

## JEAN ROUCH, FILMMAKER, ANTHROPOLOGIST, ENGINEER, AND WHITE AFRICAN

José da Silva Ribeiro

ID+ Instituto de investigação em Design Cultura e Media, Instituto Politécnico do Cávado Ave, Barcelos, Portugal

---

### ABSTRACT

In Jean Rouch's meeting with Manoel de Oliveira, the latter situated him and his cinema as more African than European, and Jocelyne Rouch identified him with the title of the film *Moi, un Noir* (I, a Negro; Rouch, 1958) — that is him. Rouch is also an engineer at Ponts et Chaussées. No wonder his cinema reflects the poetry of iron and steel, as does Manoel de Oliveira's. Rouch's bridges and paths are also connecting people, cultures and societies. The relationship of the real as imagined in his films — fascination with authentic Dogon rites and possession phenomena and modern anthropology focused on displaced people, migrants living in big cities, and urban life — is thus remarkable. This text seeks to address four dimensions of Jean Rouch's path: situating him in the context of ethnographic film, revisiting the archives of *Chronique d'un Été* (Chronicle of a Summer; Rouch & Morin, 1960) 50 years after it was produced, Rouch's meeting with the Dogon and the "poetry of iron and steel" shared with Manoel de Oliveira, referring to his dimension as an engineer, filmmaker and anthropologist. Other equally important dimensions were left out, for they do not fit into this reflection<sup>1</sup>.

### KEYWORDS

ethnographic film, Jean Rouch, Manoel de Oliveira, Dogon, visual anthropology

---

## JEAN ROUCH, CINEASTA, ANTROPÓLOGO, ENGENHEIRO, AFRICANO BRANCO

### RESUMO

No encontro de Jean Rouch com Manoel de Oliveira, este situou-o e situou o seu cinema como mais africano que europeu e Jocelyne Rouch identificou-o com o título do filme *Moi, un Noir* (Eu, um Negro; Rouch, 1958) — é ele. Rouch é também engenheiro de pontes e estradas. Não admira, pois, que a poética do ferro e do aço esteja presente no seu cinema, ao lado de Manoel de Oliveira. As pontes e os caminhos de Rouch são também entre pessoas, culturas, sociedades. É, pois, notável a relação do real como imaginado nos seus filmes — o fascínio pelos rituais autênticos dos dogon e os fenómenos de possessão e uma antropologia moderna virada para as pessoas deslocadas, migrantes que viviam em grandes cidades, e para a vida urbana. Procuramos abordar neste texto quatro dimensões do percurso de Jean Rouch: situá-lo no contexto do filme etnográfico, visitar os arquivos de *Chronique d'un Été* (Crónica de um Verão; Rouch & Morin, 1960) 50 anos depois de sua realização, o encontro de Rouch com os dogon e a "poética do ferro e do aço" partilhada com Manoel de Oliveira, remetendo para sua dimensão

---

<sup>1</sup> The text pays homage to Albertino Gonçalves, a friend and professor at the University of Minho in his retirement, and his interests in migrations, arts, social and cultural life in contemporary societies, common goals in the subjects, objects and fields of my research.

de engenheiro, cineasta e antropólogo, consciente de que ficaram de fora dimensões igualmente importantes, mas que não cabem nesta reflexão.

#### PALAVRAS-CHAVE

filme etnográfico, Jean Rouch, Manoel de Oliveira, dogon, antropologia visual

### 1. ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM AND VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY

In the broadest sense, ethnographic film, or ethnographic cinema, encompasses a wide diversity of animated image use applied to studying humankind in its social and cultural dimensions. It often ranges from simple recordings to very elaborate research products. The methods of ethnographic filmmaking are also wide-ranging, drawing on different theoretical traditions and the means and procedures used in its production. Nonetheless, they are based on some fundamental principles: a long insertion of the researcher in the territory or environment studied, often as a participant, a non-directive (or authoritarian) attitude founded on reciprocal trust valuing the speeches of the people involved in the research (interlocutors), a descriptive concern based on in-depth observation and listening regardless of the explanation of the functions, structures, values and meanings of what they describe.

It is often referred to as the birth of cinema: for Claudine de France (1989), with the first Lumière films, from 1898 onwards, for Emilie de Brigard (1979), with the first ethnographic film produced in 1895 by Félix-Louis Regnault, a doctor specialising in pathological anatomy who, with the help of Etienne-Jules Marey's assistant, filmed a Wolof<sup>2</sup> woman making a piece of pottery at the West African ethnographic exhibition. This film has an explicit scientific intention: describing a pottery technique intermediate between that executed without a wheel and that with a horizontal wheel (Piault, 2000). Only in the 1950s did the ethnographic film become an institutional discipline with recognised experts and criteria (Brigard, 1979). However, André Leroi-Gourhan (1948), through his paper "Le Film Ethnographique Existe-t-Il?" (Does Ethnographic Film Exist?) presented at the "International Congress of Ethnology and Cinematographic Geography" in 1948, marked the birth of ethnographic film, bringing to the fore the debate on the place that should be assigned to it in anthropological research and the exhibition of results.

The word "ethnographic" has two different connotations within the expression *ethnographic cinema* or *ethnographic film*. The first is the subject it deals with - *ethnos*, "people"; *graphein*, "a writing", a drawing, a representation. The ethnographic film would be "the representation of a people through film" (Weinberger, 1994, p. 4). The films *Nanook of the North* (1922) by Robert Flaherty and the essays on the ethnographic film written by McDougall (1979) and Asch (1975), Marshall e Brigard (1975), analyses by filmmakers who photographed or filmed exotic cultures, fall into this connotation. The second

<sup>2</sup> Senegalese village.

connotation of the term “ethnographic” is the assumption that there is a specific disciplinary framework within which the film is or was made. That framework is primarily of ethnography as a scientific description related to anthropology. In this sense, Asen de Balikci and Guy Marie-Rousselière’s series of films on the Netsilik Eskimos and Jay Ruby’s (1975) writings can be considered ethnographic and anthropological. Ethnographic cinema was mainly descriptive. The images, as archives of an encyclopaedia on non-industrial, exotic or rural societies, were captured according to the programmes of classical anthropology. They describe the techniques, the habitat, the handicrafts, the different forms of agriculture, the rituals, and the ceremonies. For Brigard (1979), the most notable change in ethnographic film since its origins emerged clearly after the Second World War. It consisted of the displacement of the camera’s centre of interest. It no longer looks from the outside to an exotic world but from the inside at its own environment.

According to Weinberger (1994), “ethnographic film has become either a subgenre of the documentary or a specialized branch of anthropology, and it teems with connection at the margins of both” (p. 47). Some authors such as Jay Ruby (1975), Emile de Brigard (1979), Heider (1976) and Eliot Weinberger (1994) argue that all films are ethnographic: “every film, no matter how ‘fictional’, is an endless documentation of its contemporary life” (Weinberger, 1994, p. 4); furthermore, “it is customary to define ethnographic film as a discloser of cultural models. This definition suggests that all films are ethnographic in content, form, or both. However, some films are distinctly more revealing than others” (Brigard, 1979, p. 27). In fact, fiction films as results of a creative process are not pure fiction: “they have a claim to everyday evidence, to experience; they suggest a space, a history, a language, a look on the world” (Augé, 1997, p. 54).

Dziga Vertov and Robert Flaherty are usually considered the *founding fathers* of ethnographic cinema. However, Pault (2000, p. 53) adds other names: Edward Curtis, Thomas Reis, Jean Vigo, Jean Epstein, Alberto Cavalcanti, John Grierson, Walter Ruttmann, Luis Bunuel and Joris Ivens, among others.

