sciendo

Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics 15 (2): 240–256
DOI: 10.2478/jef-2021-0026

NOTES AND REVIEWS

I'M A RECORDER: INTERVIEW WITH ASEN BALIKCI

Liivo Niglas
University of Tartu

Asen Balikci was one of the founding fathers of modern visual anthropology. He was part of the generation that established the subdiscipline in the 1950 to 1970s period. Along with Jean Rouch, John Marshall, Robert Gardner, Timothy Asch and others he contributed to the formation of modern ethnographic film and its use of cinematographic means to study and represent culture. He was an anthropologist who used his expertise in visual anthropology and the cultural knowledge he gained in fieldwork to curate film projects aimed to achieve cross-cultural understanding. He chose the subject matter of the films and supervised cameramen, sound recordists and film editors to work according to the principles he had learnt from Margaret Mead.

Asen Balikci worked with different film crews in many different regions of the world – from the Canadian Arctic to Afghanistan, from the Balkans to the Himalaya. He was also an avid participant in visual anthropology events, always ready to give a talk, present his films and take part in discussions. I met him at several ethnographic film festivals in the early 2000s. During these contacts the idea of organising a retrospective of his work in Estonia was born. In 2005, Asen Balikci came to Tartu as a special guest of the Worldfilm visual culture festival organised by the Estonian National Museum. On May 7, a two-hour interview was recorded with a video camera, because Balikci was a charismatic speaker who talked with a lot of emotion and passion.

Unfortunately, the videotapes with the interview got lost in the aftermath of the exciting and exhausting festival. But in early 2021, when I was going through a box full of old video material, I found two MiniDV tapes containing the long-lost interview with the world-renowned Bulgarian-Canadian visual anthropologist, who had passed away in 2019 at the age of 89. Some of the topics discussed in the interview, especially those concerning his early life and the Netsilik film project, have been covered by him in published video interviews (Turin 2003; Laugrand 2016) and films (Laird 2003; Husmann and Kruger 2009).

You were born in Istanbul, you lived for a while in Bulgaria, then went back to Turkey. Then you moved to Geneva in Switzerland to study, and after finishing your studies you went to Canada. Does the fact that you have been working in so many cultures as a field anthropologist have anything to do with this moving around and living in different countries?

Yes, I think so. You see, there are two or three things that have been very important, as far as my vocation is concerned as a visual ethnologist. I was indeed born in Turkey, in Istanbul. My parents were Bulgarian and I was born a foreigner. And all my life I have been a foreigner. In every country, wherever

I've lived, I've been a foreigner. That is one very important element in my life. The second element, which may explain my interest in visual studies: at the age of seven or eight I had an accident and lost vision in my left eye. And ever since I have been obsessed with seeing and enjoyed seeing. My greatest pleasure in life is to just walk around and look at things. I have become very visual because of that. I celebrate vision, if I may express myself like that. So being a foreigner and enjoying vision, enjoying seeing – probably these are the two factors that explain my vocation.

Now, after Istanbul, you asked what happened. You see, at age of 16, my father decided that I should go to Switzerland and study there and become a cultured man, a civilised person. So I went and I passed my *baccalauréat français* examinations. Then prepared my *licence* in economics in Geneva. I became French speaking or French cultured. Then an event, an important experience, took place. I had a friend who was a biologist and who was about to go to northern Morocco, to Taza in the Atlas Mountains to study cave fauna and he invited me to go with him. My friend disappeared into the caves and I was left alone standing there. So I started walking around and discovered in the neighborhood a Moroccan village – a really traditional village with the houses made of stone and painted white and the men and women wearing traditional clothing. I was absolutely fascinated. That day, I will never forget it, I decided to become an ethnographer.

There was no real, serious instruction in ethnography at the University of Geneva at the time. So, I completed my studies in economics and when time came for me to look for a job, I discovered that there are no jobs in Switzerland for people like me, for foreigners, and I had to emigrate. I emigrated to Canada, started doing all sorts of odd jobs – working in factories, in a library. I used to work in Ottawa. But I was careful upon arrival in Ottawa to show some letters of recommendation that my professors in Geneva gave me. I presented this to the director of the National Museum of Canada in Ottawa and one evening I received a phone call from him saying that there was a job available for six months for me in the Department of French-Canadian Folklore, which turned out to be 95% French and only 5% Canadian. Basically, there was a very rich folklore library established mainly by Professor Marius Barbeau, an extraordinarily productive ethnographer and folklorist, a Canadian, who'd done serious work in French Canada and also on the West Coast. So basically, I started cataloguing folk songs and spent a couple of years in this job. I became very interested in anthropology. I got married, I had a baby and when time came, I thought to ask for a salary raise. I went to see the director, who told me no, you need a doctorate, you need a higher degree in order to move ahead. There are many universities in America. At the time a student was visiting in our department at the museum, he came from Columbia University. He was studying West Coast Indian coppers – copper shields, engraved copper shields, famous, very important items. And he told me: "Look, why don't you go to Columbia University, it is very international, right to Professor Arensberg,[1] who speaks French as well as you do. Write him in French and see what happens." I followed his advice. I wrote a letter to Professor Arensberg and got admitted.

Now, the most important thing that took place for me at Columbia was the seminar on field methods and techniques by Margaret Mead. She was a famous American anthropologist at the time, and she was really a public figure. Her seminar turned out to be concerned mainly with the systematic use of mechanical recording devices in the field: tape recorders, cameras, still cameras, movie cameras, etc. She believed that only with the use of mechanical recording

devices can we establish the collections of data, the records that we need upon which anthropology is based. I understood clearly this message. And when I returned to the museum in Ottawa after completing my studies, I was invited by the director of the Museum to start work among the Eskimos. The reason was that we shared an office in the museum with the French eskimologist who was the first eskimologist to receive a degree from the newly established Institute of Eskimology in Copenhagen. His name was Claude DesGoffes. He had done prolonged fieldwork in Greenland and now he was going to the Belcher Islands in Hudson Bay. And he went there for a summer, then a second summer and never came back. He had drowned in a kayak, and they never found his body. So, I had to continue his work and for two summers I went to the East Coast of Hudson Bay. And I did work there, but I became very interested in traditional Eskimo culture. I wanted really to discover the traditional place. And I contacted the systematic survey and concluded that Belly Bay is such a place. It is on the Arctic coast; high up north and it is traditional because the trading post had never been established there by the Hudson Bay Company. The reason was again that at the top of the fjord there were mountains of ice – icebergs piled on top of each other, and no boat could cross. So the Eskimos were obliged to live their traditional life up to early 1960s. I went first for the summer there, then I went back for the winter. And I assembled substantial material and I wrote my dissertation and later published books and articles.

