

# The Ethnographer and the camera in the audiovisual production of informal producers

## *El etnógrafo y la cámara en la producción audiovisual de productores informales<sup>1</sup>*

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*Filmar lo que sucede se vuelve más complejo  
que filmar lo que hacemos suceder*  
Carmen Guarini, Meykinof (2005)

### **Abstract**

*This work studies the use of the camera as a device for dialogue, interaction and reflection between the audiovisual ethnographer and the informal producers of Santo Domingo de los Colorados Ecuador. In addition, it explains through a series of questions how the audiovisual ethnographer thinks and approaches the methodological and theoretical processes in the field work. As a result I obtained the necessity to strengthen the usefulness of the audiovisual text as a language that, on the one hand, evidence scientific rigor and, on the other hand, allows to rescue multiples agencies and think about the theory of Audiovisual Anthropology, considering other paths in the creation of knowledge.*

### **Keywords**

*Anthology, methodology, ethnography, audiovisual, performance.*

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- 1 El presente artículo fundamenta uno de los resultados obtenidos durante la etnografía audiovisual de mi proyecto de investigación doctoral: *Análisis de las representaciones en las narrativas audiovisuales de productores informales en Ecuador a partir de una etnografía audiovisual de sus estilos, escenografías y distribuciones comerciales*, bajo la tutoría de: Dr. Jorge Grau Rebollo de la Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona y Dr. Juan Ignacio Robles Picón de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.
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## **Resumen**

Este trabajo estudia el uso de la cámara como dispositivo de diálogo, interacción y reflexión entre etnógrafo audiovisual y los productores informales de Santo Domingo de los Colorados Ecuador. Además, expone mediante una serie de interrogantes cómo el etnógrafo audiovisual piensa y aborda los procesos metodológicos y teóricos en el trabajo de campo, obteniendo como resultados la necesidad de potenciar la utilidad del texto audiovisual como lenguaje que evidencia el rigor científico que permite rescatar múltiples agencias y reflexionar sobre la teoría de la Antropología Audiovisual, considerando otros caminos en la producción de conocimientos.

## **Palabras claves**

Antropología, metodología, etnografía, audiovisual, representación.

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## **Preproduction**

### *Introduction*

Audiovisual Anthropology focuses its interest in observing, describing, studying and recording the various visual and sound manifestations of the human symbolic nature. These manifestations are perceived and captured in different contexts where images and sounds are recreated in social representations and cultural expressions (Ardèvol, 1994, Grau Rebollo, 2002, Guarini & De Angelis, 2014, Hockings 2003, Lisón Arcal 1999, Mead, 1995, Piault, 2002, Robles Picon, 2012, Rouch, 1995, Ruby, 2007).

It has not been easy to position Audiovisual Anthropology and its audiovisual ethnographic methods at the level of scientific rigor. But it is paradoxical to think that, in our time, where the audiovisual is prevailing the studies carried out by this discipline branch are still imprecise. The task has been difficult, but in this struggle against uncertainty, it has been proven that the constant representation of the image drawn, narrated and portrayed in the field notebooks (Grau Rebollo, 2008) has been proven in the path of epistemological work. The record shows that yearning for describing and projecting “the real” and evidencing “being there” of situations, smells,

colors, temperatures and feelings captured by the body of the ethnographer. Even more so when the body that observes, listens and interacts with the subjects and symbolic objects during the fieldwork does not appear invisible, but integrated to the context and its protagonists.

However, can a camera bias the ethnographer's scientific gaze on fieldwork? This question has boomed, rebounded and encouraged various debates on the representation of alterity in the social sciences scenarios. It cannot be denied that the presence of the camera in the ethnographic work is still strange for the cultural agents studied. But this strangeness does not present itself in a negative way, but as a stimulus of multiple situations in the collaborative participation between ethnographer and cultural agent.

The camera can activate the human memory, for example the memories around the objects, places, events and cultural artifacts. These memories serve both the ethnographer and the cultural agent, because they recreate situations that help to understand certain social phenomena. In addition, this device exercises as an audiovisual and photographic field notebook, since it enriches, facilitates and provides greater possibilities of analysis and appropriation of the studied (Ardèvol & Pérez Tolón, 1995; Boudreault-Fournier, Caiuby Novaes, & Gitirana Hijiki, 2017, Gonzalez, 2011, Grau Rebollo, 2008, Guarini & De Angelis, 2014).

