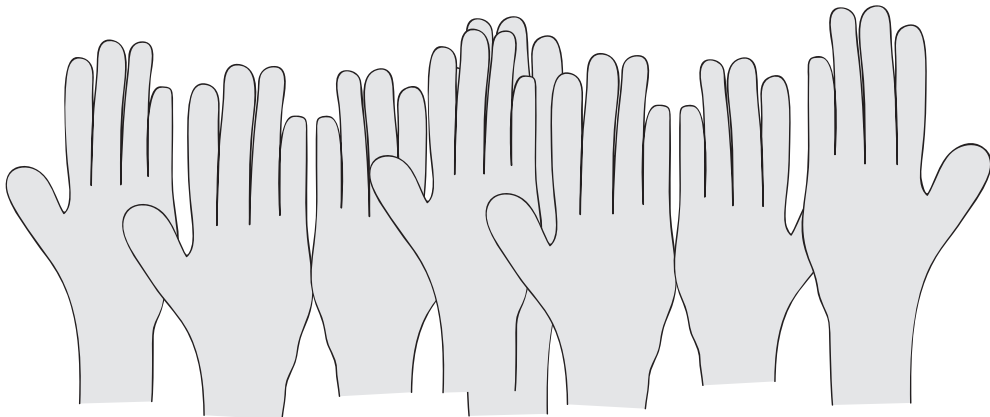


Film for Thought
Hawaii International Film Festival 2010



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FILM for THOUGHT

HAWAII COUNCIL
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OCTOBER 14th-24th

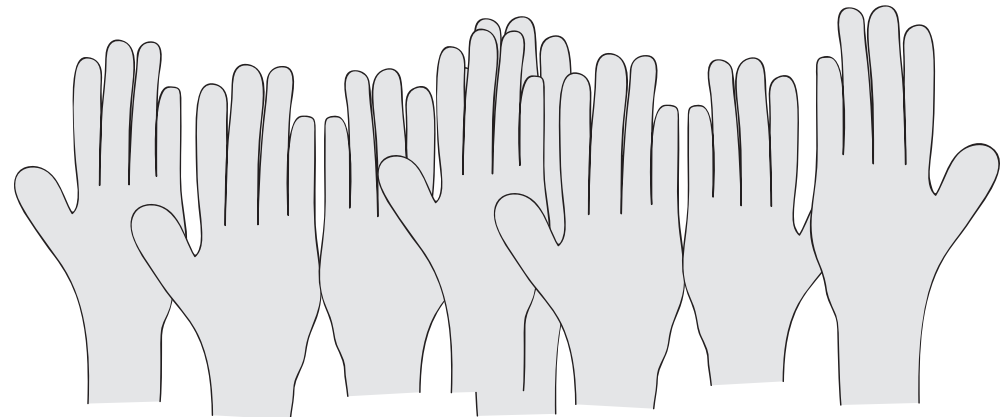
DOOMAN RIVER
directed by
Lu Zhang

LEONIE
directed by
Hisako Matsui

NUUMMIQQ
directed by
**Torben Bech
Otto Rosing**

THE SECRETS OF THE TRIBE
directed by
Jose Padilha

SUMMER PASTURE
directed by
**Lynn True
Nelson Walker III
Tsering Perio**



FILM for THOUGHT

Film for Thought Hawaii International Film Festival 2010

SPECIAL THANKS

Bob Buss
Hawaii Council for the Humanities

DESIGNED BY

Matthew Honda

The five films in this section focus on human issues, and we're bringing you local scholars to discuss them after the films conclude, along with selected filmmakers.

These discussions will follow the first screening of each film.