After I completed my dissertation, I was invited to join a research development group in Boston with the aim to contribute to the establishment of new social science instruction techniques for American grade schools. Now, these new pedagogical strategies implied the intensive use of audiovisual materials and ethnographic case study was necessary. And the directors of the program were all eminent scientists. Jerome Wiesner, one of the scientists, was the science consultant to President Kennedy. The other person in charge was Douglas Oliver, who was head of the Department of Anthropology at Harvard, and then there was Jerome Bruner, who was Head of the Institute of Cognitive Studies at Harvard. So a very high-powered group. And new ethnographic film material was needed for the course. Not films. Not finished films you know, of the kind that we know, documentary films. But of a new kind. They were to be without English commentary or subtitles, everything was supposed to be in Eskimo, and they were supposed to illustrate the life cycle, really, the annual migration cycle of the Eskimos and they were supposed to represent also traditional cultural forms.

As a result, with four different cameramen, five as a matter of fact, we spent 13 months in the field. That was a long period for shooting when you think that today a good television film is being shot maximum in a week or so.

What were the conditions for shooting? It must have been really difficult. You were shooting on 16 mm?

16 mm. We had two cameras, one camera for outside. You cannot bring a camera from outside into the igloo because the lens will get foggy. So we had two cameras. Two Nagras[2] also, always. Also spare equipment. And we were living more or less like Eskimos. We had our own igloo, the cameramen and myself. In summer, our own tent.

We were dependent entirely on the Eskimos for survival. We travelled wherever they travelled with dog teams, nothing else. There were no snowmobiles at that time, none of these things. You know it was pretty much a traditional culture. Yet some reconstruction had to take place. They had rifles. I put them under a skin, you know. They had cigarettes. I put them under a skin again, hide them. That's about the reconstruction that … They were wearing traditional fur clothing, building igloos. They were hunting seals at the breathing holes with harpoons,

fishing at the stone weir with the spears. So basically, all these activities we did not have to reconstruct. And most important, and that established the scientific value of the original footage: we did not interfere in the temporal-spatial arrangements of protagonists. When, let's say, three Eskimos were talking among themselves or doing something we would never interfere in the setting and tell them do this or do that, or stop now, or go there, never. It was for the camera to adapt to the setting and not the setting to the camera, and that was the basic principle that I learned from Margaret Mead. The spatial-temporal arrangements of protagonists have to be absolutely respected for the footage to be valid.

Was it difficult for a cameraman to understand this kind of approach?

He had to be trained. I had to train him. That was very difficult. That means that with the first cameraman – Douglas Wilkinson – our relations turned out to be very bad. Because, first of all, at the time I was rather pretentious. You see, I just came out from Columbia University with a PhD, graduated from the Margaret Mead Seminar and I thought that I knew everything. He had 20 years of film experience in the Arctic, and he knew probably more than I did. And on another side, I insisted that these basic principles should be applied. So, our relation was terrible, awful. But we managed to work together somehow. I'm astonished. The first film we shot was fishing at the stone weir. You know this film, probably – *Fishing at the Stone Weir*. It was in summer and good weather. We spent 2–3 weeks there fishing and when we sent this material back to the lab in Boston and when the people looked at it, they couldn't believe their eyes: My God, traditional Eskimos just the way Knut Rasmussen[3] and Kaj Birket-Smith[4] and Franz Boas[5] described them. How is that possible? Today, early mid-60s? So we were very pleased.

Another cameraman had to be sent to the North. The reason was that Doug Wilkinson, when it became cold and windy, experienced breathing difficulties in cold wind. He would start suffocating, so he had to be shipped out, sent south and another two men arrived. Kenneth Poste and I think Ken Kennedy,[6] if I remember well his name. Ken collapsed after a week. He was a 40-year-old man. He expected to sit on dog sledges, you know, and the dogs pull, and he would sit. That didn't turn out to be the case. He had to run alongside the sledge all the time, and when we hit pack ice, he had to pull the sledge and the dogs with them. So, he physically collapsed. Ken Poste was very strong. He was young, my age, and we spent nine months together and I never heard a single complaint out of him. Not a single time. We spent days without food. Very cold. Not a single complaint. He was very good, and we shot a lot of material with him.

Now, when the major sequences on the collective group life in midwinter with midwinter sealing at the breathing holes, the shamanistic sessions, the dancing, etc., had to take place, the producer, who was a very good man, who respected Ken Poste very much, said maybe we could try a new cameraman together with Ken Poste. You know, two of them. It's a heavy job, two of them. And that way they hired Bob Young. There was another candidate for that, Ricky Leacock.[7] He was teaching at MIT where I was teaching at the time also. And Ricky Leacock wanted to come but at the end a young man by the name of Bob Young – commercial cameramen, CBS television, specials for the National Geographic he was making – arrived. He landed and practically minutes after landing he started shooting because he landed near the camp where we were. The plane was circling around. And he told me later that he had never done work in a setting so quickly and so well prepared. By the time, of course, after nine months of shooting the Eskimos were trained like Hollywood actors, practically. They were accustomed to the camera shooting, to the presence of the crew. And as soon as Bob Young picked up the camera, within min-

utes, I realised that we are in presence of an artist, of a great artist. It is one thing just to shoot ethnographically honestly, decently, another thing to be a great artist. And I will never forget how Ken Poste looked at me and said: it is different, I cannot do that. Very simply, he admitted: I cannot do that. So, division of labour was established. Ken Poste was shooting something, mostly technology, and Bob Young was shooting mostly interactive scenes – games, drum dances, spontaneous interactions.

And we spent two months that way and we finished shooting. Back in Boston, in the lab, I was responsible for establishing the film units. We had nine film units illustrating nine different seasonal camps of the Eskimos. Each camp had basic subsistence techniques for their *raison d'être*. Without subsistence the Eskimos cannot survive, it was either fishing or hunting mammals. We were not interested in trapping activities and as a matter of fact they had very few traps. Our major protagonist, Itimanguerk, had five, six traps only. So, I had to establish on the blackboard the plan for each film unit and then with the editors they were reducing. Let's say they had 10 hours of film, they reduced it to five hours, then to three hours, then to one hour, you see. That's the way we worked. I was present at each reduction moment with a clear understanding that there were some basic materials that had to be on the screen, had to be preserved for pedagogical or ethnographic reasons. So, we finally ended up with a series of 10 half-hour films, altogether about 11 hours long.[8]

I know that you chose the main protagonists. Was there a casting or something?

No, we did not choose him. He chose himself. There was no one else. There was only Itimanguerk. You see in our style of shooting, there is no director. I'm not a film director. I'm responsible for content. I established the content of the material. All material shot in the field was under my supervision, but I refuse to be considered as a film director. I'm a recorder. And I got this position from John Marshall.[9] John Marshall was the first who publicly declared that he's a recorder, he is not a filmmaker. So, we are recorders. We do not invent scenario; we don't write down a scenario. We record daily activities, daily life, that's it. And after that in editing, of course, we could benefit from skilled editors, advice from others, definitely. So, the principal protagonist, Itimanguerk, he was the one in the community. He was about 53–55 at the time. Very knowledgeable, very stable character, responsible, the best hunter. He was the leader of the community; he was the man who thinks. And we relied on him for everything. So, basically, we tried to have him as much as possible on the screen.