Therefore, the efforts to academically position Audiovisual Anthropology and its ethnographic methods are evidenced in various researches carried out by different Latin American institutions such as the Master's Degree in Visual Anthropology from FLACSO, Ecuador, the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar of Ecuador with the International Colloquium of documentary film, the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History, the Visual Anthropology area of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the University of Buenos Aires, the Chilean Journal of Anthropology, the Masters in Visual Anthropology of the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, the Visual Anthropology Conference at the National School of Anthropology and History of Mexico, the Image and Sound Laboratory in Anthropology at the University of São Paulo, the Visual Anthropology Laboratory at the Federal University of Pernambuco, the International Ethnographic Film Festival of Recife from Brazil, Festival of Ethnographic Cinema of Ecuador, among other platforms and institutions that carry out audiovisual studies (Andrade & Zamorano, 2012; Mardones & Riffo, 2011).

These platforms have allowed to have an ample record of events, memories, representations, imaginaries, rituals, daily life and contexts

that serve to recognize and to differentiate situations of the wide quilt of cultural, political and religious pieces of Latin America. Ethnographic records that facilitate the visualization, analysis and evidence of details that open other routes for anthropological knowledge that in direct observation, participation and written description of ethnographic work could not be transmitted. These records can be reproduced for the affordability and instantaneousness of the new world system called the internet and the low technological cost. Affordability that expands and enriches the cultural and contextual analysis that are presented as consistent metaphors of the images reflected infinitely in parallel mirrors (Ardevol & Estalella, 2010, Caiuby Novaes, 1993, Cárdenas & Duartes, 2011, Hine, 2004; Rose, 2007).

Nowadays, diverse social manifestations are represented in audiovisual narratives, as in the case study of this investigation, whose objective is to reflect on the use of the camera in the ethnographic audiovisual work as a device for dialogue, interaction and reflection between the audiovisual ethnographer and the perspectives of the preproduction, production and postproduction of the informal producers in the contexts of the filming.

In it, it was found that the easy access and low cost of the digital video cameras have allowed to construct audiovisual narratives independent of the economic phenomena of the formal commerce. These narratives reproduce situations that demarcate social stereotypes, states of mind, desires, dreams, hopes, ideals, imaginaries that reinforce the memory of a family, community, city or country. Dynamic representations of social creativity that face the cultural and political situations that surround them.

There are various audiovisual currents in Latin America that try to emulate from their local perceptions the styles of Hollywood cinema. In the particular case of Ecuador we find studies on these currents such as *Ecuador Bajo Tierra*: videographies in parallel circulation that contains a detailed catalog of short films and feature films made in 8 provinces represented by 11 cities in the country from 1980 to 2009 (Alvear & León, 2009 ). Likewise, *Chonewood*: ethnography, popular cinema and commissioned murder in Chone, which is an in-depth study of the intertwining between low-budget popular audiovisual productions on the Ecuadorian coast and the accounts of hired assassins (Vaca, 2015).

For this research, audiovisual ethnography was performed alternately to two producers of audiovisual narratives in DVD format, from the city of Santo Domingo de los Colorados, from 2013 to the beginning of 2017. The

characteristics of these producers delimited specific topics of the sample to such as: (a) informal producers without formal education in cinematography or performing arts, or (b) their trades are within informality or unskilled labor; (c) audiovisual narratives in DVD format are marketed in circuits of informal commerce and d) that they have not received state economic aid.

During the bibliographical review, planning and execution of the field work, a series of reflections and questions were presented that gave way to this article. Planning adapted to the contexts, the changing and spontaneous conditions of the ethnographic experience between the anthropologist, the camera and the informal producers.

