prayer and song. Ezekiel, an evangelist and singer in the group, was eager to film ritual but was less interested in everyday scenes.

The walkabout sequences were intended to reveal ways in which inhabitants conceived of the town and its associational groupings. The findings confirmed the researchers' initial impressions of intergroup insulation and of the extent and variety of church-owned industries in the community.⁴ In addition, however, these walkabouts illustrated marked differences between the filmic approaches of the American students and the Maranke informants.

The Production of Informant Films

Informant films are more than a participant's mapping of a community. They include a set of approaches to and conventions about filmmaking. The Marrapodi films were not edited post hoc. One might ask whether the informants' filming techniques, such as abundant panning, are not simply those of beginning film students. This question is more complex than it appears for it contains the presupposition that a universal visual code or film grammar is shared among competent filmmakers⁵ and that novices in any culture lack the ability to put together sensible visual sequences, while trained filmmakers develop a set of shared conventions for doing so. By comparing informant and American made products, the techniques of novice camerapersons with radically different degrees and types of exposure to media were examined.⁶ These comparisons suggest that differences in filming can be attributed to more than random awkwardness but are not necessarily explained by applying the formal linguistic model of a film grammar.

Filming is a product of interaction rather than of mere technology.⁷ It is on the basis of the scenes filmed that shots are selected, organized, and carried out. The camera techniques mark and punctuate the subject matter (cf. Pike 1966:8-12). While producing the films, Ezekiel, an informant, stated that he tried to "get everything." He placed himself within the scene so as to capture all parts that were relevant to him and kept the camera in constant motion, artfully covering a wide variety of materials within each three-minute sequence. The informant films developed out of each context of shooting and represented a series of mediated or camera gazes on the scene.⁸ Perception in this case is not merely the assembling of visual cues; it is also perspectival, evolving from participation in the event filmed. A similar process of participation and inference takes place when the film is reviewed and analyzed (cf. Cicourel 1973:142-143).

A Method of Analysis

Worth and Adair (1972:89-90) term "cademes" the units obtained by starting and stopping the camera. The length of a cademe depends on the cameraman's preference and on the film technology, and it may contain a number of camera movements. In a recent analysis of the Marrapodi

informant films (Bellman and Jules-Rosette 1975), these movements are termed "cademic markers" to suggest their reliance on the entire filming process. The markers provide a way to examine the specific assemblages peculiar to the informant and to American films respectively. There is, of course, much intragroup variation within the informant and American products for each situation filmed.⁹

The films present visual accounts whose patterns of description parallel the structure of verbal communication in everyday and ritual events. Verbal communication among the church members involves not only stylistic conventions of speaking but also selection of appropriate occasions to speak and topics to introduce. Maranke Apostles use a stylized convention of ritual language. The Bible is read antiphonally with a speaker lining out passages, a reader picking them up, and the speaker in turn elaborating on the passages in close timing. A central aspect of Maranke Sabbath ceremonies consists of song interruptions during the antiphonal preaching and reading. These interruptions redirect the discourse and enliven the ceremony. An informant's film made a selective account of this Sabbath ceremony or kerek in contrast to the actual verbal interplay. Rather than following speakers and readers with the camera, Ezekiel filmed the kerek by turning the camera on only during singing, panning rapidly across the congregation. He described kerek as consisting uniquely of singing or those moments when spiritual inspiration was reached.

Verbal accounts given by Maranke Apostles outside of ritual settings also use special rhetorical devices or arguments (cf. Albert 1964: 35-54). When giving an account of a decision, ideal conceptions of its steps are not simply recapitulated in linear, logical order. Instead, repetition and indirect reference are used to make a point. This common use of indirect discourse is illustrated in a story told by Nawezi Petro, a Maranke leader. Several years before, Nawezi had sent an emissary to intercept a Maranke leader. The emissary, he claimed, had been deceived. Here Nawezi recalls the occasion:

Nawezi Petro, Lusaka, July 1974:

Nawezi: Mbolela, Tshibuyi, ne ye Kasanda, Muteba Pierre,
[Mbolela, Tshibuyi, and he Kasanda, Muteba Pierre,]

Ba'Kadima [Father Kadima]

Tshibola: Kadiata Titus.

Nawezi: Kadiata Titus. Muamba malu a bungu. [He said a lot.]

Tshibola: William. Ne Luka. Ne wewe ne Muteba, ne Kasanda-
[William. And Luka. And you and Muteba, and Kasanda.]