So, it was kind of a similar approach that Flaherty[10] had with the Eskimos he filmed. How did you exactly discuss what should be filmed with the protagonists?

The strategy of working with the principal protagonist we got directly from Flaherty. That was direct. Now, what to film? There was a difference between Flaherty's time and our time. We had two cameras and basically an unlimited amount of footage. We had no financial limitations, so we shot. We shot. Everybody knew that, let's say, now we're going to hunt seals. Everybody knew what seal hunting means, what it involved. There will be 6–7 people together, they will discuss first in which direction, where to go; here and there they will exchange views, and Itimanguerk at the end will decide, very gently, he will not give orders – there are no orders given among Eskimos – maybe that direction we could go. That's the way he would say. And we went in that direction. We followed Itimanguerk and what he would do is on the film. We didn't need to ask him questions: what are you going to do?, because we knew already what he was going to do. We were following my fieldwork, but my fieldwork was following the Eskimos. So, you see it came to the same? At the fishing weir it was the same thing: we were following, we knew what was going to happen.

And now, if you look at the films which were shot during this project,[11] what do you think? Has your opinion changed?

That is a difficult question to answer. I would say that if I was to do Eskimo films in the same conditions, let's say, I will do the same thing. The reason is that the material that we got is of enduring value. Many very good films have been done among the Eskimos for television or for documentaries. They are not of as enduring value as ours, I would say. Ours, I don't like using the term, but ours have a certain classic quality. They have a certain timeless quality. Today, for instance, I can show Netsilik films to any audience. They would say how interesting, how real, how new. You know they're beautiful. They're real, they're not invented. No music, no fast cutting, they are very slow. The viewer is allowed to sink in this screen and spend some time with the Eskimos. Just this winter recently I showed them at the British Museum in front of a full audience. It was the same reaction that I got 30 years ago. Same reaction. So I would try to do the same thing. Maybe I failed in one aspect – in shamanism. There was a Catholic missionary, extremely strong man who ran this community as a medieval monastery, I would say. All the Eskimos who were present near the Mission Church, every morning at 7:00 o'clock they were attending mass. Although most of the Eskimos were away, they were hunting or fishing. So, about 15 years ago, the missionary had declared war on the shamans and none of the people there dared perform shamanistic séance, except Itimanguerk, who was not a shaman and who imitated second class, second degree shamanistic séance without trance. There was a shaman who could perform with trance, but that would have created complications and maybe the missionary would have thrown our team out. So I failed in that respect.

It is a very difficult topic to film anyway.

Difficult topic to talk about, to film anyway.

This is probably the project which is associated with your name mainly. And that's where you actually became involved in visual anthropology. After this project, did you realise it: OK, that's the thing I want to do, I want to help making films.

Yes, yes. You see, we were supposed to continue with MACOS – Man: A Course of Study, the pedagogical social science program. So, for the second case, we needed a pastoral nomadic group and that is how I went to Afghanistan. I did some library research to find out where traditional nomadic tribes would be. I discovered that Afghanistan is about the most interesting place. So I went to Afghanistan over a three-year period, off and on. I've been working there, collected bulky ethnographic information, which unfortunately I never published in a book because the war started and there were gaps in my material. The result is that when filming time came, I invited Timothy Asch[12] to join me. Now, Timothy Asch was an experienced filmmaker, and he was very much interested in pedagogy. He was working for MACOS at that time. He was filming 16 mm classroom experiments and also making stills of teacher–student interactions. He was making stills. And Patsy[13] also was working there, they had an office in the basement of our little building, our house. To have him was very rewarding because he knew about the style of shooting that was necessary. It was not necessary to have long discussions with him. He knew exactly what to do. He was not particularly artistic cameraman, he was not interested in art, but neither were we. So, we filmed systematically for a period of about four months and got a lot of material which all of it is deposited today with the Smithsonian Institution. We had a principal protagonist: an elderly man, very rich, called Haji Omar, who had three sons. So, it turned out that we made a family portrait, of a wealthy Afghan family, pastoral traditionally, but with involvements in agriculture and also in city activities, branching out in many directions. So that was our work. Thanks to Patsy Asch we were able to take some shots of

the women. And then we finished the film and when the war started we couldn't edit at the Smithsonian Institution. They told us look, we're not a film production company. You should go elsewhere. So we went to the National Film Board of Canada and there we were obliged to edit the one hour television film. My intention was to edit, and we had the material, to edit a series of at least three films.

So, similar to the Netsilik films?

Similar to Netsilik, a little bit shorter, but at least the three film units, you know, three hours long. That was rejected by the director of the Film Board, and we were told immediately to work on a television film, which we made one hour long, and which went with a commentary, with subtitles, with everything – traditional documentary television production, and which was extremely successful. It went all around the world. Really, including PBS in the states, which is no small achievement, and BBC. So, it was the basic documentary film used at the beginning of the Afghan War.

But it never made it into the classroom as the Netsilik project?

No, it never made it because meanwhile, the classroom project that I was working for, ran into difficulties. You see our new film on the Netsilik Eskimos project is concerned almost entirely with these difficulties.[14] The American public was against the new pedagogy, the Eskimo case material. Why? That's a long story, but apparently there was too much blood, too much killing of animals in the Eskimo films. Although the Netsilik films do illustrate to a certain degree the positive stereotype that Americans hold of the Eskimos. But it is different. You see, the American public rejected the films and together with the curriculum program.

The rejection was brutal. I mean there was a national debate, national controversy going on, on radio, television, the press. May 11 in 1976 there was a plenary discussion in American Congress about discourse in these films. I was in Afghanistan meanwhile and remained penniless after disastrous outcome of this controversy. But I decided after that to conduct a survey of my own. I will tell you why. In some museums in America the Eskimo series was presented continuously, they had screening rooms where the 11 hours used to run continuously. And I happened to sit in these rooms and observe from behind audience's reaction. There was a moment. In front of me, I remember, once were sitting a mother with two children, two boys, 6-7-8-9-10-year-old boys, I don't remember exactly. I was sitting behind, and they were showing caribou hunting and the caribou were speared to death by the Eskimos and at this moment the children turned towards their mother and said, said Mommy, I cannot watch. And she took them, the two boys by their heads, turned their heads towards her, and with the two boys she came out. She left the screening room with holding them like that, you know.