This article is structured in the three phases of audiovisual production. The preproduction that approaches the introduction starting with the reflection to the constant growth of the Audiovisual Anthropology in Latin America and exposes the objective of this document, also exposes the theoretical and methodological questions. The production is conceived from an ethical standpoint that clarifies the role played by the audiovisual ethnographer in fieldwork vis-à-vis informal producers. The postproduction shows the discussions and the feedback, reaching agreements that benefit both the anthropological work and the work of the informal producers. Finally, the considerations that expose the need to give greater relevance to the audiovisual ethnographic document are presented.

#### BETWEEN THEORIES AND METHODOLOGIES

The theoretical anchor of this research is based on the view that audiovisual ethnography has had as a creator of scientific knowledge in the study of cultural representation linked to the analysis of representation in Audiovisual Anthropology, understanding that the knowledge of the anthropological work is generated, to a large extent, thanks to the experiences of ethnographic practices.

The epistemological approach allowed access to aspects of material culture, economic condition and biographical trajectories of informal producers. The confluence between the anthropological knowledge theory approached and the ethnographic audiovisual practice generated reflections that focus on three aspects.

- a. Knowledge about their material culture that starts from the empirical relation that these objects have contributed in their instruction

and social interaction. Examples are the tools used in the field work that represent the work, the economy and the purchasing power of an individual in society. These same tools are transformed into the props of their productions, which in most cases are associated as security, defense or violence tools in their audiovisual narratives.

- b. The economic condition represented by the habitat was characterized by urban marginality. Informal producers, coming from economically limited migrant peasant families and lacking professional qualifications, are forced to experience subsistence labor of unskilled labor and informal commerce, although they accept the rules and irregularities of the world around them, they seek to overcome obstacles and long to live in dignified conditions, a reality that is not different from the social aspirations of those who have the cultural and economic means. Their aspirations are constantly represented as happiness, family, social ascent, quality of life, good living among other desires.
- c. The biographical trajectories are represented in their audiovisual narratives as imaginaries where they deposit both part of their memory and what they hope to become. Self-represented aspects in their perceptions of habitat and *habitus*, manifesting themselves as a “*bricoleur*” in terms of their spontaneous performance, improvised scenes and the use of spaces and times represented in their narratives (Capevielle, 2011; Mélice, 2009).

To approach the field work, the methodological model of audiovisual ethnography is used from the following questions: how to differentiate in the field work the role of the ethnographer and the camera in front of the cameraman of the informal productions?, how to reach the rigorous audiovisual observation demanded for the anthropological discipline? How are images woven in written language and audiovisual language? All of them respond to questions that guide this reflection and that, moreover, they were cleared by the reading of multiple texts that accredited diverse answers from experiences and theories teorías (Ardèvol, 1994; Asch & Asch, 1995; Cardenas & Duarte, 2011; De Brigard, 1995; Grau Rebollo, 2005; MacDougall, 1995; Pault, 2002; Potts, 2015; Robles Picon, 2012, Emile, 1995).

We chose three formal modalities to represent the audiovisual text: observational cinema, “participatory documentary” and the implementation of the audiovisual device as a tool for interaction, provocation and reflection.

The first allowed to give importance to the “long-sequence planes with depth of field and the preservation of the spatial and temporal unit of the events during the filming and montage” (Lacerda, 2015, p.1). The second, “participatory documentary” or “interactive mode” as defined by Bill Nichols facilitates the “fully approach to the human sensory system: looking, hearing and speaking as events are perceived and allowing a response” (1997, p. 79), characteristics that lead us to the third modality and which are also evident in the cinema of Jean Rouch and Edgar Morín called *cinéma vérité* in his filmography *Chronicle of a summer* (1961), according to Rouch the interaction leads to the use of the camera as a device that produces the “truth of cinema” (Canals i Vilageliu, 2011). This act is evidenced in two aspects: first, the camera as mediator between informal producer and audiovisual ethnographer (photograph 1). Second, the researcher reflects on the self-representation that cultural agents perform in their audiovisual narratives and in their own documentary representation. This generates a sort of double mirror between the reality captured and represented by the ethnographer and the reality represented by the informal producers (Boudreault-Fournier et al., 2017 and Caiuby Novaes, 1993).