TUESDAY OCT. 19TH	6:45 PM	DOOMAN RIVER pg. 2-5
WEDNESDAY OCT. 20TH	4:00 PM	
SATURDAY OCT. 16TH	12:30 PM	LEONIE pg. 6-9
MONDAY OCT. 18TH	8:30 PM	
SATURDAY OCT. 16TH	6:30 PM	NUUMIQQ pg. 10-13
SUNDAY OCT. 17TH	8:00 PM	SECRETS OF THE TRIBE pg. 14-17
SUNDAY OCT. 17TH	11:30 AM	SUMMER PASTURE pg. 18-21



DOOMAN RIVER

Director:
Lu Zhang

Screenwriter:
Lu Zhang

Producers:
Guillaume de Seille
Jeong Jin Lee
Hye Kyung Woo

Cinematographer:
Wei Xu

Cast:
Jian Cui, Lan Yin
Jin-Long Lin
Xuansheng Jin

SOUTH KOREA 2009 MANDARIN, KOREAN W/ ENGLISH SUBTITLES | 89 M

The Doo-man River forms the vital border that separates North Korea from mainland China. Focusing on this harsh and isolated part of the world, the film DOOMAN RIVER tells the story of a small village of Koreans living on the Chinese side of the river. The frozen river is frequently crossed by fleeing North Korean refugees, while the village residents seek out a meager existence often supported by relatives working in South Korea.

Directed by Zhang Lu (IRI, DESERT DREAM), the film explores the lives of the villagers from the perspective of 12-year-old Chang-ho (Cui Jian), who lives with his sister and grandfather while his mother works in South Korea. The strained relationship between the villagers and the starving refugees hits home for Chang-ho when he befriends a young North Korean refugee boy. Through this tale of survival and friendship, the viewer is provided a glimpse into a unique community of people who live along North Korea's 'other' border.

Dr. Gary Pak

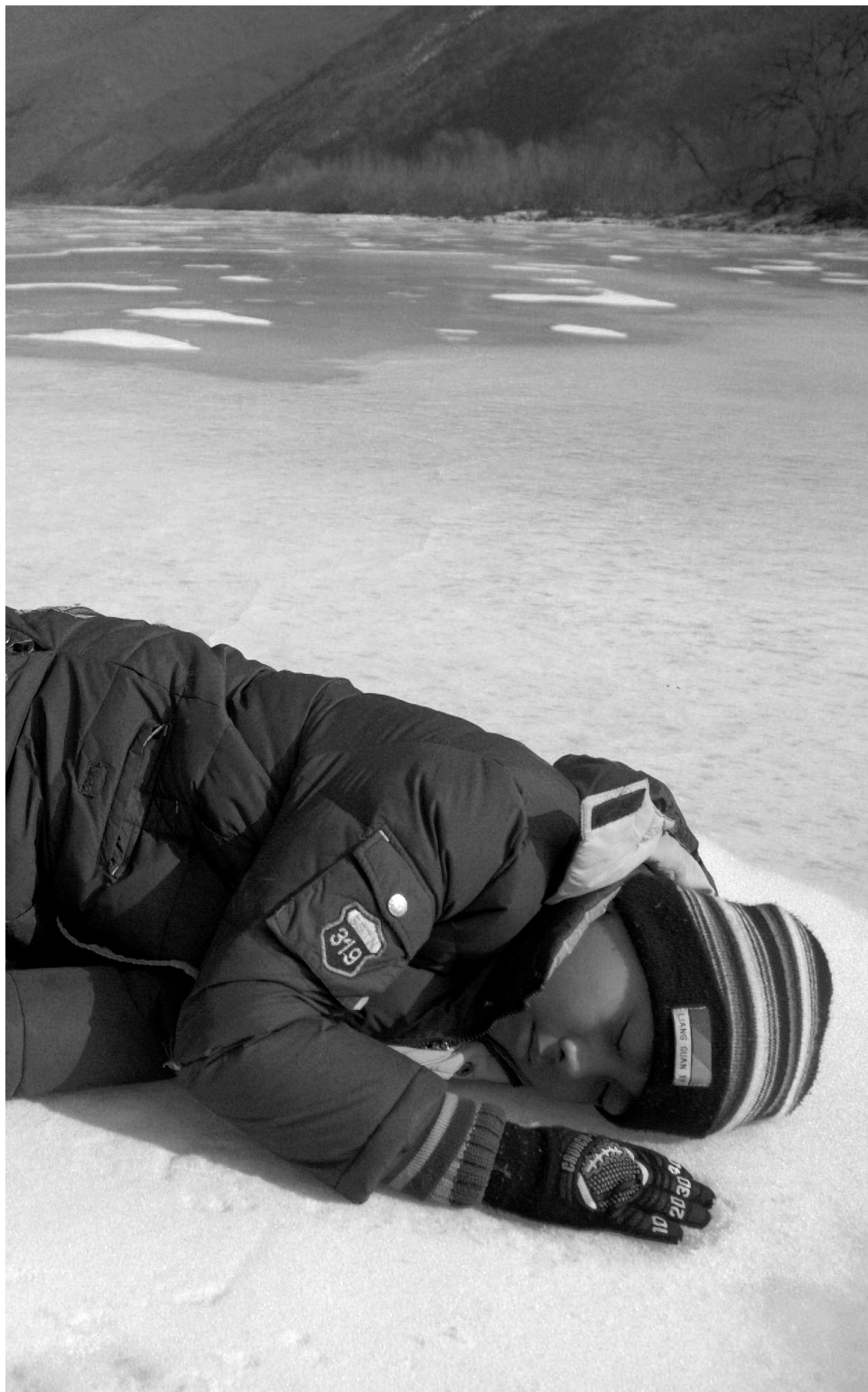
Professor of English
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Early on in Zhang Lu's Doo-man River, a grandmother who as a young girl had fled from North Korea is asked by two boys on a bike where she is going. She tells them poignantly that she will try to cross the river, to return to her ancestral village. The boys ask, "Grandmother, North Koreans are starving, why would you go back?" She says, "That's not true. There is plenty of food over there. I know better." The boys ride off, respecting what she has said as she is an elder of the village but at the same time knowing full well the hard and destitute life of the old country.