Then I told myself, my God, something is happening here. So, I went to the schools of Vermont and New Hampshire not far from Montreal and asked children in the schools there to draw an Eskimo on a sheet of white paper. Please draw an Eskimo. And when I couldn't understand exactly what was drawn, I asked questions. This was in order to see what the stereotype of the Eskimo was among 10-year-olds in America. I discovered that the Eskimo live in a totally white aseptic frozen environment – white snow, white ice. Basically, they were extremely clean people living in a totally clean environment. Second, there was no violence in their behaviour, they were very peaceful people. Not a single element of violence in the drawings. Then the Eskimos were doing something, they were hard working people. I, in my questions, discovered that children had never seen an Eskimo sitting idle doing nothing. Also, children had never heard about Eskimo kings, Eskimo dictators, Eskimo presidents, Eskimo directors. They were perfectly egalitarian society, extremely

democratic. They don't steal from other people. Maybe because they have nothing to steal, you know. But anyhow, they're very honest people. Now, when you add all these qualities and virtues, what you get is the Protestant ethic. You get the Protestant ethic, which in this case belongs to people, strange people, primitive people sitting on top of the world, sitting in the ice. So that was my discovery from this survey.

Now, what about the caribou scene the mother, American mother did not allow…? Why, because the caribou are Bambi, the most noble, the most gracious, graceful animal created by Walt Disney. So, this conflict between Primitive Protestant and killing Bambi could not be accepted in the context of popular America imagination. It was impossible, it was absurdity, there was an internal contradiction that was unbearable.

So, you basically found this out by doing a visual anthropology project: asking the children to draw and then analyse the drawings. Have you written about it?

I think that I have published something.[15] So, that was the outcome. The result was catastrophic for me. I had a good job in Boston, I lost it, because my job was linked to the pedagogical programs and continuing research. I lost it and basically, I became persona non grata in the States. In class, the distribution of the films suffered of course, was immediately interrupted, but not on television. You see, television directors, they know about good material, they're not interested in controversies. You see, they want good film and they got it. So, they were something like 200 television bookings all around different formats of Eskimo material. That happened because I don't have the copyright. I have no rights whatsoever over this material. It is the National Film Board of Canada and the American company that has the copyright and they can do whatever they want. So, there is one children's television series made of this material. There is one CBS television special, the first television ethnographic film on an American network television in the history of Network television. I'll never forget that. Never.

I will tell you how it happened. I was doing fieldwork with Robert Gardner.[16] He was not there at that moment in Ethiopia. I was sitting down in the Danakil desert in a hut, and I see from afar a horseman, riding extremely fast and coming straight to me, straight through the little hut, you know. And he stopped just in front of the hut. He was holding a spear. At the top of the spear a piece of paper. He lowered the spear, I picked up the piece of paper, opened it. It was a telegram. It reads something like: in March, let's say, I don't know, 100 to 200 affiliated CBS television stations are going to broadcast *The Eskimo: Fight for Life*.[17] Your presence is immediately needed at CBS headquarters. Signed Michael Dan, director of production, CBS New York. So that is how it started. And I went, we made a film. And then the time came for it to be screened. So, we were sitting precisely in the office of Michael Dan. One wall was covered with television sets representing different CBS affiliated stations, I presume. So, I was told, I couldn't check it anyhow, that at the beginning audience participation was medium low and then it started picking up. It started picking up, in the middle it was very high and at the end we beat the National Geographic. They were screaming, shouting, champagne bottles, we beat the National Geographic, anyhow. So that is, then there was a two-hour BBC television special there, all sorts of different formats around the world, you know. I didn't get a single dollar out of all this – no copyright.

But coming back to the Afghanistan film. How was it to work with Patsy and Timothy Asch?

It was very easy because they needed no instruction. With the other cameramen, I had always to instruct them. As soon as they start interfering a little bit, "stop it", I have to say, "you just film from any side you want, but you don't bother with the setting". So in the course of action, I will tell them:

OK, now we concentrate on Haji Omar and we follow Haji Omar. He was going there to make some payments to somebody, so we try to catch that, you know. Very little instruction they needed; they didn't need much. They didn't know anything about the culture, of course, but that was my job to tell them. In the morning I would discuss what is the most important thing to film today. But there were no disagreements like with the others, no need for training, for explanations. They understood everything by themselves. They were an autonomous unit, you know. There were moments when I could not be present at the setting, you know, because for three days we had the visit of the American and the Canadian ambassadors. They wanted to come and visit us in the field, and we had to organise a reception, supper, I don't know, horse games – I was busy with them. Patsy and Tim were all by themselves working and they didn't need any supervision.

I would like to point that we made two additional soundtracks for the Smithsonian. There are three soundtracks. The first is the original soundtracks. The second contains translation into English of the Farsi and Pashto dialogue. And the third soundtrack contains the ethnographic observations. These are mine. Ethnographic observations, explanation about what was happening in the field. Why was it happening? How was it happening? What was its anthropological significance, etc., etc.? So, now all these materials are deposited at the Smithsonian Institution. They are directly available for somebody who wants to study them together with my field notes. Everything is stored there.

With this film also there was lots of politics involved. Somehow it also had kind of a not very happy end.

You see, it's very difficult to film the women. Without Patsy we certainly couldn't have filmed the women. Second, I will never forget the first time… Tim was using a tele lens usually, you see, a long lens. The first time when Tim started shooting with this camera, Anwar, our principle common protagonist came to me and said: "Haha! In the past you were pointing your guns at us and now you are pointing your cameras." He was right as a matter of fact; he was perfectly right. And maybe the camera is as much an instrument of domination as the gun. Jay Ruby[18] disagrees with that.

So, when we started filming the women, the word spread around among neighbouring tribes that Haji Omar has given his women to the foreigners. Awful things. So, I had to run around constantly and do all sorts of engaging political games. But we managed to film. Today I would not be able to participate in such a project. As a matter of fact, the National Film Board of Canada recently invited me to go back there, after the end of the Taliban rule. I was scared. Anwar was killed during the communist fighting. It's a difficult situation. Maybe I will go one of these days. I will see.

How did you find this family – Haji Omar and his sons?

Generally, I spent three months on horseback in central Afghanistan, searching for a suitable group. Normal groups, plenty, but normal groups who would accept a film crew of foreigners, impossible, practically. It had to be a group or a family in a very strong position, dominant politically position and rich in order to accept such a responsibility. Then, I had a very good guide at the time. He said that he knows of a group spending summer somewhere at the top of Panjshir Valley. The Panjshir Valley was the famous valley during the Afghanistan war. It was the centre of anti-Communist struggle. At the top of the Panjshir Valley, at the altitude of about 3,000 metres, were their summer grazing grounds, or so. We went there, and indeed we climbed the Panjshir mountains on horseback. Very dangerous thing to do. We climbed it and when we reached, we saw the black tents at the bottom of the valley and out of them Anwar came, and he rushed towards us. Right away I knew that

he was the principal protagonist. All of a sudden. It is as if he had been waiting all his life for us to come. You see, then you have a film. Then you have a film.