Jean Rouch (1917–2004) is a key figure and the first reference of ethnographic cinema. Not only for the number of films he made but also for the quality of the works, the continuous innovation in research procedures, the creation of fundamental structures for the development of the genre — the creation of the Ethnographic Film Committee in 1953, the *Bilan du Film Ethnographique*, currently the “International Jean Rouch Festival”, whose 44th edition was held in 2022, the development of training in France and its expansion/extension to many countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, Latin America, notably through the Ateliers Varan.

Jean Rouch, engineer, filmmaker-anthropologist or anthropologist-filmmaker, was born in Paris on May 31, 1917. He graduated in 1941 in civil engineering from the *École des Ponts et Chaussées* and left France with 20 other engineers the same year to work on railway construction in Africa. While there, Rouch discovered the mysteries of religion

and Songhai<sup>3</sup> magic and decided to study ethnology. In Paris, he attended the courses of Marcel Mauss and Marcel Griaule. He started his doctorate with Marcel Griaule on the Songhai in 1947, which he finished in 1952. In 1953, he founded the Ethnographic Film Committee with Henri Langlois, Enrico Fulchignoni, Marcel Griaule, André Leroi-Gourhan and Claude Lévi-Strauss. He made his first film in 1947 — *Au Pays des Mages Noirs* (In the Land of the Black Magi). His cinematographic work includes around one hundred and fifty films. His influence extends to the present day in cinema and anthropology. He was first recognised in cinema, and only later was he recognised in anthropology. He influenced the practices of visual anthropology discussed at the first “Conference of Visual Anthropology” in 1973. Jean Rouch’s films became a paradigmatic reference (Ginsburg, 1999) and school, pursued in multiple places: at the University of Nanterre, with courses in cinema, audiovisual, culture and society, at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris, Marseille) and at other institutions such as the Ateliers Varan, which expanded cinema training throughout the world.

Among Rouch’s numerous films, it is difficult to highlight any in particular. Some because they represent important records in African history, society and culture, such as *Les Fêtes du Sigui*<sup>4</sup> (The Celebrations of Sigui; 1967–1974), *Sigui Synthèse, L’Invention de la Parole et de la Mort* (Synthesis of Sigui, The Invention of Speech and Death; 1981), or the filmmaking initiatives in Mozambique, others because they stand for innovative, creative processes, both in anthropology and cinema. I refer especially to *Les Maîtres Fous* (The Mad Masters; 1955), *Moi, un Noir* (I, a Negro; Rouch, 1958), *La Pyramide Humaine* (The Human Pyramid; 1961) e *Chronique d’un Été* (Chronicle of a Summer; Rouch & Morin, 1960).

From the beginning of the 19th century, anthropology and cinema established a relationship between the “indigenous” or “native” and the poor of European societies. The figure of the primitive savage was extended by the excluded Europeans (Kilani, 1994). Indigents, farmers, and mountain people were thus included, those whom the civilising action of science sought to rehabilitate for modern society. Anthropology had, apart from the romantic nature of the traditional societies’ “preservation”, “conservation”, the philanthropic character of integrating the excluded, both values of modern society. Cast out of its traditional fields, anthropology at home (Davies, 1999) or anthropology (Kilani, 1994) not only failed to turn towards the centre, which it had rarely done during the colonial process, but also maintained the two great divisions — external: radical difference;

<sup>3</sup> The Songhai Empire (also transliterated as Songhay, circa 1460 to 1591) replaced the Mali Empire (1240–1645) as the most important state in West Africa (covering southern modern Mauritania and Mali). Originally established as a minor kingdom on the eastern bank of the Niger River bend (around 1,000), the Songhai expanded their territory dramatically from the reign of King Suni Ali (1464–1492). With the capital based at Gao and managing control of the trans-Atlantic trade through centres such as Timbuktu and Djenné, the empire prospered throughout the 16th century until torn by civil wars, it was attacked and absorbed by the Moroccan empire around 1591.

<sup>4</sup> The Sigui is an itinerant ceremony passed on from village to village and region to region along the Cliff of Bandiagara. The Sigui is not celebrated in all places simultaneously, and its itinerary is significant: it begins in Yougo Dogorou, a mythical high place. Indeed, it is where the serpent’s misdeed was committed, and from there, he set out in search of his spiritual principles. It was also to Yougo Dogorou that he returned. It takes place for seven years in a row, only to be repeated 60 years later.

and internal: differentiation nature/culture and, consequently, science and society, things and signs — and even lost some of its best features — holistic objectives.

*Les Maîtres Fous* is one of the best-known films, but it is also the object of much controversy among anthropologists and African communities. It is, however, still one of the most relevant ethnographic films, as it deals with important epistemological questions pivotal to anthropology.

Overall, Marcel Griaule's objective was linked to an *anthropology of urgency*. That is, he aimed to record disappearing rituals. Rouch addresses in *Les Maîtres Fous* the reconfiguration of ritual in today's society, emphasising the perception of ritual and society in the construction of narrative.

He disrupted a way of doing anthropology that advocated the integration of the social through ritual and ritual as a form of experience of this representation of integration. From its title, *Les Maîtres Fous* pointed to an ambiguity that suspended the question: which society was represented in the ritual? The African, the British, or both at the same time? Thus, *Les Maîtres Fous* provided a new look at what society was and reflected West Africa's transition. Rouch's interest was in displaced people, migrants living in big cities, urban life and the phenomenon of possession. In this sense, Rouch was part of the Enlightenment and yet its antithesis, the shadow around the light (Grimshaw, 2001, pp. 91–92). Rouch embodied in the best sense of the term this condition of the modern ethnographer: while he had a fascination for the authentic rites of the Dogon, as they had been thoroughly presented by Griaule, which Rouch filmed 40 years later, in the same way, that Griaule had written it, he was also aware that this experience is not possible in the modern world (Gonçalves, 2007, pp. 35–36).

In *Chronique d'un Été*, Rouch and Morin overcome anthropology's challenges in adapting to new situations by turning to the centre. Themes such as the city, young people, relations between workers and students, political debate, decolonisation — the Algerian war, the independence of the Republic of Congo and even a small reference to Pândita Nehru, Indian Prime Minister between 1947 and 1964 and responsible for the integration of the territories in India (namely, the territories under Portuguese rule), life in the city, the July 14 bal-musette (French national holiday ball), industrial production, the urban paths of workers, the outskirts of the city, the problem of housing, frustrations with work, intimate life and personal fulfilment, the dawn of the consumer society and financial concerns as a form of happiness.

The approach of the exotic and the distant, which had marked Jean Rouch's earlier films, is placed on an equal footing with the endotic, the close, the familiar, and the everyday life of our societies (*Chronique d'un Été*) or with the interaction between the worlds traditionally belonging to the observers with those traditionally belonging to those being observed (*La Pyramide Humaine*). Observation as a visual activity, knowing how to see, is now complemented by locally produced words and sounds, knowing how to hear, and knowing how to listen. The relationship between the observed and the observers (who is who in this process?) is transformed. Anthropology is also about knowing how to be — with others and oneself, even when we meet others. Finally, it is also about constructing

audiovisual discourse, integrating the technical possibilities of recording synchronous, audiovisual sound. It is closely marked by an affinity with new forms emerging in cinema — truthful cinema, the “new truthful cinema” (Morin, 1960), observation cinema, and interaction cinema (shared anthropology). This period and the influence of Jean Rouch extend to the present day.