The theory dictates that “the objectives of observational cinema are directed towards the analysis of behavior, while the direct cinema tries to reflect the spontaneity of the situation” (Ardèvol 1998, 231). It was considered therefore that the cinematographic treatment has some formal characteristics obtained by documentaries like *Meykinof* (2005) of Carmen Guarini, in which the look towards the realization of a film of fiction becomes object of anthropological study. Guarini constantly ponders and questions what her camera has captured. Her ethnographic view revolves around the interaction, relationship and action that exists between the “immanence of the audiovisual image” and the realism of the “action-image” (Deleuze 1984, 178). In the documentary we listen to her voice on off as a soundtrack that unites the blocks through the analysis and her stories. Likewise, David MacDougall’s approach in *Gandhi’s Children* (2008), where the ways of representing *realities, rituals of rivalry, friendship, cruelty and generosity* are uncovering the personality of the students. And lastly, *The Gleaners and Gleaner* (2000) by Agnès Varda, who shows the methods in its collection when she appears on the scene evidencing her look. That look that turns the camera into a narrative instrument of accumulation and recycling. This film shows how the boundaries between author and ways of representing the subject of gleaning or collecting in the film and the subject in itself



are blurred. These treatments helped to define the modes of representation of a methodology that specified, perceived, evidenced and activated the theoretical concepts in the audiovisual document.

### **Photography 1**

#### **The camera as an interaction device**



Exterior of the hacienda of friends of the producers, first day of shooting. One of the actors tells me: “Take a picture of me with my weapons, to frame it and put it in the living room of my house” in Manga del Cura (Manabí).

Source: photographic archive of the author (2016)

The filming was done individually, using the camera in hand or tripod and an external microphone, which was somewhat limited and laborious. The technical and human resource limitations influence the time of filming and editing. The difficulties, which can be converted into opportunities later, are presented in the contexts of audiovisual ethnographic filming. In our case study, we tried not to modify the technical errors presented at the time of the filming of the audiovisual narrative, or the final documentary. This interaction allowed us to capture the audiovisual record as a holistic exposition of the observed reality and to dispense with other resources such as talking heads or voiceover during the assembly.



## **Production**

### *Between findings and analysis*

All audiovisual ethnography is based on the empirical and theoretical knowledge of its cultural agent. From the first approach to the field one must be honest and make clear the role of the ethnographer. In the contexts of filming of the audiovisual realizations the occasional artists confused the presence of the ethnographer with the camera of the cameraman of the film, this situation was to be uncomfortable for the cameraman of the production because he had to repeat the take; then how to differentiate in the field work the role of the ethnographer and the camera in front of the cameraman of informal productions? In principle, to repeat again and again the archetypes arranged in the established answers, during the ethnographic position of the ethnographer in the field of work.

### **Photography 2**

#### **Cameraman of filming, between his role and my role**



Exterior, second day of shooting in Manga del Cura (Manabí).

Source: photographic archive of the author (2016)

Being clear the role, the camera stopped being an instrument of observation and exploration and happened to be part of the participatory and reflexive ethnographic method. Therefore, both ethnographer and camera were integrated into the natural development of informal producers and the demands of filming, taking advantage of the circumstances of interaction to exchange views and ideas of what was captured. An example (photo 2) is the favorable event in which informal producers, who were already familiar with the cameras, continually interjected the lens of the ethnographer with his gaze and conversations, resources that were exploited and included in the documentary as modes of reflexive intervention between producers and ethnographer. This situation of collaboration did not bias the anthropological view, on the contrary, it strengthened and generated spontaneity in the correlation. The development of this integration allowed the dialectical link between the adopted theory and the captured audiovisual reality. The communications favor both the audiovisual data and the writing that arouses the anthropological knowledge, even more so when the ethnographer became for the production a theoretical expert, technician in makeup, photographer, actor, cameraman and even publicist and seller of tickets of the premiere of the audiovisual narrative.