And then the Film Board of Canada sold the film to …

They film was distributed all around the world and the BBC got hold of it, of course, and changed a few minutes. Changed it in a political way. While our camels were crossing in one direction, BBC put a line of armed Mujahadeen walking the other way across. No such thing we had filmed. So that was dangerous even for the tribe and we wrote letters to the editor. All sorts of discussions we had. I expected that the film board would take action, but they didn't do anything. They didn't do anything, saying that you know BBC is much bigger than us, we rely on the BBC to show our films, we don't want to antagonise them, etc.

So, they just changed the editing, not the commentary?

I don't remember. I remember that they added political material. You see, when a television station, television network buys a certain film they have the right to change things for editorial reasons. They, for instance, can decide that they want to use their own voice, narrator. They can change something in the narration style. They may change a little bit here and there up to two minutes, two and a half minutes. That is admitted, nobody pays attention to that, but not to politicise the film, to give it a different ideological direction, that, no.

They just didn't think about it, probably, that it could be dangerous for protagonists. But what was your next big film project?

Oh, it was Siberia, visual ethnography training seminar in Kazym, near the river Ob – *posyolka*[19] Kazym. For a small number of boys and girls from the small nations of Siberia, Siberian tribes. That is another line of activity for me altogether.

That was in 1991. The *raison d'être* for this seminar was that I had always been feeling very guilty towards the Eskimos because I got a lot from them. They gave me a lot and I never gave back anything to them. Until now, now they begin to realise the importance, the cultural, historical importance of the Netsilik film series. And I decided that something I would like to do for the native peoples of Siberia and give something back to the Northern people. With a colleague from Alaska, Mark Badger,[20] who is a videographer, we organised a training seminar in Kazym *pasyolka* over a month. Initially I thought some observational note taking in ethnography. Then we screened a large number of ethnographic films. Then we taught some visual ethnography, visual anthropology. Mark Badger taught some camera technique, camera technology. And then we gave them cameras and invited them to film, to make a film, each one of them on their own. We were very careful about the film subjects that they selected. And these film subjects had to be submitted to public seminar discussion for all the participants to express their views. I was concerned that important themes about the culture, history of the present situation of the people should be selected. I was very concerned about that. They selected the topics, but the topics were discussed. And we have a visual record, video record of the discussions with Eva Schmidt[21] present.

And there was also a wider outcome – this political side of the project, again.

You see, one of our aims was precisely to empower these young men as tribal representatives to make their own film someday. Not necessarily to make political revolutions, but first to make a record of their living cultures and their culture history. And then if they have some particular points of view to express to express them on camera and that way they could acquire a wide audience, you see. We had a large number of films, but we selected four that we edited. They edited them first, and we've made a final edit. And we made a film,[22] a one hour film, out of their compositions, and that was broadcast in northern Canada, in Alaska,

in California and in Siberia. And I think in Scandinavian countries as well, but I'm not sure. So, it was a rather successful project. I discovered one thing there that was confirmed by Vincente Carelli's[23] work, who is a very capable man, and he works exactly in this context. Native people usually don't make political slogans, don't make ideological speeches. Some do. The Kayapo of Terry Turner[24] do, but that's a particular situation. The BBC and maybe Terry Turner invited them to do so. But the ideological activists, the Moldanovs,[25] husband and wife, did in Kazym. They wanted to portray a traditional, ultra-traditional Khanty family, the daily life of a traditional Khanty family. They filmed Timofey Moldanov's father very well, who was a shaman. They filmed him and his mother in daily activities, fishing, cooking, cleaning and also filmed the old man chanting ritual chants that were never translated because Eva Schmidt did not allow us to do so. What came out very clearly is that the Moldanovs were satisfied with their film, which showed traditional Khanty with their ideological message being: we are Khanty, we have a traditional way of life, this traditional way of life has been preserved after 70 years of communism, we are still here, we have survived, and this film is a proof of that. You see, this film documents this fact, that's what they want. We exist. We have survived. They did not want to deliver at the time a different message. Same thing is corroborated by Carelli.

I'm very happy with the results of this video teaching. The video teaching was serious. It was productive. The Moldanovs went on to make PhD dissertations. One of their cousins went to a three-month course in Moscow to state television, became a television editor. There were other activities also. What I was not happy about is that I did not follow up the situation. It would be extremely interesting for somebody, let's say from Estonia, someday to go back to Kazym and see what has happened to the young people who were in this seminar and essentially the Moldanovs. What have they done? They are very important people. They are ideologically very sophisticated; they know what they want. They have become famous. They have money now. Very good book and very good film could come out of follow-up study of Kazym.[26]

Then you also have worked with an Estonian filmmaker.

Yes, with Arvo Iho[27] we went to an Eskimo village Sireniki in Chukotka on the Pacific. The reason was that the Canadian Eskimos didn't know anything about their Soviet cousins, the Chukotka Eskimos. Nothing. And I thought that it would be very interesting to make a film on Chukotka Eskimos and show it in northern Canada for our Canadian Eskimos to think about. And that's what we did. We went there with Arvo Iho who is a very serious and very good documentary filmmaker. He has a very good eye, a very good eye. What I wanted to do is constantly think that I am a Canadian Eskimo who had just arrived here and what would most impress me as a Canadian Eskimo. So, I turn around and what do I see? Buildings of two stories that do not exist in Canada, they have only one-story houses. Then I see cows. Cows. That is unthinkable, totally unthinkable in the Canadian North. Then I see pigs, pig farm. What is that? We go hunting walrus. There is plenty of walrus, walrus everywhere. We kill one walrus. We bring it to the beach and there it is being measured, the whole of it, you know, on a scale. Then it is being brought to the warehouse. And then we go to the office of the kolkhoz. And we see *bumagi* everywhere – *bumagi, bumagi, bumagi*.[28] So, I ask Arvo: film all the *bumagi* one after another, because in Canada that is unheard of, *bumagi* of this sort. Then the community had a meeting with the sovkhoz director. Serious people having serious discussions. We go to the school – uniform, serious teaching, mathematics. Very different from the Canadian Eskimos, where nobody learns anything. There is no discipline, you know. So basically, that is what we did, try-

ing to show the local Eskimos, Sireniki Eskimos from a North American perspective.

And what was the Canadian Eskimos' reaction to the film?

The reaction is: they are like us. Because they speak a language that we cannot understand, but it is our language. And then at the end they eat caribou meat. They cut the caribou on the floor exactly like in Canada, and they take the eye of the caribou and give it to a small boy to eat. That is us, they say, that is us, they are our people, immediately.

How was it to work with Arvo Iho on the film?