In *Chronique d'un Été*, Jean Rouch overcame two technical constraints that hindered the development of the experimental or research film: the live capture of synchronous sound and a light camera that allowed him to follow the characters' actions — a *Vertovian* active camera. The close collaboration between Rouch, a *born craftsman*, and the engineer Coutant produced a prototype of a camera used in *Chronique d'un Été*. It contributed to the rapid progress of sound and image recording techniques. Rouch had in his team Michel Brault, an accredited cameraman, director and producer from Quebec, and Edgar Morin, who in this film was beginning to learn the practice of filmmaking and was embarking on a new working method: a film based on the word, on natural dialogue, captured live. This new method allowed them to get closer to people in one of their strongholds: the word, the instrument par excellence of human communication. It thus sought out the secret, repressed, forgotten things that emerge from the word (the mental representations). He also produced a profoundly innovative film in the French cinematic milieu: on a formal level, because, for the first time, “sound and image walked together, with the characters in movement, Michel Brault's camera investigated the characters, filmed around them, ‘sculpted’ them” (Marsolais, 1974, p. 270). In this film, the characters are not placed in a psychodrama situation nor called upon to relive a past situation; they are in their everyday lives. Through provocation or trust in the directors (Morin and Rouch), they are invited to express themselves and reveal their truth. The camera sometimes becomes discreet or intervening, with the aim of provoking and witnessing the confession. Above all, it is a film geared towards the problem of communication, not only in its formal and superficial aspect but also towards the revelation of the real problems that are not communicated.

## 2. *CHRONIQUE D'UN ÉTÉ*: 50 YEARS LATER

In 2008, the materials, images and sounds not used in the final editing of this film were digitised, and the sound was restored and synchronised. From these materials revisited by Edgar Morin and the main actors of the film — Régis Debray, Jean-Pierre Sergent, Marceline Loridan-Ivens, Nadine Ballot — and the comments of the researcher Raymond Bellour and Florence Dauman, the director, producer and director of the company Argos Film, producer of *Chronique d'un Été*, produced the film *Un Été + 50* (A Summer + 50; Dauman, 2011; [https://www.allocine.fr/film/fichefilm\\_gen\\_cfilm=196828.html](https://www.allocine.fr/film/fichefilm_gen_cfilm=196828.html)). The film thus reworks unpublished sequences from the film made in 1960, reread through conversations with its actors 50 years after the shooting.

The first editing of *Chronique d'un Été* (Rouch & Morin, 1960) produced a five-hour final work, version unknown. Subsequently, Jean Rouch e Anatole Dauman (Florence

Dauman's father) edited 85 minutes. This downsizing led to disagreements between Rouch and Morin, settled much later, but left many sequences that allow us to know the creation processes, filmmaking contexts, and the integration of many of the film's actors through cinema. That is, they allow us to reread this important work of reference — “an extraordinarily important film... a singular project [unique] by the confrontation of these two individualities [Rouch and Morin] and their two experiences: sociology without cinema and the ethnographic cinema in Africa” (Raymon Belour in Dauman, 2011, 00:02:04), in cinema and doing its ethnography and *genetic critique* — the theoretical-critical follow-up of the creation process.

Cinema and ethnography question what reality and the imagined are, the multiplicity of viewpoints, and the importance given to detail. Like social phenomena, cinema is both visual and sound. Cinema alters our knowledge and our perception of the sensitive. It simultaneously fosters a knowledge of the real and the imagined as a reflection on the imagined and constructed real. Each and every film is thus a privileged field for anthropological research, ethnographic description and anthropological reflection. This also applies to the creative process of filmmaking, construction, production and circulation dynamics. *Un Été + 50* (Dauman, 2011) clearly shows us this. It also shows us how this figure of the anthropologist-filmmaker is good for thinking about both fields of knowledge — anthropology and cinema. Rouch stated in an interview with Enrico Fulchignoni in 1981:

cinema, the art of the double, is already the passage from the real world to the imaginary world, and ethnography, the science of the thought systems of others, is the continuous passage from one conceptual universe to another, an acrobatic gymnastics in which losing one's foot is the least of the risks. (Stoller, 1994, pp. 96–97)

This same reflexive strategy is presented, in the form of a commentary, by Jean Rouch's voice in *Chronique d'un Été*: “this film was made without actors, but lived by men and women who devoted part of their time to a new experiment in truthful cinema” (Rouch & Morin, 1960, 00: 01.10). Synchronous sound and longer film rolls allowed Rouch and Morin to fulfil their intention to leave the marks of the passage from the idea to the film in their films.

The film begins with a proposal and a rehearsal of the experiment that Rouch and Morin intend to undertake. It seemed, then, that this experiment was too simple. However, the film's first images immediately point to its ambitious intention. It sets out to pair with and rival the excellent and innovative emerging and award-winning achievements of the time: Vittorio de Sica's *Miracolo a Milano* (Miracle in Milan), Jacques Tati's *Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot* (Monsieur Hulot's Holiday), Alain Resnais' *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (Hiroshima, My Love), Federico Fellini's *La Dolce Vita* (Life Is Beautiful), *La Source* (The Virgin Spring) by Ingmar Bergman, *Rocco i Suoi Fratelli* (Rocco and His Brothers) by Luchino Visconti, and establish itself in the history of cinema by continuing Vertov's truthful cinema and integrate the contexts of these masterpieces of European cinema.

The complexity and richness of *Chronique d'un Été* (Rouch & Morin, 1960) derive from the mixture and imbrication between life and cinema at all levels of the film. According to Morin (1960), what captivates the actors is the action of cinema in real life, how people, becoming characters, release some of their deepest concerns before the gaze of the camera. The film unfolds as a work in progress subject to the technical and human oddities of filming experienced as an encounter. The film, writes Morin (1960) after its making, “is hybrid, and it is this hybridity that makes it both infirm and interrogative”. *Cronique d'un Été* has these elements inscribed not only in the film but also in the writings or interviews of the authors who provide information about the creative process — inspirational sources, creative processes, photographs of the shooting, technologies used, actors or characters to address in the film, but above all, a lot of filmed material that remained outside the final edit — editing that entered the circuits of distribution and exhibition. *Un Été + 50*, by Florence Dauman (2011), is a valuable document for a retrospective look at this film, considered today a classic in documentary cinema and anthropology. Florence Dauman's film (2011) introduces a double look at the actors' past after 50 years and their own images that remained in the film, or out of it, as unassembled material in the final copy, thus allowing us to see and reconstruct the filmmaking process; it brings out, or re-emerges, the intimate emotion where life and cinema overlap; it shows us the sociopolitical context of its making — *mise-en-situation filmée* (filmed situational awareness). The film's credits inform about the film itself and the international Critics' Prize awarded at Cannes in 1961. It also mentions the technologies used, the restoration of the images and synchronisation of the sound and a soundtrack of sound fragments from the shoot in which the first idea of the film's title is revealed and the divergence in a telephone conversation between Rouch and Morin at the beginning of the film — Rouch disagrees with Morin's proposal *Un Été Pourri* (A Terrible Summer); “without a title, there is no film”, and the themes addressed that contextualise the political situation in France — the war in Algeria (Dauman, 2011, 00: 00:00:01) and Raymond Bellour situates this “outstanding film” in the context of the *nouvelle vague* and outlines the biography of its authors (00:01:20).

Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin's (1960) idea for the film *Chronique d'un Été* came up in Florence, where both met as members of the jury of the recently created “Festival dei Popoli”<sup>5</sup> — “International Festival of Ethnographic and Sociological Film” and was inspired by Lionel Rogosin's film *Come Back, Africa*<sup>6</sup> (1960) with Miriam Makeba in which the word is improvised, lived and filmed. This film particularly influenced Edgar Morin

<sup>5</sup> The “Festival dei Popoli” (<http://www.festivaldeipopoli.org/>) was founded in 1959 by a group of humanities scholars — anthropologists, sociologists, ethnologists and the media, aiming to promote social documentary cinema. Based in Florence, it has some activities in New York. Apart from the festival's main activities, it conducts important work in preserving and digitising the archive (over 16,000 titles, including video and film) which is an asset in the training and organisation of courses and workshops for filmmakers and aspiring filmmakers.

<sup>6</sup> *Come Back, Africa*, secretly shot by Lionel Rogosin, exposes the cruelty and injustice with which black South Africans were treated. Miriam Makeba features elegantly in the film in a beautiful song accompanied by the voices of the participants in the show. The music, the dances, the sounds and the lived words are important hallmarks in the film, considered by Martin Scorsese as a “a heroic film of terrible beauty, of life in progress and that captured the spirit embodied by Rogosin and his fellow artists” (Rothschild, 2011, 00:00:33).