Nawezi: Ne Kadiata. Bantu ba Tshiaba, Tshiaba Daniel.
[And Kadiata. The people of Tshiaba, Tshiaba Daniel.]

Tshibola: Tshiaba Daniel.

Nawezi: Mu- mu- muamba malu a bungl.
[He- he- he said a lot.]

Reference is made to Kadiata through repetition. The information that he conveyed is also referred to indirectly ("he said a lot"). The matter of conflict is never raised but is instead assumed to be common knowledge for listeners. When informants use panning, similar assumptions of common knowledge are made. Panning is used to follow important individuals in an event. The repetitive selection of subjects panned is based on personal knowledge of the scene. In both its structure and content, the cademic marker of panning for emphasis resembles the repetition of names and the use of indirect discourse in everyday talk.¹⁰

The units of film analysis are not an end in themselves. These camera techniques may point to an informant's participation in and interpretation of a scene. They may reflect strategies of verbal expression but are not synonymous with them.¹¹ Thus the informant's visual account of a ritual as "singing" coincides with his verbal description of it, and his filming orientation provides an interpretation of the events marked or edited in the camera. This interpretation is not synonymous with a linear interpretation of events as they took place.

A Brief Comparison of the American Student and the Informant Films

Over 4,000 feet of 8mm and 16mm film were shot by informants in Marrapodi and the surrounding villages. Kongolo Yeshale, a ritual leader in the Maranke Church, and Muamba Ezekiel, a "new" member, shot the bulk of the film. Two American students, Peter, a more experienced researcher and member of the Maranke Church, and Chris, a novice videoist, accompanied them.

Yeshale spoke his native Tshiluba and several other African languages fluently, though he spoke no European languages. His exposure to cinema had been minimal. Yeshale referred to commercial films as "tools of Satan" and refused to frequent them. When shown a previous informant film, he modified his attitude, stating that film might be "good after all." Ezekiel had more exposure to commercial films. His attitude toward doctrine and ritual was less rigid than Yeshale's, and he was interested in film and photography as a potential business. Yeshale preferred filming walkabouts which allowed him to remain in the area where he occasionally worked as a door-to-door fishmonger. Ezekiel participated sporadically in the organization of ceremonies. He was eager to have the camera and used it as a means to develop a specialized set of activities within the ceremony.

Four sets of films will be compared with respect to filming behavior, cameramen's orientations to the scene, and the camera movements that occur in each segment. All of the films were made in July and August of 1974. The first two films of a tinsmith and an open air market were made by Yeshai during his Marrapodi walkabout. Chris videotaped the scenes simultaneously. The last two films were made during ritual scenes: an at-home confession and a Maranke Apostolic retreat ceremony at Matero village, some 50 miles from Marrapodi. Yeshai's confession sequence and Ezekiel's Matero films are accompanied by Peter's 8mm films shot on the same day. These segments have been assembled in a companion videotape.

1.0 The Tinsmithing Sequence by Yeshai:

Yeshai began this walkabout at Ncube's tinsmith shop where he filmed three young men making buckets and chicken feeders. Ncube, the owner and a member of the Masowe church, was absent. His wife stopped washing clothes to watch the filmmakers. Yeshai turned the camera on once for the duration of the reel. He used a 360° pivot to cover the corner where the tinsmiths worked, emphasizing their activities by horizontal panning. At certain moments, Yeshai seemed to be in the throes of a decision before making a horizontal pan. This marker was labeled "hesitate." Yeshai returned to the tinsmiths six times while panning across the work scene and held on them for four out of the six occasions. Through this return pan and hold Yeshai established tinsmithing as a central activity.

1.1 The Tinsmithing Sequence by Chris:

Chris followed Yeshai from Ncube's to the Mandevu market at the southern tip of Marrapodi, videotaping most of the events that Yeshai filmed. Several minutes after Yeshai filmed Ncube's, Chris began to tape. He held the camera on a tripod and repositioned himself only once. Chris zoomed in to establish the context and used zoom, much as Yeshai used panning, to follow action. Chris' interaction with the workers contrasted sharply with that of Yeshai. He filmed from the corner using zoom rather than from in the middle of the workshop. When he started taping, the smiths stopped working to look at the camera. While they interrupted their work to look at Yeshai, the smiths never stopped to assume poses.