No problem. It was very very good. I was not well prepared because I had not done any fieldwork there. We arrived together. We selected Sireniki because it was easily accessible, others were very far north. Very difficult to go there. From Anadyr we accessed it. We got a helicopter; with a helicopter we went there. I was not in a strong position, because without research in a new society, what can you do? So, basically, he did the film, and I was able to give him some advice here and there. Just as I mentioned, you know. We covered subsistence techniques, that was absolutely necessary. I wish we could stay longer to do some fishing and reindeer breeding, because the Eskimos breed some reindeer, working in the sovkhoz there, together with the Chukchi. We didn't have time to do it, but we covered the main institutions which are the trading store, the school, and the community council and the different farms. So, we got a rounded-up picture of an Arctic community, which probably is the only one in existence.

It took maybe two weeks in 1992...[29] Very short. Very short trip, poorly prepared or not prepared at all. I had provided the camera and film stock. I brought the camera and the film materials from Canada.

Was it a commissioned film? How did you do it?

I mean, there was a studio here in Tallinn that was interested in it, with Peeter Eelsaare. I provided the equipment and stock. They provided air tickets and a little funding. But in the Soviet time it was not expensive. They had money. Russian money, roubles they had. No problem. Arvo Iho produced one version. And after that it was re-edited in Montreal by a commercial outfit and a very good editor, very very good editor. A young boy, brilliant. And then it was sold I think to Finnish television or the other television networks. And Peeter Eelsaare got some money out of it. Got a few thousand dollars.[30]

So, it was partly an Estonian film?

I would say it is an Estonian film. I would say that it is basically an Estonian film. All of the editing that was done in Montreal was very good, but they used basically the work that was done already by Arvo Iho here. Finnish television should have a BETA of it because Markku Lehmuskallio used this BETA recently for his film on Chukotka.[31] I saw the material he has used.

We have to move on to the next phase in your life… When did you leave Canada for Bulgaria?

About 10 years ago. I retired and decided that I didn't want to stay any longer in Canada, because, you know, very cold and I had enough of teaching, and I wanted a new life. So, I donated my books to the University library and sold my house and with a small suitcase I landed in Bulgaria, which was in a very poor condition at that moment. And because my parents were Bulgarian, I spoke some of the language and I started some activities there. First thing that I organised was to select a Muslim Bulgarian community, they are called Pomak. A Muslim Bulgarian community in the mountains near the Greek border. And I began with the organisation of video ethnography training project. It was not as interesting as in Siberia. In Siberia the local people wanted to learn, they were intellectually alive. You know, there was desire for knowledge, but down there nothing. So, but anyhow we did something. We got some experiments

but hardly any results, except that two of our trainees, one Pomak and one Gypsy, became almost professional videographers of commercial weddings, christenings, and ceremonies of various kinds. They filmed them, they have cameras, now digital cameras, and they film weddings. No wedding can take place in the village without their participation, their filming it.

In Bulgaria you made *Muslim Labyrinth* and the pensioner film.[32] You were working a lot with Antonii Donchev?

Antonii Donchev is an editor, essentially. And because he's a very good editor and helper he should be considered a film director, although usually we don't have film directors, we never use the title of film director, you see. But he's a very good editor and he helps.

But tell me a little about the pensioner film because you studied this…

I did not study particularly this family. The World Bank during the mid 1990s was conducting all sorts of poverty assessment surveys in the Balkans. I participated initially in a poverty assessment, serving Macedonia. And that was very difficult for me because they use special quantitative investigation technics. Then they asked me to organise a qualitative survey of poverty among retired people in Bulgaria. So, I got a sample of 50 families, retired couples in the city, in the village, etc. And among them was this family that we filmed. Now, at the end of my survey, I wrote a monograph about that. The World Bank told me that we hear that you are interested in documentary films, etc. Why don't you make a film of your choice? You define the subject and the pensioners, so we could use it in our classes, in our training seminar. I said why not and that is how we made this film.

You told me that it is a very sad film.

It is a sad film. It is a sad film because their situation is very difficult. They survive on a pension of something around $60–70 a month. Now in a city environment, that means that they don't have a vegetable garden, they don't have a cow, they don't have a goat to give them some produce, nothing. And it is difficult, difficult to survive.[33]

During the festival you have said many times: oh, this is a good film, this is a happy film. I guess that probably everyone prefers to see happy films. Was studying Bulgarian pensioners and filming them difficult experience for you?

It was a sad experience because their situation is hopeless. They don't know what to do in order to survive in the situation. None of them can find a job. They depend on their daughter for food, so you know, their friends are close to death. The subject is not a happy one, the subject is difficult. So, that has to come to the screen, the difficulty of the subject. Of course, that's why we're making the film.

Did you have to make many ethical decisions?

We made two versions because the first version that we made was sort of rejected by the bank. Our principal protagonist was a communist. And that came out on the screen very clearly. He was writing articles for the local communist weekly. So, there was an ideological side of it. And the whole film was negative, you see. It described a hopeless atmosphere. The bank didn't like that. The bank liked some suggestions, positive suggestions about how pensioners could make some kind of a living, live better. That is why we had to make a second version and include these two cases at the end of pensioners who started raising cows, cattle, etc, etc. And what they were doing very well.

And now again you are studying people, again helping with filmmaking. Can you talk about your most recent project?

In the Himalayas? That project depends on my daughter Anna Balikci. She studied anthropology at SOAS, at the University of London and finished her dissertation there. She has done several years of fieldwork in the central eastern Himalayas. In the ancient Kingdom called Sikkim, it is between Nepal and Bhutan. And her work is on ritual. She

has a book coming out of her dissertation. Her work is on the ritual of the Bhutia. The Bhutia are the dominant Tibetan group, they are immigrants from northeastern Tibet from the 15–16th century. They established the kingdom. The King is a Bhutian. When they arrived, they found a local tribe called the Lepcha. The Lepcha have been there since time immemorial. They are the local, traditional tribe. They speak a Tibeto-Burman language. And traditionally they were hunters-gatherers, definitely with slash and burn dry rice farming some of it, and other species also they cultivated in traditional times, bamboo houses anciently, etc. Now, we decided to start filming among the Lepcha. The reason was that we found a young Lepcha man, Lepcha boy who had studied art in Calcutta and he was interested in filming. And he had made a film with a friend of his, as sort of amateur activity, on building a bamboo bridge, how you built a bridge made of bamboo in the Himalayas. Not an easy task to build a bridge there. OK, now. I provided the camera and very modestly we started work right near his village. The name of the boy is Dawa Lepcha. Very amiable young man. The Lepcha are full of attention, consideration, respect and admiration for the other. You know, they are very respectful, they are so different from the Balkan people who are really wild. So, there we had to train him. In the film that he had made on the bridge building he did not have a protagonist. He filmed only groups. He seemed unable to pull one person out of the group and concentrate on him. Second, all the people he filmed from the back, he could not film the faces because he's shy to point the camera. And so I spent two months with him every day, making exercises in the village. So, we would go about the village, see what people are doing, film them, then I would make comments at the moment of filming. And in the evening, we came back home. We had a television set. If there was electricity, we would look at the material. I made further criticisms and that way we went on. And till now he has exposed about 100 hours tapes, mostly on Shamanism and rituals because that is my daughter's field. He works now under the direction of my daughter, filming essentially ritual. But I also give advice when I go there. We have a very good shaman. He's 73–74 years old this year. At the beginning he did not want to be filmed, but after he understood that, you know, we are good people, he sort of…