(1960), who, returning from the Festival, wrote in *France Observateur* the article “Pour un Nouveau Cinema Verité” (For a New Truthful Cinema). In this article, Morin states that “fiction cinema reaches the deepest truths, but there is one truth that it cannot grasp, the authenticity of lived experience” (Morin, 1960). Morin also believes that before the very heavy and not very mobile camera (attached to the tripod), life suddenly escapes and closes in, causing a halt in the fluidity of everyday life — “the intimacy of everyday life actually lived” and the loss of liveliness. Also, before the camera, everyone puts on a mask, thus losing authenticity. So, Edgar Morin (1960) concludes:

cinema cannot penetrate the intimacy of everyday life actually lived ( ... ); truthful cinema was, therefore, at a standstill if it wanted to grasp the truth of human relations on the spot. ( ... ) Documentary cinema remained out of touch with humans, refusing to compete with fiction films.

For Morin, authenticity, truth, intimacy and capturing what is lived in the new cinema-documentary represent a synthesis of two contradictory tendencies: capturing what is lived is the surface, and intimacy and depth restrain liveliness. The challenge of the film would be “the intimate captured by the lived” (Morin, 1960). The words, the sonorities, and the speech of the participants in the film (directors and actors — social and in the film) are truly important and direct synchronous sound<sup>7</sup> is essential to meet this challenge. Morin was most interested in the dialogues, the spoken word and its added value for spoken cinema.

Morin (1960) considered that only Jean Rouch, “a filmmaker-diver who penetrates the real environment”, would be capable of initiating this cinema. To do so, he envisaged a technical device that would allow great freedom, renouncing formal aesthetics and searching in life actually lived for its aesthetic secrets. The idea would be to reveal the beauty of life rather than attempting its “aestheticization” through formal processes. This concept would allow the combination of beauty and aesthetic truth. It would introduce the idea of beauty discovered and not brought from the outside. He then suggested to Jean Rouch that they make a film in France about “how do you live?”. The film would then boil down to three phrases that he explained to Anatole Dauman, who would become the producer of the film: material/economic and moral/psychological problems; the added value that the spoken word brought to the cinema (Dauman, 2011, 00:03:51); only Jean Rouch could materialise this experience. At the outset, Edgar Morin saw a film made of everyday things, taken from people’s lives, from conversations with them, as in *Come Back, Africa. Un Été + 50* describes the negotiations with the producer, recounted by Morin in the present day and experienced at the time by Rouch and Marilù (Dauman, 2011, 00:02:40). It also exposes the involvement of the actors, a consistent feature in the film (use of the start of shooting sign by Jean Pierre, Marceline and Nadine Ballot in the

<sup>7</sup> Technical sound and image recording innovations were essential to this project’s development. The development in the 1960s of the Nagra recorder by Kudelsi, which Marceline Loridan carried in the film, and the advent of synchronous sound were a revolution. Also, the launch of the Éclair Courant camera, whose design Jean Rouch followed, made it possible to record for around 10 minutes without reloading the camera.

street survey), in the process of making, viewing and appropriating the images and the work (in the original film and *Un Été + 50*).

After the meeting with the producer — Anatole Dauman — the characters were contacted and built from Morin and Rouch's social relations (bande Morin and bande Rouch). They were the young Renault workers, Jacques Gabillon and Angelo Borgien; the latter became an important character in the film with Marilù Parolini, an Italian immigrant from Morin's close relations; Marceline Loridan-Ivens, a former concentration camp deportee whom he had just met; Jean-Pierre Sergent, a student (in a difficult love affair with Marceline); Jacques Galillon, a railway employee and his wife. Rouch, who had just directed *La Pyramide Humaine*, invited, among others, Nadine Ballot, a student he had met on the Ivory Coast and would become an actress in *La Pyramide Humaine* and other Rouch films such as *Gare du Nord* (Rouch, 1964), *La Punition* (Punishment; 1962), *Les Veuves de Quinze Ans* (The 15-Year-Old Widows; 1964). He also invited Régis Debray, a student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris; Landry, a young African medical student; and Michel Brault, who had travelled the previous year to California to meet Rouch, invited by Rouch to come and work with him in Paris.

The war in Algeria, the participation or desertion of young people (out of the film's final edit; Dauman, 2011, 00:21:25) and the independence of the Congo in 1960, until then, the private property of the king of the Belgians, were hallmarks of the socio-historical context of the filmmaking and the socio-historical context of the events, concerns and awareness and political differences of the young people. The conversations with the actors were about the issues of everyday life — individualism and monetary concerns, money, people's private lives, love, gender relations, boredom, immigration, racism, the meeting of two social groups that do not know each other, workers and students (foreshadowing May 1968, in which they jointly demonstrated but did not actually meet or question each other; Dauman, 2011, 01: 00:05), the holidays (the trip to San Tropez, Morin's idea), the beach, the sea, the movie stars (meeting of Nadine, Landry and Nicole), and the conversations about the conflict between Jean-Pierre Sergent and Marceline<sup>8</sup>.

In editing, they produced a first version of five hours and another of an hour and a half, which Jean Rouch and Anatole Dauman thought was very good, but which left Edgar Morin perplexed, which he did not overcome until 20 years later. In solving this problem, self-censorship worked. On the one hand, the Algerian war — Jean-Pierre was in the pro-National Liberation Front network — on the other hand, people's private lives and more intimate dialogues, which would become trivial after May 1968 but were here a first public exposure that later, in 1964, Pier Paolo Pasolini would pursue further in *Comozi*

<sup>8</sup> Scenes from an apparently fictional film, which were not included in the final edit of *Chronique d'un Été*, but which Marceline and Jean-Pierre believe to be true, and this was only possible, in Marceline's words, 50 years later, because she trusted Edgar Morin and Jean Rouch "I was not afraid to say what I felt to both of them... I lived what I said. The sorrow over Jean-Pierre's break-up was real". Other intimate conversations were also left out of the film's final version, such as the conversation between women — Marilu and Nadine — which Morin, 50 years later, reinterprets by Marilu's meeting with Jacques Rivette and change in the work of the Italian chamber of commerce for the *Cahiers du Cinéma* "a relationship between the world of cinema and that of this film", as Morin states (Dauman, 2011, 00:51:35).

*d'Amore* (Love Meetings)<sup>9</sup>. The intimate dialogues between Jean-Pierre and Marceline are admittedly from a fiction film (Dauman, 2011, 00:39:13)

Both Rouch and Morin considered the need for light technology, a hyper-movable camera. The idea was of a provocative camera that is seen, that is evident, that deeply disturbs the person filming and the person filmed.

The differences and complementarity between Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin are evident in the film. Edgar Morin is an important and very well-known sociologist — “a great sociologist and a great connoisseur of cinema and sociology” (Dauman, 2011, 00:01:39). His works on cinema are renowned: *The Cinema or the Imaginary Man* (Morin, 1956) and *The Stars* (Morin, 1957), and the article published in *France Observateur* in January 1960. There are also many interesting stories about the *author's epistemological trajectory* (transdisciplinarity, complexity, reciprocity towards the theory and economy of reciprocity), which shed some light on the genesis of the film *Chronique d'un Été*. He also published with Jean Rouch *Chronique d'un Été* (film script; 1962). Morin has a more ideological and militant role in the film; Rouch has a more interlocutory, ethnographic position.

Like Marcel Griaule, the ethnologist who supervised Rouch's thesis, he deserved burial ceremonies and resting at the Cliff of Bandiagara, close to the Dogon ancestors, as documented in the referred film. For Raymond Bellour, Rouch is “a great filmmaker partaking in the *Nouvelle Vague* from ethnographic cinema in a unique position” (Dauman, 2011, 00:01:30).

