

Within this context, a revitalization begins to take shape. Although the film does not portray it in these terms, the evolution of the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB, founded in 1912) can be viewed very much within Anthony Wallace's classic formulation of revitalization movements, complete with charismatic leaders and new codes for living. Not ironically, the two key leaders in the film are both marginal—Peter Simpson, being a Tsimshian originally from outside of Alaska, and William Paul, a "mixed-blood" graduate of General Pratt's legendary assimilationist boarding school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, who attains a post-graduate degree—and as such are in a unique position to define a new path for Native success in a modern world. Borrowing heavily at first from the missionary paradigm but then adapting the code to accommodate more traditional aspects of Native culture, the founders of the ANB built a politically potent and unifying institution dedicated to the betterment of a new ethnic minority—Alaska Natives. Unfortunately, while the film does a credible job of portraying key events in the development of the ANB, it chooses, simplistically, to characterize both the missionaries and the ANB as "acculturation" organizations, thus equating them too much and obscuring the dynamics of the ANB as a revitalization movement.

With William Paul's leadership, legal warfare and, after his election to the Territorial Legislature in 1922, political might, a number of ANB objectives are achieved by 1929, including citizenship, the vote, and school desegregation. But in the protracted land-claims struggle there is disagreement among the leadership over how to proceed and what to settle for. Meanwhile, the warrior-hero Paul "falls," committing ethical breaches that alienate his constituents and provide fodder for his enemies, the white commercial interests, who so desperately want him out of the way. Other leaders and organizations emerge to manage the land-claims suit and Paul, though still active and outspoken, is often relegated to the sidelines. He dies in 1977, at the age of 91, only partially redeemed, though the film suggests (especially through the voice of his son, Fred) that Paul was right all along in arguing that the Natives should not have compromised as they did in their fight to maintain ownership of the salmon resources and their aboriginal hunting and fishing rights.

While the focus on Paul is appropriate and gives the film dramatic force, it means that other important Native leaders are ignored or given short shrift. When I viewed a premiere of the film before a Native audience in Juneau, this criticism was in fact brought out. Other contexts, too, such as the changing landscape of federal Indian policy, are glossed over. But, alas, it is a long story to tell.

In addition to being an original and substantive contribution to the ethnographic record, *The Land is Ours* is very well-crafted. Especially noteworthy is the exquisite use of historical photographs, landscape videography, and the employment of Native voices, music, and experts. The subtitling, however, could have been more consistent and descriptive. Significantly, the film was supported by a number of the Native organizations, including several Southeast Native corporations—the offspring of ANCSA. This financial and creative support no doubt contributed to the quality of the finished product.

The film is especially recommended for students of Alaska Native history and cultures but also is appropriate for studies of indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, cultural change, and

other courses in Native American Studies, anthropology, and American history. For teaching purposes, it would best to supplement the film with information that highlights key themes and directs the viewer to other sources of information on Alaska Natives, the ANB, and the land-claims struggle.

Trinkets and Beads. 1996. 52 minutes, color. A video by Christopher Walker. For more information contact First Run/Icarus Films, 153 Waverly Place, New York, NY 10014.

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This video, about the effects of oil exploration and extraction on a small group of Indians in Amazonian Ecuador, provoked decidedly mixed feelings in us. On the one hand, its heart is in the right place; it is in favor of beleaguered Indians and against oil companies, pollution, and environmental destruction. It portrays with horrifying clarity the damage being done to the environment and to individuals and communities. It also exposes the cynical hypocrisy of oil company executives and government representatives seen solemnly pledging to protect indigenous cultures and fragile environments while actively collaborating in the devastation of both.

On the other hand, the Huaorani (Waorani), who are nominally the subjects of the video, were nearly unrecognizable to us. One reason is that virtually the only Wao voice heard is that of Moi, an articulate but somewhat erratic young man who is presented as "the Waorani leader," a position conferred on him by author Joe Kane (a technical advisor on the film), who relied on him as a primary informant for his book *Savages* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1995).

One of the few Waorani who are fluent in Spanish, Moi has developed a talent for self-promotion and for telling tourists, writers, and filmmakers precisely what they want to hear. He extols the virtues of life in the forest as opposed to the evils of the city, he describes how the missionaries and Maxus Oil "sent 35 anthropologists to visit and investigate us," how, as a result of diseases introduced by missionaries "10, 20 of us would die in one day" (neither of which are true), and so on. (He was also specifically *not* elected as an officer when ONHAE, the organization of all the contacted Waorani settlements, came together in 1993 to formulate policies for dealing with tourists, oil companies, and colonists.)

Most disturbing, however, is the ethnocentrism implicit in the film's portrayal of the Waorani. We are shown a people united until divisions were imposed upon them by missionaries, steadfast in preserving the pristine ecology of the rain forest, in resisting the intrusions of oil companies and missionaries, in rejecting the modern world, and in maintaining their traditional way of life. They are nearly naked, chanting, feather-wearing, spear-wielding, ecologically and politically correct Noble Savages.

Unfortunately, that fantasy bears little resemblance to the reality that we encountered during our two field studies among them (see Robarchek and Robarchek, *Waorani: the Contexts of Violence and War*, Harcourt Brace, 1998). Most Waorani now share the surrounding Indians' perception of nudity as a sign of "savagery" and have abandoned it, except when paid by filmmakers

to strip for the cameras. They hunt with shotguns, when they can get powder and shot, and fish with poisons and with plastic explosives stolen from seismic crews or purchased in the frontier towns.