We have some very excellent material. For instance, I have seen the material that Dawa shot of a shamanistic séance for a hunter, relatively young in his 40s. A hunter comes and invites the shaman to increase his hunting spiritual powers through shamanistic means, and the shaman does so. And very interesting, the séance is intelligible for a Western audience. And now we're going to film, as soon as I go back, or even before, Dawa is going to film alone. This young man is going to hunt, hunting successfully, and performing himself additional rituals in the mountain until he has a kill. When he comes back, continuing hunting ritual activity. So, this subject is extremely interesting – the link between shamanistic activity and hunting. And many other films we will have. Basically, we are creating a video archive of Lepcha ritual life. In 1949, Halfdan Siiger,[34] a Danish anthropologist, was there and he published two volumes of chants. We follow in video Siiger's collection, and we add to it a lot. So, we will have a library. And after we finished with the Lepcha, which maybe in a year or so, we will continue with the Tibetan Bhutia for a few years and then with the Nepalese Limbo. Our long-range aim is to make collections of rituals of three Himalayan tribes.

So, you have plans for many years ahead?

Yeah, for the rest of my life. To help my daughter. That's essentially helping my daughter in this field, which is always the same, the use of audio-visual recording strategies for the preservation and revitalisation of traditional cultures. Usually minority marginal cultures of the Fourth

World. That's what I have done all my life.

And now a bit more personal question. Looking back at your life – you were involved in filmmaking in many different places –, did it force your life to take certain turns? Is there any connection between your family life and your professional life?

No, because I was doing my fieldwork in summer. In winter I had my family. I had my teaching at university. I had a stable position at university. Only one winter I was away, that is the Eskimos. That was difficult but after that I have conducted all my fieldwork, filming, etc., in summers. In Canada we have long summer vacations, four months. But that did not interrupt my family life because I could return. On September 1 I would be home until June.

Is there anything you would have loved to film but for some reasons you couldn't? Are there any projects you wanted to do at certain moments of your life?

You see, I'm certain that, unconsciously, we are following sort of the Victorian explorers' tradition. Whether we like it or not, that's the way it goes. We have been unconsciously influenced by certain deep-lying stereotypes or archetypes about Noble Savages, extremely exotic places… Our dreams about exotic nations and exotic places were established during the 18th century, precisely the time when Rousseau was writing, when Cook was exploring and when Bougainville was navigating in the South Seas. With the Eskimos the same thing. The Eskimos are probably the most famous primitive tribe in the world. If you get a hold of old Lanterna Magica slide programs called "People of the British Empire" – there are altogether about 80 of them – you see that the first are the Eskimos. The Eskimos are the first among the people of the British Empire. British explorers essentially rely on the very old, very descriptive accounts on the Igloolik Eskimos, from 1830s. Popular writers, not only in Britain but also in Germany and in France, got hold of these accounts and they wrote books for young boys. This boys' literature sort of structured the mind of the Western public about exploration. Also, the classic accounts of Cook, the objects that they brought, the drawings – we are the heirs of this Victorian tradition. I mean the visual ethnographers – we are the heirs. No wonder that the films were like works on Bushman in Kalahari Desert… So, we are really looking for the pristine, pure, traditional culture. Now, in these traditional cultures, that's my belief, there are certain that are purer than others. And I think that there are three of them: the first are the Eskimos, the second are the Bedouins, and the third are the South Seas, Polynesia. So you see, Flaherty got two of them, he did not get the Bedouins. I didn't get the South Seas. I'm interested in deserts. Open spaces, deserts and mountains.

Notes

1 Conrad M. Arensberg (1910–1997) was an American scholar who helped to shift the focus of anthropology from the study of exotic primitive peoples to the examination of complex modern societies.

2 Nagra is a brand of portable audio recorders produced from 1951 in Switzerland. Nagra-brand tape recorders were the de facto standard sound recording systems for motion picture and non-video television production from the 1960s until the 1990s.

3 Knud Rasmussen (1879–1933) was a Danish-Inuit explorer and ethnologist who made several expeditions to Greenland and the American Arctic, studying various tribes in that vast region. He has been called the father of Eskimology.

4 Kaj Birket-Smith (1893–1977) was a Danish philologist and anthropologist studying the way of life and language of the Inuit. He was a member of Knud Rasmussen's 1921 Thule expedition.

5 Franz Boas (1858–1942) was a German-born American anthropologist and pioneer of modern anthropology. In 1883, Boas went to Baffin Island to conduct research on the impact of the physical environment on native Inuit migrations. He continued to study the Inuit throughout his academic carrier.

6 Apparently, Balikci does not correctly remember the name of the cameraman. There is no Kenneth Kennedy in the credit list of the Net-

silik films, instead Kenneth Campbell is listed as a cinematographer.

7 Richard 'Ricky' Leacock (1921–2011) was a British-born cinematographer and documentary film director. He was one of the pioneers of direct cinema and *cinéma verité*. In the late 1950s, he made several educational films for the Physical Science Study Committee that was based in Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to improve the teaching of high school physics.

8 The films were produced and directed by Quentin Brown and were released as *The Netsilik Eskimo Series* in 1967.

9 John Marshall (1932–2005) was an American anthropologist, activist and acclaimed documentary filmmaker best known for his work in Namibia's Kalahari Desert recording the lives of the Jul'hoansi (also called the !Kung Bushmen).

10 Robert Flaherty (1884–1951) was an American filmmaker who directed and produced the first commercially successful feature-length documentary film, *Nanook of the North* (1922). The narrative documentary was made in close collaboration with the Eskimo protagonists in the Canadian Arctic. Flaherty is considered the 'father' of both the documentary and the ethnographic film.

11 For more information on the *Netsilik Film Series* see Balikci 1989; 2009.

12 Timothy Asch (1932–1994) was an anthropologist, photographer, and ethnographic filmmaker. Along with Marshall and Gardner, Asch played an important role in the development of visual anthropology in the US. He is particularly known for his film on Yanomamö Indians of Venezuela.