We can say that Rouch and Morin make hybrid direct/truthful cinema from multiple influences and participations (like Michel Brault). They use the technical resources of direct cinema — light cameras (Coutant-Mathot and Nagra), small crews, direct sound, and natural light (<https://www.avoir-alire.com/chronique-d-un-ete-la-critique-le-test-dvd>). However, they use them as a kind of provocation to free expression, expecting from their characters an involvement that does not exist in other documentary schools. The procedure is meant to be scientific, and ethnologists and sociologists used the technical resources, not journalists. This use of the apparatuses (specific technical means and procedures) challenged everything Michel Brault had acquired as the specific language of direct cinema.

The presence of Rouch and Morin and the apparatuses on the scene were not to be concealed. They would become the film's protagonists themselves in the initial presentation of the idea for the film and in the negotiations/instructions given to the interviewees (Marceline and Nadine).

Rouch's originality is most noticeable in terms of language. In *Chronique d'un Été*, the interviewer's relationship with the protagonists is not entirely new, and he establishes a new relationship with the protagonists (the interview gives way to conversations between interlocutors).

---

<sup>9</sup> In *Comozi d'Amore*, Pasolini starts with a question, “how are children born?” to address the issues of sexuality — the importance of sex in life in Italy, inspired by Rouch and Morin's film and the idea of a “new truthful cinema”. Accessed on May 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKGvqxBZWS0>.

It is also a hybrid film, somewhere between documentary and fiction. The character freely reinvents his/her story without any staging: (a) this procedure avoids the dramatisation of the narrative, which corrupted neorealism, by seeking the possibilities of revealing behaviour in a message; (b) for Rouch the camera is not an obstacle to the expression of the protagonists but on the contrary an “incomparable stimulus”. The protagonists participate in the shooting themselves, signalling the camera to start and the synchronism (film clapboard). It is about getting, thanks to the complicity of the undirected and unscripted/guided characters, reality as it happens — the very life of the young people described by Marceline and referred to above: “I never know what I’m going to do the next day. I have a principle that tomorrow can take care of itself. For me adventures are always around the corner” (Marceline in Rouch & Morin, 1960, 00:03:56).

*Un Été + 50* (Dauman, 2011) presents a final reflection, in the form of a polyphonic mosaic, on *Chronique d’un Été* by the actual words of its actors — Debray, Sergent, Marceline, the film researcher Raymond Bellour and the final conversation not included in the original version of the film (00:58:57). Here, they address issues that clarify and give new life to the work of Rouch and Morin:

- the construction of their own characters in the film;
- the film as a premonition of something (May 1968? – Rouch and Morin’s question);
- the general understanding of each other and the challenges of this understanding;
- the “ambivalent conclusions of our adventure” (Morin) — a holiday film. The holiday is over. What happened during that holiday in the world (in the Congo, in the United Nations, in France), and to the people in the film;
- the main goal of the film, based on the results of the survey presented in the film;
- the evolution of people in the film (especially Marilù, who finds a new job and emotional stability);
- the actors’ expressions before the camera (highlighting Marceline — the main character of the film);
- the “paradoxical film therapy in reverse” (Dauman, 2011, 01:04:35), for which Rouch and Morin are responsible;
- the stance towards work.

Raymond Bellour’s final comments on the shooting techniques, the focus, the synchronous camera, the totally determining importance of sound — “it becomes image” — the ability to penetrate the interstices of reality. The film ends with Marceline’s words, 50 years later, next to a reel of film to be shot — “for this film, I thank Jean for having made it. There is a truth in this film, not truthful cinema, but an authenticity of all these characters” (Dauman, 2011, 01:06:40) and Jean-Pierre:

in film, the truth is debatable... but one reality that shows itself, whatever the circumstances in which it takes place, is the level of sincerity. Some people stage themselves. Marceline plays herself. She is very conscious of what she is doing. In the discussion, I am aware of the role I play... there is a kind of more authentic spontaneity in people... This is what makes the charm and the power of this film. (Dauman, 2011, 01:07:04)

Morin's statements prompt us today to new reflections on cinema, on the relationship of cinema with the lived and with the autobiographical, or the auto-socio-biographical, and not only in cinema as Annie Erneaux shows us in literature.

Marceline Loridan-Ivens, the main character in the film, directed the film *Algerie, Année Zéro* (Algeria, Year Zero; 1962) with Jean-Pierre Sergent and with Joris Ivens, whom she came to marry, *Le 17ème Parallèle* (The 17th Parallel; 1968), *Une Histoire de Ballon, Lycée n° 31 Pékin* (The Football Incident; 1976), *Comment Yukong Déplaça les Montagnes* (How Yukong Moved the Mountains; 1976), *Les Kazaks* (The Kazaks; 1977), *Les Ouigours* (The Uigurs; 1977), *Une Histoire de Vent* (A Tale of the Wind; 1988). She was also an actress and scriptwriter/screenplay writer. Marilù Parolini worked at the Italian Chamber of Commerce, met Jacques Rivete, and started working at *Cahiers du Cinéma*. Régis Debray, philosopher, journalist, writer, Althusser follower, a friend of Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara, the descendant of a well-to-do family, PhD at the École Normale Supérieure and a philosophy professor at the University of Lyon. Nadine Ballot, an actress in *Chronique d'un Été* — interviewer with Marceline —, and in other Rouch films, also played small roles in films by Jean-Luc Godard and François Truffaut. Jean Rouch made a hundred and fifty films and is an absent physical character, but is the one most referred to in *Un Été + 50*, and was given a symbolic funeral by the Dogon, as had previously happened to Marcel Griaule, at Cliff of Bandiagara. In this funeral, the Dogon include the rites Rouch filmed and in which he was initiated. From these rites of his last return to Africa, the German filmmaker Bernd Mosblech (2007) made the film *Je Suis Un Africain Blanc – L'Adieu à Jean Rouch* (I Am a White African – Farewell to Jean Rouch). Perhaps this film will shed some light on the African presence in *Chronique d'un Été*.

### 3. JEAN ROUCH: THE LAST MEETING WITH THE DOGON

The documentary filmmaker and the anthropologist live the same experience of going through, sometimes, the same situations, the same socio-historical contexts, the same ethical and political responsibilities and the same conditions for their work, and even, sometimes, the same precariousness of means and the same constraints. The anthropologist-filmmaker, or the filmmaker-anthropologist, lives a unique experience, in a specific place, with specific people, similar to a rite of passage. An original route and an original work are required of them. The completion of a project, entailing a passage to another place, where they will conduct fieldwork, the adaptation to the situation in which they will undertake this work (crisis of adaptation, of interactions, of representations), the focus on intentions, the densification of objectives and the definition of strategies and the implementation of actions aimed at achieving these objectives. Finally, the conclusion of a journey through the presentation of expected results, likely to lend credibility to the return to the institution (cinema, anthropology) with a different status from that of departure. It is, therefore, a rite of passage in which one seeks recognition of his work's value and, consequently, also a rite of institution.

In this journey, we see the recognition of the work by the institutions where it fits. However, in this rite of passage, there is contact with places and people — an effective and emotional passage into the terrain hard to leave. Thus, it is not a mere passage through the field to collect information without any ties to the people, the groups, the institutions, and the places. People would risk becoming objects, susceptible to being manipulated and reified. Both the filmmaker and the anthropologist bring to life the work, the people and the places — the affections and the conflicts experienced in the fieldwork and the production of the cinematographic work. This situation puts the anthropological and cinematic project in a complex process of personal, political, economic, ethical and aesthetic decisions.