2.0 The Mandevu Market by Yeshai:

The Mandevu Market is an open area divided into several sections. Yeshai placed himself centrally in an area between the cabinetmakers and vegetable vendors. He again used a 360° pivot with pans to follow action. The persons filmed formed small tableaux as Yeshai panned across them. The movements of the camera were so rapid that the posing is not immediately noticeable. The market appears to be cluttered and

bustling. In order to include seeds and vegetables spread on the ground, a tilt downward was used along with a spiraling vertical pan up to objects and persons on a higher level. This pan/tilt downward is more than a random combination of two camera movements. It was intended to emphasize a specific relationship among the objects filmed.

This scene contains Yeshai'e's first use of zoom, combined with dolly. The zoom reoriented the scene to a furniture business. The zoom and dolly followed a pan/tilt downward to cover objects on the ground. Vertical panning was used to study individuals.

2.1 Chris' Mandevu Market Sequence:

Chris and Yeshai'e stood in the same area. While Yeshai'e faced south toward the carpentry shop, Chris faced north toward another group of cabinetmakers and the market thoroughfare. He used panning to link different filmed subjects. At one point, however, he panned quickly across several businesses and repositioned himself, creating a segment that is more "transitional" and a little dizzying. Chris used zoom to center on the furniture business and on the posing cabinetmaker. The posing behavior of the filmed subjects is far more evident in Chris' tape. Children lined up, circled around the camera, and glared at it. Like the tinsmiths, the cabinetmakers virtually stopped their work while Chris was taping. Since the camera was on a tripod and was panned slowly, the impression of bustle and activity found in Yeshai'e's sequence is absent.

3.0 The Marrapodi Confession Sequence by Yeshai'e:

In preparation for the afternoon's worship ceremony, Apostles had gathered at the home of a local woman healer to confess their sins. The film is of particular interest because it marks Yeshai'e's first use of the camera. He was shown how to focus, zoom in and out, and center a scene. Yeshai'e raised the camera gradually, and as soon as he reached Chris' face he lowered it. Among Apostles, staring is a sign of disrespect. Women customarily kneel to greet men, and at this time they lower their heads so as not to make eye contact.¹² Yeshai'e studied Chris' stance and reactions with vertical panning and used horizontal panning to follow the course of talk. The prophet Yowane prayed over Chris.

While Yowane prophesied, Yeshai'e held the camera directly on his face. Seated on a stool, Yeshai'e was at approximately the same level that Yowane was when he knelt. Chris' face and entire body entered the frame as he sat down for the concluding prophecies and curing ceremonies.

3.1 The Marrapodi Confession Sequence by Peter:

Peter's filming preceded Yeshai'e's. He shot upward from the seated position, capturing the faces of each member who confessed. Peter

used the standard filming technique of allowing an individual to respond, then turning the camera toward him a few seconds later. He panned to follow action and otherwise held the camera directly on the person speaking. He did not use zoom and kept the camera on a full wide angle to cover as much of the room as possible. It is interesting to compare the positions of Peter and Yeshai as ritual participants. Both are baptists or ritual leaders, although Peter's influence in the Marrapodi congregation is restricted. As baptists or pastors, neither Peter or Yeshai was empowered to prophesy or hear cases. They therefore both felt equally at ease filming the scene, stopping only before the concluding prayer.

4.0 The Matero Retreat by Ezekiel:

On two previous occasions, Ezekiel had filmed ritual events. Ezekiel's first film was a series of swishes made during ceremonial singing. He used a three-minute cartridge to film a two-hour ceremonial. Members of the American team suggested that Ezekiel's product might be too impressionistic. He was instructed to hold the start button of the camera longer and to slow down his panning. Ezekiel's final pieces, therefore, were definitely influenced by instruction. His modified use of markers including the eventual introduction of zoom, was comparable to linguistic "pidginization."¹³

In addition, however, Ezekiel used the camera in all of the ritual events that he filmed to establish a specific order of reality. As a cameraman, he was able to engage in activities otherwise forbidden during the ceremony. He left his seat to encircle the prayer area, walked on the preaching aisle, and entered the woman's side of the worship space to pan from that vantage point. In contrast, Peter filmed action from the seated position to simulate the perspective of a male participant. Ezekiel ended his final segment with a zoom in on the speaker to emphasize his statements and gestures.