During the filming of ethnography we are concerned with framing, exposing, mediating and interacting with the conceptual terms framed in anthropological theories. As a result of these concerns comes the following question: how to achieve the rigorous audiovisual observation demanded by anthropological discipline? There are no specific formulas, procedures, rituals or techniques to achieve an audiovisual veracity. What does exist is a rigorous reflection on the place of the anthropological audiovisual view that contributes new epistemological positions that result from the record or capture work model, from the empirical, methodological and theoretical approach that has been made in relation with the studied cultural agent. This approach forms the analytical view of the ethnographer on the audiovisual, a look that seeks to describe with honesty and vivacity the event filmed in its natural environment. In addition, it forms the ethnographer's position vis-a-vis what is captured with the camera, whether caused by the presence of the camera or produced by the spontaneity of the cultural agent. Therefore, the scientific rigor is presented throughout the process of the investigation of audiovisual ethnography. In the ethnographic scenes the conceptual and cinematographic components are revealed and animated. Observation and

participation detonate descriptions and interpretations of the investigated material culture. The conversations and the interviews stimulated memories that, in telling them, react emotionally to the informal producers in front of their contexts of recording.

### **Photography 3**

#### **The place of the audiovisual anthropological view**



Interior Hospital removal of bullet scene in Santo Domingo de los Colorados  
Source: photographic archive of the author (2016)

The image (photograph 3) presents information on the process of filming of informal producers, which is feasible for this and other investigations. The audiovisual language acquires its significant ethnographic data when its methodology and process of interaction between ethnographer, camera and producer reaches the object of its reflection on the representation and on the image. Or, on the contrary, representation can be questioned and renewed as its immediate veracity present subjective biases versus the reality of the studied contexts. For this reason, during this research two techniques of descriptive registration were alternated to reach a rigorous observation: the first one that serves for the written academic language, was to write in the field book everything that happened outside the register of the camera, such

as daily life of the families of the informal producers or the conversations that were not produced in the contexts of filming of the audiovisual narrative, among others. For example, a family conversation during dinner, which refers to the place where the brother of one of the producers was killed and was now part of his narrative as the scene of the first death. Situation a little tense but significant because it revealed the symbolic and proper importance of the context for the audiovisual memory of the narrative. Also, it allowed to obtain the representative data for the producer since the scene describes and presents the skill, the force, the knowledge of the place and the vendetta turned into triumph of the main character.

Knowing the previous significant ethnographic data outside the context of filming enhances the second descriptive technique made with the camera, which as a rigorous record describes audiovisually how the scenes were constructed and represented in the shooting contexts. The description of audiovisual observation in this study represents the reflective gaze surrounding the context that evidences the formality of ethnographic “being there”. The two languages complement each other and generate details of the ethnographic data that escape when using only one of the methods of observation and description. In the same way, these techniques contribute substantial material to the memory of informal producers as text and audiovisual and to the scientific construction of anthropological knowledge.

Any information that contributes relevant information (or generates suspicion of being) to research during the field work is imbued with a significant ethnographic dimension. As ethnographers we cannot capture in our written or audiovisual descriptions the universal event of the context, we learn to be selective and this brings us to the significant fact. Therefore, the audiovisual data captured, represented and analyzed in the ethnographic processes is legitimized significantly thanks to the treatment of the categorical concept in the theory and its method of obtaining. Another concrete example in this research is that one of the informal producers uses in his artistic clothes ethnic elements of different national indigenous groups. At first glance, in (photo 4) the arrow and the bow form part of the props and characterization of the main character in the audiovisual narrative. Apparently this data should not transcend in the analysis, since it is presented explicitly in the character of Tarzan who represents. But the meaning changes when the instrument is used outside the recording context as a hunting and fishing weapon, and where the data takes on a significant

dimension when the use and social interaction of the elements in the culture of the informal producer fulfills another function.

#### **Photography 4**

##### **Meaning of the ethnographic method**



Exterior, Calle 29 de mayo, scene marketing audiovisual narratives DVD format, in Santo Domingo de los Colorados

Source: photographic archive of the author (2016)

Now, how are images woven in written language and audiovisual language with this data? When we speak of interlacing languages the greatest difficulty is in what we want to make known. Therefore, it is necessary to know the modalities of the audiovisual and written representations. According to this research the tissue between languages is presented from its three worlds: his family life, his work performance and audiovisual production, which happen between the fusion and functionality of his perceptions; spaces where they experience, listen, see and read the stories that then narrate and audiovisually represent. Audiovisual language would be responsible for rigorously exposing the complexities of dialogues, discontinuities and everyday interactions, while written language would expose interpretations, descriptions and analyzes.