Unlike fiction cinema and literary work, which can fabricate and determine the destiny of their characters, the documentary filmmaker and the anthropologist work on reality. They work on what they see and hear, the way they see and hear, what they choose and freeze (characters, frames, places, events, actions); they choose characters, a choice mostly driven by affinities without excluding, however, certain characters essential to understanding the theme dealt with, even if grudgingly integrated. The same is true for places — geographical territories. The whole world can be offered to the research of documentary filmmakers and anthropologists since the birth of anthropology and cinema (since the Lumière operators who spread all over the world) — faraway places and exotic cultures, or the “drama on the doorstep, the drama of the ordinary” (Sussex & Grierson, 1972, p. 27). Like anthropology, the documentary was born from wandering and exploring the unknown.

Jean Rouch was an anthropologist and filmmaker faithful to his social themes, region, ethnographic cinema, and, most of all, a respect for the cultures and the people he filmed. Marcel Griaule, who had headed the Dakar-Djibouti scientific mission (1931–1933), in which Michel Leris (*Afrique Fantôme* [Phantom Africa], 1934), André Schaeffner, Deborah Lifshitz, Eric Lutten, Jean Mouchet, Jean Mitten, Abel Faivre and Gaston-Louis Roux participated — would later direct his doctoral thesis on religion and Songhai magic (1952), becoming a researcher at the National Centre for Scientific Research.



**Figure 8.** Dakar-Djibouti mission (1931–1933)

*Credits: Membres de la Mission Dakar-Djibouti au Musée d'ethnographie du Trocadéro. De gauche à droite : André Schaeffner, Jean Mouchet, Georges Henri Rivière, Michel Leiris, le baron Outomsky, Marcel Griaule, Éric Lutten, Jean Moufle, Gaston-Louis Roux, Marcel Larget [Fotografia], por ©Charles Mallison, 1931. Creative Commons 3.0. (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/legalcode>)*

How were they “invented” for anthropology, and how do the Dogon appear in Rouch’s life? The first contact was with Marcel Griaule and Michel Leiris, who toured fifteen African countries in the Dakar-Djibouti mission (1931–1933). They spent two months among the Dogon, and Griaule made some films on this West African people in the following years: *Au Pays des Dogons* (In the Country of the Dogon; 1935), *Les Techniques Chez les Noirs* (The Techniques of Black People; 1942) and *Sous les Masques Noirs* (Under the Black Masks; 1938). However, it did not record the most important Dogon ceremonies repeated every 60 years for seven consecutive years — the Sigui. This mission would be accomplished by Jean Rouch and Germaine Dieterlen (1967–1973).

Marcel Griaule, through the first contact, Germaine Dieterlen, through the systematic research, and Jean Rouch, through the cinema, make up the trio that constructed or at least introduced or made visible the Dogon mythology to Westerners. Rouch and Dieterlen had the privilege of filming the Sigui ceremony — *Sigui Synthèse, L’Invention de la Parole et de la Mort* (1981), a synthesis of films made between 1966 and 1974.

Jean Rouch reached the Dogon later, when its notoriety in Africa and France was already evident due to the films made in West Africa (Mali, Ivory Coast, Nigeria), his participation in the truthful cinema movement (*Chronique d’un Été*) and the *nouvelle vague* — as Bellour states “a great filmmaker partaking in the Nouvelle Vague from ethnographic cinema in a unique position” (Dauman, 2011, 01:26:00). These facts have definitely contributed to Dogon’s popularity in the restricted circles of anthropology experts and students, ethnographic film and visual anthropology.

On February 18, 2004, 50 years after the shooting of *Cimetière Dans la Falaise* (Cemetery in the Cliff; Rouch, 1950), Jean Rouch died in a brutal car accident in Nigeria while on his way to the film festival to present the film *Le Rêve Plus Fort que la Mort* (The Dream Stronger than Death; 2002). Three years later, the Dogon people in Mali held his symbolic funeral.

Jean was a strong man (recognised, esteemed) in this village and was initiated before he died. Jean asked that when he died, they do the same thing they did to the Dogon after their death. We informed them. So tomorrow, Jean will be buried as an initiate in this village, Tyogou, Koundou. (Anagaly Amadigné Dolo em Mosblech, 2007, 00:05:08–00:05:48)

Jocelyne Rouch was to participate, as Rouch's widow, in the funeral ceremonies and hand over the personal objects that were requested of her — clothing and his main working tool. Earlier, Marcel Griaule, locally known as *Mr. Dam*, had also been given a similar ceremony in 1956 (Mosblech, 2007, 00:15:30).

German filmmaker Bernd Mosblech accompanied Jocelyne Rouch, recording his contact with Rouch's friends in the Dogon. He handed the traditional gifts to Ogon, the village's religious chief, and to the women who taught Jocelyne how Dogon widows participate in the funerals of their relatives and their husbands.

The film is not a biography but a remembrance of the filmmaker through the rites commented on by Jocelyne Rouch. The title borrows a statement by Rouch, "I am a white African". She also recounts, during the journey that leads her to the Dogon, the circumstances of the car accident in which they were involved. The Dogon funeral rites follow, dances with masks, the sacrifice of an animal (bull) according to the importance of the deceased, and, finally, the climbing of the straw mannequin, dressed in Rouch's usual clothes, blue shirt, beige trousers and hat. Jocelyne Rouch's emotional voice overlaps with those of the rites in a vibrant and joyous farewell amid sacrifices, libations and corn beer.

Among the Dogon, funeral ceremonies included dances on the terraces covering the houses of the dead, in which many masked people took part according to the precise rules of the ritual. The aim is to drive away the deceased's soul, preventing it from returning by terrifying the family members. A periodic festivity allowed the wearing of a large mask in the shape of a snake. This symbolised the ancestor, the link between the world of the living and that of the dead. Where patriarchal systems dominated societies, ancestor worship thrived. In any case, as the Mozambican writer Mia Couto (2003) summarised, "in Africa, the dead never die. Except those who die badly... After all, death is another birth" (p. 30).

The Cliff of Bandiagara, Mali, is a geological fracture approximately 200 km long and 300 m high. Located between the savannah and the plain of the Niger River, it served as a natural refuge for the Dogon. Its craggy rock walls offered protection and shelter, and their houses were made with clay and straw for camouflage. They were, and still are, almost indistinguishable from a distance. This mimicry in the constructions was not at

all coincidental. It was a topography of war and, in fact, ideal for defending the settlements. The houses, erected next to the highest cliff walls, are only accessible by climbing the rock, especially those that served as an object for the initial occupation. The terrain, here and there, dotted with loose stones, made it difficult for cavalry groups to enslave their members. And, from the top of the cliff, it was possible to observe and signal the approach of threats when they could still be avoided or their impact minimised.

After Jean Rouch's mannequin was laid down on the cliff in a secret location, his main working tool — the AATON camera — was handed over to Ogon, the village's religious chief, who smashed it against the rocks before the silence of the funeral participants.

The film has seven parts: it opens with climbing the Cliff of Bandiagara, followed by the title in German and French. The first part covers the journey and the entrance to the village of Tyogou. In this part, the director and Jocelyne Rouch-Lamothe narrate Rouch's connection with the Dogon and the circumstances of Rouch's death in a kind of external (director) and internal/participant (Jocelyne) interlocution that refers to the film *Le Rêve Plus Fort que la Mort* (2002), which Rouch was to show to his friends, Damouré Zica and Tallou Mouzourane. On the route, we have Rouch's itinerary in Africa in archive images and the director's narration. Jocelyne announces the arrival in the Dogon village, the ceremonies to take place and the common knowledge of these ceremonies and their actors. The second part, in Tyogou, is of offerings, introductions and greetings to the religious chief of the village — Ogon, and statements about the reason for the ceremonies to honour Rouch.

As in the first part, the narrative of Rouch's itinerary through Africa, through cinema, through ethnography in interlocution with Jocelyne continues, with archive images of Rouch or the Dogon, filmed by Rouch. The third part begins with preparing the mannequin that will represent Rouch, with his blue shirt, beige trousers and other objects brought by his widow, the fire of rifles and the mimicry of colonial military manoeuvres.