4.1 The Matero Retreat by Peter:

This sequence demonstrates Peter's effort to follow the preacher's movements from the perspective of a congregational spectator. He used panning but paused considerably more than Ezekiel. Zoom was used rarely. Slow panning was used to provide an "interpretive" view of the scene.¹⁴ In this sense, Peter's techniques contrasted with Chris' heavy reliance on zoom with the stationary camera.

The Possibility of a Visual Code

Camera movements follow situations and are products of them. They must be evaluated in the context of the cameraman's orientations to an event. When the American cameraman and the Maranke informant taped the busy Mandevu market, both products contained abundant

panning, although the American videolist kept the camera on a tripod and the Maranke informant held it. Zooming occurred only once in the Maranke sequence and four times in the American. Both the filmers reported that they conceived of the scene as multifocal. This information accounts for the panning, but not for the optional use of zoom. Relating the cameraman's orientation to the scenes to camera movements requires an examination of the repertoire of movements and their appearance in each scene. Rather than "explaining" the choice of movements, this collection offers a "paradigm for looking" at and comparing the sequences. Using this framework for looking, we can discover ways in which the informants participated in the event filmed and the conventions that they used to describe it.

A Comparison of Cademic Markers

Inventory of

Camera Movements:

Situated Use of Cademics:

Maranke Informants:

American Students:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Zoom (in/out) | Full: Used to change a scene, make transitions. Appears with dolly in Yeshai'e's market film, appears for emphasis in Ezekiel's Matero film. | Full: To emphasize subject. Mid: to frame a subject. In: to center and make transitions. Appears in Chris' tinsmith and Mandevu market tapes. Out: to context and make transitions. |
| 2. Pan (left/right, up/down) | Used to emphasize filmed subjects in all informant products, for example, tinsmith and market scenes. Fast pan: to emphasize particular individuals; to return. Slow pan: to study a scene. | Slow horizontal pan: for transition. Fast horizontal pan: to segment, to make transition. |
| 3. Tilt (up/down) | Used to capture objects above cameraman (Yeshai'e's confession film); objects below cameraman (Yeshai'e's market sequence). | To focus on activities above or below camera-person's eye level. |
| 4. Dolly (in/out) | Used to segment and change a scene. | Used to follow action (walk from Ncube's to market). Rarely used. |

Inventory of

Camera Movements:Situated Use of Cademics:

	<u>Maranke Informants:</u>	<u>American Students:</u>
5. Hold	Used to study an object or individual.	Used to study an object or individual. ¹⁵
6. Hesitate	Pause to decide what to film next.	Does not occur in American student films and tapes.
7. Pause	Used to mark out or point to subject.	Used rarely.
8. On/Off	Change locations; make a break in timing; reflex movement.	Reposition; make a break in timing.

The differences in filming style among the participants are not idiosyncratic. The informant filmers used zoom to make transitions, while the American students utilized pan. Horizontal panning for informants was a form of indirect emphasis. By returning to an object in the same way that Nawezi returned to the list of participants in the scene he described, the informant cameramen established centrality through repetition. The film segments made by Peter and Ezekiel afford interesting variations on the anticipated approaches to filming.

As an experienced member of the Maranke church, Peter is familiar with the format of ceremonies, the language of preaching, and the personnel. His film of Magora, a Zambian elder who had been immobilized by leprosy until his miraculous healing and conversion, followed the preacher's movements closely. He panned in relationship to the pace of Magora's movements to capture the flow of the ceremony and the experience of participation. Yet, Peter's filming was not the same as an informant's product. While he used panning to follow action, his choice of content differed from Ezekiel's. He did not establish a special arena of movement from which to film and did not use the camera to establish specialized participation in the ceremony. The resultant upward tilt of Peter's panning immediately distinguishes his filming from an informant's.

Peter shared with Chris the tendency to remain stationary with the camera and to hold it on objects and events longer than did the informants but used zoom less than Chris. In addition, Chris related to the scenes that he taped with a visible distance and uneasiness. This is particularly evident in the tinsmith and market tapes. His presence brought the activities to a halt. The settings that Chris taped were virtually produced for the camera. This contrasts most sharply with the concluding segment of Ezekiel's Matero film (Segment #11), in which persons flocked around the camera without directly remarking upon its presence.