One of the complexities of the fabric of the audiovisual language and therefore in the informal production is presented before the time and the space, which are fundamental factors. For example, Time in a scene became



ally when improvisation flowed between natural actors or in an enemy when it was necessary to repeat several times the same scene. The shooting space depended on the owners of the places where the scenes were recorded, because the producers can only run the shooting the day the scene becomes available. In addition, these spaces and times are subject to contradictory emotions on the part of the owners of the spaces and/or the relatives of the producers. It could happen that the day after the filming the owner of the place can retract his authorization and prohibit the continuity of the scene. This is presented by various circumstances of the stereotyped imaginary towards some occasional actors on the part of some proprietors. For this reason, the informal producers during the filming of the scene revise time and again the audiovisual material to be sure and try not to return to the place of filming. Also, this exercise proposed by producers saves work during the editing stage and allows to free space in the memory of the camera.

### **Photography 5** **Weaving pictures “in situ”**



Exterior, restaurant, Pedro David death scene in Santo Domingo de los Colorados  
Source: photographic archive of the author (2016)

For the ethnographer, (photograph 5) shows, on the one hand, the activity of the audiovisual fabric and, on the other hand, alludes to the metaphor

of the collector because informal producers discard unwanted images on the spot. Both an informal producer and an audiovisual ethnographer become collectors of images that are then woven to give logical order to their audiovisual fabrics. From this tapestry we can analyze, firstly, the complex structure between material culture, everyday family reality, work and performance of the informal producer represented in the audiovisual fabric. Secondly, the tapestry allowed us to understand the perceptions, availabilities, postures and skills of informal producers in relation to the needs of their audiovisual productions. This point was very helpful during the feedback and reflection of the work done, because it allowed the ethnographer to understand the positions of informal producers and thus avoid prejudices in the pursuit of scientific rigor. In addition, it provided meaning to elements of this fabric that were thought unimportant. Finally, the audiovisual fabric experimented with informal producers, ended up being a learning process for the ethnographer because it broadened the view of audiovisual and written description by linking anthropological knowledge with the empirical knowledge of the producer.

### **Photography 6** **Limited Spaces-Times**



Interior, house, scene discussion with cleaning assistant in Santo Domingo de los Colorados  
Source: photographic archive of the author (2016)



The (photo 6) presents times and spaces limited to its immediate reality. The fabric outside the picture is what the ethnographer describes in written form. For example, the shooting of the scene is interrupted because the cell phone of the owner of the house has disappeared from the dining room table. Of the group of natural actors there are several accused, the director angry and loudly requests that the cell phone appears. This situation does not appear in the ethnographic documentary by ethical decision before the informal producers because of the discomfort of the fact. But it is part of the seams that the audiovisual fabric leaves for another type of language such as writing. The observation, participation and reflection that remains together with the work of the informal producers broadens and enriches the ethnographic data. For this reason, this methodology brings us closer to our perceptions of reality and allows us, from the written ethnographic description, to rethink the ethnographic data and locate new signifiers during the development of the research. Finally, audiovisual ethnography allowed to recapitulate, detail and synthesize the reality observed during the tissue process.

## **Postproduction**

### *Between editing, discussion*

It is not an easy task to synthesize the audiovisual temporal space of ethnographic work during short-sequence editing. It is in this process where the audiovisual seams translated into small blocks of moving images have to coincide conceptually with the research objectives. The ethnographic audiovisual material without editing is consubstantial to the description written in the field notebook because both are published for scientific presentation. This work of audiovisual linkage can be done by the ethnographer independently as he does in written language. However, Jean Rouch (1995) proposed (before the digital era) that the editing should be done by an editor who did not participate in the shooting. Today, thanks to the facilities provided by portable software for non-linear editing, we can have a first draft of our audiovisual work as in all writing, and then work hand in hand with an expert, if so desired. According to this, “the process of assembling an ethnographic film would amount to the process of ethnographic writing, and the mounted film would be nothing more than an

ethnographic monograph expressed in images and sound” (Roca i Girona, (Comp.), & D ‘Argemir, 2010, p. 192).