The historical narrative in this part evokes a ceremony similar to that of Griaule, who lies in a secret place on the cliff. The narration is provided by the director, Rouch's widow and the Dogon collaborator, who describes where the filming took place. The fourth part is mainly composed of funeral ceremonies. The fifth part contemplates the ascent of the mannequin to the cliff, ending with the destruction of the AATON 16 mm camera. The ceremonies are then restarted with Rouch's films about funerals, followed by the dance of the masks and their interpretation by the narrator, who has Rouch's voice as an interlocutor. The seventh part is the personal narrative of the experiences in the ritual of meeting and living with Jean Rouch — a kind of catharsis in which the separation between Rouch and Jocelyne occurs.

Paula Morgado e Denise Barros (2008), in a paper delivered at the “26ª Reunião Brasileira de Antropologia” (26th Brazilian Meeting of Anthropology), notes the cultural changes of the Dogon, stemming from the installation of the media and the development of tourism. According to this researcher from the Laboratory of Image and Sound in Anthropology of the University of São Paulo, in 2002, only one generator in Bandiagara provided power for part of the population. Even so, the first cybercafé was installed and

quickly, a growing number of young people, generally tourist guides or people linked to development projects of one of the various non-governmental organisations operating in the area, began their incursion into the Internet, mainly to send correspondence abroad. Later, North American support installed a room with five computers with satellite access in the Bandiagara administration. These changes introduced significant disruptions to the local culture. In 2027, when the Sigui rituals are performed again, what will the Dogon be like? Will the rituals persist? How will they be reconfigured? Furthermore, will scientific institutions and film anthropologists still be available to spend the seven years of their performance with the Dogon? Will the Dogon be making their own films, studying their own culture and processes of change?

#### 4. JEAN ROUCH AND THE POETRY OF IRON AND STEEL

*Une Poignée de Mains Amies, Fleuve Qui par Dessous les Ponts, Ouvre la Porte de la Mer* (A Shake of Friendly Hands, River that Beneath the Bridges, Opens the Door to the Sea) was the film that Rouch directed, in Porto, with Manoel de Oliveira, in 1996:

savouring an old Port wine, I was talking to Manoel about the Douro bridges, and we immediately agreed — of all the bridges, the one built by Gustave Eiffel before he built the Tower of Paris was a great work of art. In less than five minutes, the project for this film was created. Manoel would write a poem that we would perfect with our friends. (En une Poignée de Mains Amies, Fleuve Qui par Dessous les Ponts, Ouvre les Portes de la Mer, s.d., para. 1)

The meeting and the idea of the film connected the two filmmaker friends, two films, *Douro Faina Fluvial* (Douro River Fishing; 1931), by Manoel de Oliveira, and *Beau Navire* (Beautiful Ship; 1990), by Jean Rouch, two cities, two filming approaches to the “modern poetry of iron and steel” (Régio, 1934), the works of art by the same engineer — Gustave Eiffel. Rouch (1992) always referred to the way Manoel de Oliveira filmed the D. Luís Bridge across the Douro River in *Douro Faina Fluvial* and how he filmed the Eiffel Tower himself: the “third film where I got a plan-sequence” (p. 38) showing what was happening

under the skirts of the Lady Eiffel Tower. So I lay down on top of a car and approached the Eiffel Tower at twilight ( ... ) the sky was completely blue, and the lighting contrasted with the sky so blue as she turned all golden. So it had a gold jewel on a blue background. And I could see my Eiffel Tower underneath ( ... ). So I added a poem that I like very much, a poem by Baudelaire to a Creole and which I quote by heart: When you walk, with your wide skirt, sweeping the air. (Rouch in Ribeiro, 2007, p. 38)

Rouch’s meeting with Manoel de Oliveira took place in 1955 and was mediated by Georges Sadoul during a meeting of filmmakers in Paris. Rouch had just finished directing *Les Maîtres Fous*. This first meeting did not seem very promising, but it set the two

filmmakers on a path of multiple encounters and forms of mutual recognition (<https://images.cnrs.fr/video/6543>).

It would be difficult to conceive of Jean Rouch's presence in Portugal before April 1974. The country had its colonies and, since 1960, wars in Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique, and a growing flow of emigrants to central Europe. Themes and ideas dear to Rouch's work — Africa, migrations, shared anthropology — were banned in Portugal. The regime watched and persecuted field researchers in the human sciences — the geographer Orlando Ribeiro, the linguist Lindley Cintra, and the musicologists Lopes-Graça and Michel Giacometti. Anthropology was almost exclusively taught at the Instituto de Ciências Sociais e Política Ultramarina, where colonial administrators were trained. Under these circumstances, although Rouch had produced almost a hundred films by then, these were not known in Portugal, and the police were more easily admitted to the university than cinema.

Soon after April 1974, Jean Rouch came to Portugal several times, especially to Porto, invited by the cultural attaché of the French embassy (Centro Cultural Francês do Porto; French Cultural Centre of Porto), Jacques d'Arthuys, a career diplomat between 1944 and 1989, cultural advisor in Valparaíso, communication advisor to President Salvador Allende, then transferred to Porto. In Portugal, d'Arthuys wrote the script for Thomas Harlan's film *Torre Bela* (1977). According to Jean Rouch (1979), he and d'Arthuys began their experiments there in Super 8 — they jointly developed the idea of creating Super 8 workshops with small cameras with synchronous sound. Jean Rouch had found an ideal tool in the Super 8 format to initiate a teaching programme dedicated to visual anthropology at university in France. These workshops would later be held between 1978 and 1980, in Mozambique, with the aim of training in the techniques of documentary cinema the staff and workers of the Centro de Estudos de Comunicação (Centre for Communication Studies) of the Eduardo Mondlane University, in Maputo. This training was provided by a group of young filmmakers — Philippe Constantini, Miguel Alencar, Nadine Wanono, Françoise Foucault — coordinated by Jean Rouch and Jacques d'Arthuys, then appointed cultural advisor in Maputo. During his stay in Mozambique, Jean Rouch and D'Arthuys made the film *Makwayela* (1977; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxGa25BSRbA>), produced with sequence plans. This document showcases a dance originating in South Africa, in which several Mozambican workers were working in the gold mines reconfigured in post-independence Mozambique. This film drew the attention of Jacques d'Arthuys and Jean Rouch to the need to provide Mozambicans with tools for the visual and audio recording of their history and the effervescence reigning between 1975 and 1980, during the first years of independence.

Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Miéville joined the project during the distribution of the films made by the students in the villages and took an interest in how the peasants perceived the images. Godard and Miéville's project went beyond the training scope in which the young directors were involved. They negotiated with the Mozambican leaders the proposal for television in Mozambique. This project, entitled the "nascimento da imagem de uma nação" (Birth of the Image of a Nation), challenged the communication

practices of state television and anticipated collaboration between their production company Sonimage and the Mozambican government, inspired by Armand Mattelart's experiences with Salvador Allende. This television programme never materialised.

The experiences developed in Porto and Mozambique by the influence of Jacques d'Arthuys definitively contributed to the birth, in 1981, of the Ateliers Varan, a member of the International Association of Film and Television Schools and consultant for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Though founded in January 1981, its origins went back to the mid-1970s in Portugal and late in the same decade in Mozambique. They were mainly due to Jacques d'Arthuys, its manager until 1988, meeting Jean Rouch and the proposal made by both to several filmmakers to come and film what was happening in Mozambique. In this context, Rouch proposed that Mozambicans should film themselves, offering to train future filmmakers by initiating the making of documentary films. The development and worldwide dissemination of this first experience brought together dozens of professionals (directors, editors, operators, sound engineers, etc.) who would later set up the Ateliers Varan (<https://www.ateliersvaran.com/>), teaching their practices in internships and workshops that are still held today.