13 Patsy was Timothy Asch's wife and collaborator in filmmaking. She was the sound recordist and editor of their films.

14 Balikci refers to the film *Through These Eyes* (Laird 2003) which revisits the politics and controversy of this unprecedented era in American education reform, focusing on the Netsilik Eskimo films. Balikci is one of the main protagonists of the film.

15 See Balikci 1989.

16 Robert Gardner (1925–2014) was an American visual anthropologist and documentary filmmaker. He was the director of the Film Study Center at Harvard University from 1956 to 1997.

17 The film (Young 1970) portrays the life and hunting skill of the Netsilik Eskimos at a seal hunting camp. It shows six families trekking across the sea ice and setting up camp, building a ceremonial igloo, butchering a seal, playing games, and packing up to search for game in another area.

18 Jay Ruby is a visual anthropologist. He has published numerous studies about photography, film, popular culture and produced several ethnographic films and also founded graduate and undergraduate programs in the anthropology of visual communication at Temple University.

19 *Posyolka* – in Russian a settlement, a bigger village.

20 Mark Badger is an American anthropologist and filmmaker specialising in visual ethnography and representation.

21 Eva Schmidt (1948–2002), Hungarian linguist and folklorist, worked and lived among the Khanty people in Western Siberia for more than two decades.

22 See Bader et al. 1992.

23 Vincent Carelli (1953) is a Franco-Brazilian anthropologist and documentary filmmaker, creator of the Video in the Villages project (1987) which trains indigenous filmmakers in Brazil.

24 Terence Turner (1935–2015) was an anthropologist who did extensive ethnographic and activist work with the Kayapo from central Brazil. Turner helped found the Kayapo Video Project, which uses an innovative media strategy to document illegal extractive activities and land grabbing by Brazilians in Kayapo territory.

25 Tatyana and Timofei Moldanov are the founding members of the Association for the Salvation of Ugra and the organisers of Kazym ethnographic film seminar in 1991.

26 For more information on the video project see Balikci and Badger 1992; Badger and Balikci 1993 and Danilko 2017.

27 Arvo Iho (1949) is an internationally known Estonian film director, cinematographer and photographer, who has made both documentary and fiction films.

28 *Bumagi* – in Russian papers, written documents.

29 Actually, the film trip took place at the end of August and in September 1989.

30 The film trip to Chukotka was organised and financed by Eesti Kultuurfilm, Peeter Eelsaare was its director. The French (and English) version of the film – *Chronique de Sireniki* (*Chronicles of Sireniki*) – was released by Pixart studio in Montreal in 1990. The final editing of the film was done by Patrice Sauvé, who had just graduated from film school. In 2001, Arvo Iho produced the Estonian version of the film, titled *Sireniki*

kroonika, with a slightly changed voice-over commentary.

31 Balikci probably means the film *Fata Morgana* (2005), which is a documentary mixed with animation and was directed by Anastasia Lapsui and Markku Lehmuskallio. The film provides a look into the history of the Chukchi people, their colonisation and modern-day survival.

32 See Balikci 1999; Balikci and Donchev 2004.

33 For more information on the visual ethnography seminar and the Balkan films see Balikci 2007.

34 Halfdan Siiger (1911–1999) was a Danish ethnologist and the founding Professor of the Institute for the History of Religions at Aarhus University. In 1947–1950 he participated in the third Danish Central Asian Expedition to Afghanistan, Pakistan and India, conducting fieldwork in 1948 among the Kalasha, 1949 among the Lepcha in Sikkim, and 1950 among the Boro in Assam.

References

Badger, Mark and Asen Balikci. 1993. Towards a Native Visual Ethnography in Siberia. – *Polar Record* 29 (169): 145. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0032247400023603.

Balikci, Asen. 1989. Anthropology, Film and the Arctic Peoples: The First Forman Lecture. – *Anthropology Today* 5 (2): 4–10. DOI: https://doi.org/10.2307/3033138.

Balikci, Asen. 2007. Visual Ethnography Among the Balkan Pomak. – *Visual Anthropology Review* 23 (1): 92–96.

Balikci, Asen. 2009. The Netsilik Film Series. – *Visual Anthropology* 22 (5): 384–392. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/08949460903187196.

Balikci, Asen and Mark Badger. 1992. Siberian Seminar: In the Village of Kazim, Activists Learn to Portray Their Own Culture with Video. – *Cultural Survival Quarterly Magazine*. https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/siberian-seminar-village-kazim-activists-learn-portray (accessed October 26, 2021).

Danilko, Yelena. 2017. "Kazymskiy perevorot": k istorii pervogo vizual'no-antropologicheskogo proyekta v Rossii. – *Sibirskiye istoricheskiye issledovaniya* 3: 93–112. [Данилко, Елена. 2017. «Казымский переворот»: к истории первого визуально-антропологического проекта в России. – *Сибирские исторические исследования* 3: 93–112.]

Filmography

Badger, Mark; Asen Balikci and Claudia Clark. 1992. *Siberia Through Siberian Eyes*. KUAC-TV; University of Alaska Fairbanks, 52 mins.

Balikci, Asen. 1999. *A Month in the Life of Ephtim D.: A Portrait of a Bulgaria Pensioner*. Documentary Education Resources, 56 mins.

Balikci, Asen and Antonii Donchev. 2002. *Muslim Labyrinths*. IWF, 52 mins.

Brown, Quentin. 1967. *Netsilik Eskimo Series*. Documentary Educational Resources, 630 mins.

Flaherty, Robert. 1922. *Nanook of the North*. Les Frères Revillon, 78 mins.

Husmann, Rolf and Manfred Kruger. 2009. *The Professional Foreigner: Asen Balikci and Visual Ethnography*. Documentary Educational Resources, 60 mins.

Iho, Arvo. 2001. *Sireniki kroonika*. Cumulus Projekt, 56 mins.

Laird, Charles. 2003. *Through These Eyes*. Documentary Educational Resources, 55 mins.

Lapsui, Anastasia and Markku Lehmuskallio. 2004. *Fata Morgana*. Giron Filmi, 57 mins.

Laugrand, Frédéric Benjamin. 2016. *Asen Balikci. Livre 16. Le film ethnographique (...) sous le patronage de M. Mead*. – *Anthropologie et Societes, 15 juin 2016*. https://www.anthropologie-societes.ant.ulaval.ca/asen-balikci-livre-16-le-film-ethnographique-sous-le-patronage-de-m-mead (accessed October 8, 2021).

Sauvé, Patrice. 1990. *Chronique de Sireniki*. Eesti Kultuurfilm, Productions Pixart, 56 mins.

Turin, Mark. 2003. *Asen Balikci interviewed by Mark Turin in Gangtok, Sikkim, India, 11th January 2003 – Part 3*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHD3TfoMApw (accessed October 8, 2021).

Young, Robert M. 1970. *The Eskimo: Fight for Life*. National Film Board of Canada, 60 mins.