If existing film practices were applied to the American students, one might say that Peter's style approached that of "cinéma vérité," while Chris' approach was more documentary (cf. Bergum 1974:2-3). Peter conveyed his intensity of participation through film. He attempted to show subjective reactions and movements from the perspective of the filmed subject as well. Although Chris wished to capture events as fully as possible, he did so in a documentary manner, attempting to hold the camera steadily on an activity as it unfolded. However, the "objectivity" of this approach in capturing events generated self-consciousness on the part of those taped.

Furthermore, Chris' decision to "leave the camera on" involved its own selectivity.¹⁶ He intended to record an entire Sabbath kerek from beginning to end with minimal in-camera editing, turning the camera on and off selectively. His final tape of preaching at Matero contained several sermons and few songs. Maranke Apostles who viewed the tape did not consider it a full recording of the ceremony because the songs, marking moments of spiritual inspiration, were absent. Ezekiel's film of the same ceremony included only singing.

In addition to drawing upon different camera movements to convey what they saw, informants wanted to present an image of themselves. The recognition, "That's me," on the screen or while being filmed makes a difference in how one orients to the process of filming and of observing. For example, Ezekiel stated that he was displeased with Chris' tape because he had sung several lively songs on that day and they did not appear on the tape. He had come to the special screening in part to see himself singing. The informant films and the home movie are similar with respect to these self-revealing properties of film. In each case, the cameramen and subjects look at the films in order to see and recall themselves in a situation.

When examining the informant and American films, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Filming as an order of reality differed for informants and researchers. In ritual settings, informants established special filming behaviors and arenas for filming that contrasted with ordinary activities.
2. The "vocabulary" of camera movements differed across groups and pointed to distinctive orientations to the scenes filmed.
3. The filming techniques used among informants and researchers varied within each group with respect to the cameraman's relationships to the scene and intent in filming it.

The Prospects and Significance of Informant Filming

The review of academic usage leaves us without an explicit visual grammar. Instead, the structuring of filmed scenes relies most heavily on recognition of the context of filming and on the relationship of the cameraperson to it.¹⁷ The academic markers afford a paradigm for locating orientations to a scene and approaches to filming. Certain types of filmic expression seem to recur in selected groups, for example, cross-culturally among novices and within particular cultural groups. Informants share specific uses of certain techniques, while some of these movements do not occur at all in the American student products. On the other hand, American professional films share some of the properties of the student productions. For example, zoom in may be employed to follow persons talking, playing musical instruments, or engaged in mechanical tasks.¹⁸ Like the use of pan among the informants, the use of zoom by the American students appears to decrease with experience.

There is, of course, a broader research scope for the use of informant films. Worth and Adair first used them to examine the influence of visual language on cognition. One may build upon their approach to look at how scenes are constructed and described. An interesting comparison might arise by looking at children's versus adults' 8mm films or by exploring home movies. In each case, one could examine the combination of (potentially) group specific camera practices along with the particular contexts of filming. These films might reveal not only unique types of involvement in scenes but also new ways of expressing this involvement filmicly. Next, one may look at edited materials, a task already begun by Worth and Adair. The edited films will point not only to the process of "film participation" but also to the relationship of film to existing conventions of narrative and visual expression (e.g., parables, stories, myths, saga paintings, dance, and theater).¹⁹

Edmund Carpenter (1972:188-189) asserts that visual media allow little experimentation and that cross-cultural differences in filming are quite minimal. The investigation of Maranke informant and American films, however, suggests that we are just beginning to discover the scope and importance of these differences and that they point toward a new, more intensive and reflective approach to ethnography. To discover and interpret the extent of differences in filmic expression requires investigating the relationship of all persons to the scene and the specific features of the recording process. A structural explanation of the filmed outcome will not suffice. Intensive ethnographic observation, including participatory involvement (at least on the part of one person doing the analysis) is necessary to decipher and assess informants' materials validly.

Finally, informant-made materials offer the social scientist an effective avenue for self-examination. Through looking at the informants' selection of relevant activities, orientation to them, and relationship to other participants, the ethnographer is provided with a mirror and perhaps even a corrective example. With reference to the informant product, ethno-

graphic distance, framing of a scene, and the observer's influence on what is seen and reported can be examined as steps in the construction of ethnography.²⁰ The American and African filmed and videotaped sequences presented here provide an illustrative example and a point of departure for future research. Through the informant's view and expression of a situation, we can begin to uncover the logic of description and the process of communicating ethnography.