## 5. FINAL REMARKS

Cinema and anthropology emerged around the same concerns, the perception of movement and the inventorying of cultural diversities. The visualising tendency of the first images intended for archives and museum collections was followed by voices and discourses, which, in different ways, brought other forms of anthropological representation and communication between cultures to anthropology. This is how the ethnographic film was gradually defined and consolidated. From the middle of the twentieth century, Jean Rouch became a key reference for his long career as an anthropologist, filmmaker and Africanist. With Edgar Morin, he achieved innovative work in cinema and anthropology, both in technological processes and in shared and participated anthropology, as well as in the forms of discourse and the approach to relevant themes of 1960s Parisian society. The remastering of the *Chronique d'un Été archives* 50 years later gives us an ethnography of the creative process and a longitudinal ethnography of the social actors involved in making the film. Rouch did not leave African themes aside when he turned to "anthropology at home". On a trip to present the film *Le Rêve Plus Fort que la Mort* (2002) at a film festival, he died in a car accident. Jocelyne Rouch was left to tell the story of the accident and the symbolic funeral celebrated by the Dogon in Bernd Mosblech's film *Je Suis un Africain Blanc*. From 1975, Rouch travelled frequently to Portugal for Manoel de Oliveira's honorary doctorate at the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Porto, for meetings with Jacques d'Arthuys, and for cultural initiatives at the French Institute in Porto. These meetings made it possible to visit Mozambique and contact Manoel de Oliveira regularly. These were the four relevant moments from

which we can build a look at the manifold journey of the most relevant character in ethnographic film and visual anthropology.

**Translation:** Anabela Delgado

## REFERENCES

- Asch, T. (1975). Using film in teaching anthropology: One pedagogical approach. In P. Hockings (Ed.), *Principles of Visual Anthropology* (pp. 385–420). De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783112415405-027>
- Augé, M. (1997). *Por uma antropologia dos mundos contemporâneos*. Bertrand Brasil.
- Brigard, E. de. (1979). Historique du film ethnographique. Em C. de France (Ed.), *Pour une anthropologie visuelle* (pp. 21–51). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Couto, M. (2003). *Um rio chamado tempo, uma casa chamada terra*. Caminho.
- Dauman, F. (Realizador). (2011). *Un été + 50 [Filme]*. Argos Films.
- Davies, C. A. (1999). *Reflexive ethnography: A guide to researching selves and others*. Psychology Press.
- “En une poignée de mains amies, fleuve qui par dessous les ponts, ouvre les portes de la mer”. (s.d.). Les Écrans Documentaires. <https://lesecransdocumentaires.org/film/en-une-poignee-de-mains-amies-fleuve-qui-par-dessous-les-ponts-ouvre-les-portes-de-la-mer/>
- France, C. de. (1989). *Cinéma et anthropologie*. Editions Maison des Sciences de l'Homme.
- Ginsburg, F. (1999). Não necessariamente o filme etnográfico: Traçando um futuro para a antropologia visual. In C. Eckert & P. Monte-Mór (Eds.), *Imagens em foco, novas perspectivas em antropologia* (pp. 31–54). UFRGS.
- Gonçalves, M. A. (2008). *O real imaginado: Etnografia, cinema e surrealismo em Jean Rouch*. Topbooks.
- Grimshaw, A. (2001). *The ethnographer's eye, ways of seeing in modern anthropology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Heider, K. G. (1976). *Ethnographic film*. University of Texas Press. Kilani, M. (1994). *L'invention de l'autre: Essais sur le discours anthropologique*. Payot Lausanne.
- Leroi-Gourhan, A. (1948). Cinéma et sciences humaines. Le film ethnologique existe-t-il? *Revue de Géographie Humaine et d'Ethnologie*, 3, 42–50.
- Marsolais, G. (1974). *L'aventure du cinema direct*. Éditions Seghers.
- Marshall, J. & Brigard, E. (1975). Idea and event in urban film. In P. Hockings (Ed.), *Principles of visual anthropology* (pp. 133–146). De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783112415405-011>
- McDougall, D. (1979). Au delà du cinéma d'observation. In C. de France (Ed.), *Pour une anthropologie visuelle: Recueil d'articles* (pp. 89–104). De Gruyter Mouton. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110807400-006>
- Morgado, P., & Barros, D. (2008). La representación Dogon y Wayana en la web francesasubsidios para una crítica cultural. In J. Ramirez, J. Félez & M. Jiménez (Eds.), *Epistemologías y metodologías: Perspectivas antropológicas* (pp. 337–350). Universidad Católica San Antonio de Murcia.

- Morin, E. (1960, 14 de janeiro). Pour un nouveau 'cinéma vérité'. *France Observateur*, (506).
- Morin, E. (1956). *O cinema ou o homem imaginário, ensaio de antropologia*. Moraes Editores.
- Morin, E. (1957). *As estrelas do cinema*. Livros Horizonte.
- Mosblech, B. (2007). *Je suis un africain blanc - L'adieu à Jean Rouch*. ARTE.
- Piault, M.-H. (2000). *Antropologie et cinéma*. Nathan Cinéma.
- Ribeiro, J. (2007). Jean Rouch – Filme etnográfico e antropologia visual. *Doc On-line*, (03), 6–54. <http://doc.ubi.pt/03/doco3.pdf>
- Rothschild, A. (2011, 26 de agosto). Come Back, Africa – *Um filme de Lionel Rogosin (trailer)* [Vídeo]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDFznqweUTQ>
- Régio, J. (1934). *Cinema português*. Presença.
- Rouch, J. (Realizador). (1950). *Cimetière dans la falaise* [Filme]. CNRS.
- Rouch, J. (Realizador). (1958). *Moi, un noir* [Filme]. Films de la Pléiade.
- Rouch, J. (Realizador). (1961). *La Pyramide Humaine* [Filme]. Films de la Pléiade.
- Rouch, J. (Realizador). (1964). *Gare du Nord* [Filme]. Les Films du Cyprès; Les Films du Losange.
- Rouch, J. (1979). La caméra et les hommes. In C. de France (Ed.), *Pour une anthropologie visuelle* (pp. 53–71). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Rouch, J., & Morin, E. (Realizadores). (1960). *Chronique d'un été* [Filme]. Argos Films.
- Ruby, J. (1975). Is an ethnographic film a filmic ethnography? *Studies in Visual Communication*, 2(2), 104–111.
- Stoller, P. (1994) Artaud, Rouch and the cinema of cruelty. In L. Taylor (Ed.), *Visualizing theory* (84–98). Routledge.
- Sussex, E., & Grierson, J. (1972). Grierson on documentary: The last interview. *Film Quarterly*, 26(1), 24–30.
- Weinberger, E. (1994). The camera people. In T. Lucien (Ed.), *Visualizing theory, selected essays from V.A.R., 1990-1994* (pp. 3–26). Routledge.

## BIOGRAPHIC NOTE

José da Silva Ribeiro graduated in Philosophy from the University of Porto, a bachelor's in Cinema from the Escola Superior Artística do Porto, a master's in Educational Multimedia Communication, PhD in Anthropology with a focus on visual anthropology / anthropology and cinema. José was a professor at Universities in Portugal, France, Spain, Brazil and Argentina, coordinated Research Groups, and supervised dozens of dissertations and theses. Currently coordinates the CINEMAS research group at ID+ Institute of Design, Culture and Media and the Cinema and Digital Narratives Study Group at AO NORTE – Audiovisual Production and Animation Association. Also coordinates FORA DE CAMPO – Summer Course integrated with the MDOC – Festival Internacional of

Melgaço Documentary. José participates in several juries of Film Festivals and Academic Examinations, and develops the audiovisual research and production project: ENTRE IMAGENS – Cinema for all ages.

Email: jsribeiro.49@gmail.com

ORCID: 0000-0001-9562-9845

Address: Rua Diogo Silves, 55, Vila Nova de Gaia

Submitted: 24/11/2022 | Accepted: 03/02/2023



*This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.*