Many Waorani credit the Protestant missionaries with making it possible for them to escape the cycle of vendettas that had raged for at least a century and had given them the world's highest homicide rate. They laboriously clear and maintain air strips so that missionary pilots can bring in teachers and medical teams and carry the sick and injured to the missionary hospital at Shell-Mera.

While the traditional swidden-based subsistence system and sociopolitical organization remain intact, most Waorani welcomed oil exploration as a source of employment whose wages provided the "luxury" goods—machetes, axes, clothes, flashlights, shotguns, and so on—that have increasingly become necessities. Far from wanting to drive the oil companies out, their main objectives today are to extract more consumer goods, medical care, and support for schools from them and to limit the influx of colonists into Waorani territory (cf. Robarchek and Robarchek 1998).

The "unspoiled primitive" image portrayed in the video is no accident, however; it was carefully crafted. The cameras concentrated on protests and meetings with government officials, occasions when Waorani, fully conscious of the political value of their "Auca" (savage) image, shed their clothes and don feathers and face paint (and in one unintentionally hilarious sequence, barkcloth miniskirts that were never a part of their tradition) for Quito television. Camera angles were carefully scripted to avoid photographing the schools that parents have requested and supported in most settlements. Likewise invisible, for the most part, are the ubiquitous transistor radios and all the other accoutrements of modernity that most Waorani are eagerly acquiring as they actively strive to shape a future for themselves and their children in a world that is changing before their eyes.

In fairness, it should be noted that this video is not an ethnography and it is directed not to anthropologists but to Euroamerican society's seemingly endless fascination with the Other as a thinly disguised projection of ourselves. The filmmakers' good intentions notwithstanding, the video exemplifies the hollowness of much of the currently fashionable rhetoric of "multiculturalism" and "cultural diversity," where other ways of life are valued and respected not for what they are, but for what we wish they were and fantasize them to be. Like the Waorani in this video, they become little more than caricatures, distorted mirrors in which we can comfortably see our own assumptions, values, and prejudices validated and reflected back at us.

Sight Unseen. 1996. 27 minutes, color. A film by *Nicholas Kurzon*. For more information contact Documentary Educational Resources, 101 Morse St., Watertown, MA 02172.

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Sight Unseen is described in its promotional material as "a provocative encounter with Bali. . . . A portrait of a Balinese Hindu priest comes into focus as the film interrogates and inter-

relates tourism, anthropology, home-video making and ice cream selling." It sounded delightful, and my personal interest increased immeasurably as I recognized the voice of a priest I have known for 25 years in the first few seconds of the video. Indeed, a moment later I was flattered to hear one of the priest's sons reminiscing about me. Evidently the priest whose portrait was to be portrayed was someone I knew very well, someone I had written about as "Ida Bagus Sastrawan" in an introductory textbook on Bali (Lansing, *The Balinese*, Harcourt Brace, 1995).

This priest grew up as a landless peasant in a Brahmana family living in the coastal village of Sanur, which became the first important center of tourist development in Bali in the 1960s. An elder brother inherited the opportunity to become a high priest (*pedanda*), so Ida Bagus survived by finding odd jobs, like selling handicrafts to tourists and working as a waiter in a restaurant created by the village, as a way to benefit from the presence of the tourists in foreign-owned luxury hotels. Ida Bagus also became the devoted pupil of an uncle, Pedanda Made, who was one of the most celebrated poets and scholars of the previous generation. Perhaps because of his immersion in Hindu-Buddhist theology, most of the time Ida Bagus's poverty did not seem to greatly trouble him: "why should we think it necessary to always eat delicious food?" he would say, if he had caught no fish that day.

Ida Bagus eventually inherited the library and, some say, the spirit of his illustrious teacher. For many years now he has taught a free class in classical Old and Middle Javanese literature to anyone who cares to attend, including Balinese hotel workers and not a few foreign scholars. The doors to his home are always open, and he is regularly consulted by eminent Balinese scholars and artists, who respect his encyclopedic knowledge of Brahmanical scholarship and his open-hearted, humble willingness to put his knowledge at the service of anyone who requests his help.

In 1979, I filmed several sequences with Ida Bagus for *The Three Worlds of Bali*, an in-depth documentary about a once-in-a-century ritual (DER, 1980). After the film was shown in the United States, we brought several copies to Bali, where it is frequently shown and is especially popular with the families of people who appear in it. One of the priest's sons attended many of these showings with me and was captivated by the responses of Balinese audiences. He decided to become a filmmaker himself, and for several years now has been able to make a living filming rituals which are sold to the participants, a grander version of the family snapshots that have also become enormously popular in Bali.

But *Sight Unseen* sees the world of the priest and his family through very different eyes. The videographer laments that he had arrived "too late" to see an authentic Bali and shows us footage of morose tourists riding in buses through a landscape of tawdry shops and ice cream vendors. The priest and his family seem to have struck him as charlatans. The film cuts from a close-up of the priest's face to a close-up of the face of Colonel Sanders, the fried chicken vendor. The cut works because the plastic statue and the priest both wear a goatee. One of the priest's sons is a cockfighter, who in an unguarded moment showed the videographer a fighting cock with two anuses. This merited another close-up. But the videographer's attention was mainly focused on the son who is himself a videographer, specifically on