NOTES

1. I would like to begin by expressing my indebtedness to those persons at the University of California, San Diego, engaged in the detailed study of informant-made films and videotapes, including Beryl L. Bellman, Christopher H. Bagley, Peter B. Hayward, and Elizabeth Young.
2. Mayer (1961:90) describes incapsulation as the activities by which urban migrants maintain unbroken connections with their rural home and abstain from unnecessary contact with other groups while in town.
3. Collier (1957:844-846) describes the visual survey in community studies and the use of photography in interviewing. He also (1967: 77-104) demonstrates the use of visual indicators. The problems involved in using visual indicators resemble those of using category indicators, e.g., occupation, profession, age, and sex, in other forms of sociological research.
4. By contrast, earlier researchers on this and similar shanty communities considered cottage industries only a remote possibility (Apthorpe 1969:25-26). Religious associations were included as an afterthought among possible factors in community development (Apthorpe 1969:26). The compounds themselves were seen as blighted areas (Kay 1967:127) without reference either to their indigenous organization or to the development plans then underway.
5. Worth and Adair (1972:45) pose the question of whether there is a film code analogous to linguistic grammar. They search for a possible deep structure or universal basis for a visual code.
6. It is assumed that many similarities would be found among beginning students in any culture, e.g., American students, Maranke Apostles, or Navajo filmmakers such as those instructed by Worth, Adair, and Chalfen. These similarities, however, would not necessarily lead to the conclusion that there is a universal visual code.
7. Byers (1964:79) makes a similar statement about still photography: "So at the outset of this paper I must suggest that photography is not the product of a technology but is the product of the various

human interactions involved: people being photographed, people taking photographs, people looking at photographs. Pencils and paper do not write and cameras do not take pictures."

8. Sudnow (1972:263-265) terms the looking involved in still photography a specialized form of "glancing behavior," resembling the glancing done in everyday settings. Filming behavior can thus be said to involve protracted glances and their mediation through the camera.
9. Cole and Scribner (1974:197-199) stress that intragroup variation in psychological performance and cognitive development is as important as cross-cultural difference. They state: "[A] study that was intended to test a hypothesis about culture and cognition gave rise to much deeper speculation about the actual mechanisms involved in the particular activity in any culture. . . . Intra-group comparisons, however, can and should be made to help illuminate the factors that lead to the development of different organizations of cognitive functions. The kind of intergroup comparisons that are likely to be most helpful are comparisons of groups within the same culture."
10. Cf. Labov and Waletzky's (1967:37-39) discussion of indirect discourse in informal narratives.
11. This process may be compared with Garfinkel and Sacks' (1970:350-351) notion of verbal formulation.
12. Albert (1964:39-54) reports similar postures among the Barundi.
13. In pidgin languages, vocabulary elements are often substituted without modifying their syntactic relationship (e.g., I am très tired). Dillard (1972:303) terms this process relexification. Other processes occurring in the pidginization of verbal languages might also be found to apply to the combination of filming styles.
14. Clinton Bergum (1974:2) describes interpretive film as follows: "Interpretative ethnographic film is a descriptive, subjective, and explanatory film communication. By resembling reality, the image can give, for certain purposes, a fuller, less abstract account of reality than can language. In terms of explanation, the interpretative film seeks to interpret the meanings of cultural phenomena and to translate such meanings into structured sound film images which will accurately represent the cultural phenomena to an audience."
15. A further methodological problem revolves around the length of time required for a cademe to constitute a "hold," rather than a "pause." The hold is longer in duration.
16. Obviously the camera's placement and the process of reloading put limitations on what can be filmed. It is interesting that

much of the literature on nonverbal communication does not include information on how these activities studied were recorded (cf. Weitz 1974:3-9).

17. Cf. Rouch's (1974:37-44) conception of the participating camera, which is selectively present to activities in the scene through the cameraman's active involvement in it.
18. When Bellman took a professional videoist, Joan Logue, to Sucromu, Liberia, to instruct Kpelle informants, he found that Logue's techniques emerged as quite different from theirs. She used closeups a great deal and followed bodies and individuals rather than an entire scene. When taping a Kpelle musician, she zoomed in deftly on his fingers and followed his playing closely rather than looking at him in the context of the entire scene.
19. Such research is projected for the Maranke informant materials.
20. Both verbal and visual elicitation could be used to uncover the assumptions behind categorization systems. Elsewhere (Jules-Rosette 1974), I have suggested examining instruction in certain activities (e.g., ritual practices) as one way to approach the problem of different perspectives toward learning about and describing scenes.

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