The assembly of this research was carried out in three phases. In the first, the audiovisual ethnographer proposed a draft that was presented to the informal producers for analysis. The objective was to ensure that both the anthropological and the producers’ views were validated and accepted in the audiovisual narrative in which they are represented and represent, which allowed them to obtain authorization for the use of their images and the right of diffusion. The second phase was aimed at evaluating the audiovisual narrative; that is to say, to check the consistency of the sequences, to check whether or not the theoretical objectives were set and to analyze technical aspects in terms of sounds and images. To this end, feedback was received from the tutors of the research and from people from other disciplines who, with their eyes provide new elements to knowledge and ethnographic work. In the last phase we worked with a editor from the line of anthropological research with whom the material was technically compacted for future visualizations.

The collaborative experience between the ethnographer and the informal producers helped in the search for the objectives that are reflected in the recording, the analysis and the reflections that exist from the field work to the final documentary. Thus, for this research, the space-time represented in the audiovisual language reaches the same scientific value compared to the treatment of the ethnographic data of written language.

### *Considerations on the audiovisual ethnographic document*

The audiovisual ethnographic record from its beginnings has allowed to describe and to preserve memorable facts of times and spaces that the written language could not contain. This consideration is argued by the work of audiovisual ethnographers such as Jean Rouch, David MacDougall, Roger Canals, Carmen Guarini, and all those who use the medium of visual anthropology to expand their reflections.

The technological advance has allowed to position the camera as an integral device of transformation in the anthropological practice in methodological, theoretical design and in the construction of knowledge. The audiovisual document obliges us to rethink the ethnographic data, not so much by the cultural agents, but by the participation of the “us”. For this reason, during the ethnographic development it was possible to show that the processes of collaboration and interaction generated by the audiovisual

device allowed less abstract dimensions and closer to the social life of informal producers.

During field work, the use of the camera was intended to trigger dialogue, interaction and reflection between audiovisual ethnographers and informal producers. This consideration is given by Rouch in the face of “just distance or just distance,” when it comes to constructing a new truth (1995). Truth that allows us to understand the dialectical link between the adopted theory and the captured audiovisual reality. From this process, on the one hand, the disposition of the subjects was achieved, as they wanted to be represented, evidencing the “fidelity and feasibility” of the ethnographic data (Grau Rebollo, 2008). The audiovisual text, on the other hand, generates the third element as a spectator who re-interprets.

Therefore, we can consider that the audiovisual document also enabled the informal producer to build an idea about himself, a representation that helped to return that strange look towards the ethnographer and possibly the future viewer of the record. The crossing of glances vanishes the possibility of exoticism that can be generated during the interaction, it is here where we can experience the transfer of knowledge that dismantles and reveals other forms of epistemological construction within the anthropological discipline. These considerations leave us with the reflection that when we decide to register the reality it imposes itself with its interminable bifurcated paths composed by innumerable pieces that construct that framework called society. There, in the midst of this cross of ethnographic and empirical looks, the proximity of a certain capture of the human between informal producer and ethnographer appears in all its magnificence.

Last but not least, we must reflect and consider the areas denied for the disclosure of audiovisual documents, since the written text enjoys various sites of scientific dissemination, but the academy is still in debt to the spaces that value the scientific rigor of the audiovisual text. For this reason, it is imperative to consider the need to generate platforms closer to cultural agents and viewers, to continue in a network of correspondence, since these contributions broaden the theoretical reflection of the Audiovisual Anthropology, generating new critical views that allow review and reformulate methods and theories already addressed, besides proposing, from various networks other ways of producing knowledge.

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## **Movies**

- Crónica de un Verano (1961) Dirección Jean Rouch y Edgar Morín; duración 85m
- Meykinof (2005) Dirección Carmen Guarini; duración 60m
- Gandhi's Children (2008), Dirección David MacDougall; duración 3h 55m
- Los espigadores y la espigadora (2000) Dirección Agnès Varda; duración 82m

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