The setting of Zhang Lu's latest film is along the northern part of the 880-mile border between China and North Korea. The border is made up of two rivers, the Yalu and Doo-man (also known as Tumen), and a mountainous area where Mount Baektu, the source of both rivers, is located. Koreans believe that Baektu-san is where their ancestors founded the Korean nation; North Koreans believe, too, that this is the site where Kim Il-sung organized his People's Army that eventually defeated the Japanese Imperialist occupiers and where his son, Kim Jong-il, was born. The Yanbian Korean Autonomous Region is located on the Chinese side of the Doo-man and

is the home of nearly two million ethnic Koreans. Here, they are permitted to keep and maintain their language and cultural identity; and this is the area where most of North Korean refugees escape to as the Doo-man River for the most part is shallow and slow-flowing, in contrast to the deep and rapid Yalu. North Korea in general is depressed economically, and the provinces in the northern part of NK closest to the Doo-man—Yan-gang-do, Hamgyeong-buk-do and Hamgyeong-nam-do—are the most impoverished in the country. Though for centuries there has always been a flux of people going from the northern Korean peninsula into the areas we now regard as China, these provinces have contributed to most of the nearly 300,000 recent refugees estimated in China, mainly because of the widespread famine that began in the early 1990s. Most of these refugees are in the province of Jilin where the autonomous region is located.

For more than ten years, Zhang Lu, an ethnic Korean born and raised in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Region, lived off his wife's income as a dancer after he was fired from his professorship at Yanbian University—a Korean nationality university and the first one ever to be founded



as a minority university in China—because of his involvement with the Tiananmen incident in 1989. During this time at home, Zhang Lu wrote novels and kept house until a filmmaker friend approached him to write a script. Zhang Lu wrote the script, but it was denied production by the Chinese authorities. His friend persuaded him to write another, one that would be toned down enough to pass the censorship bureau. His friend assured him that if the second script was passed he would switch it and use the first script instead. His friend broke his promise. In an argument over drinks (he eventually forgave his friend), he shouted out angrily, “What’s so great about a movie? I’m going to make my own movie.” The next day, now sober, Zhang Lu regretted what he had said. But true to his word, and after struggling to get money together, he made his first movie, a short film, and began his way to becoming a critically claimed auteur. So far, he has directed six full-length films: *Tang Poetry/Tangshi* (2004), *Grain in Ear/Mangjong* (2005), *Desert Dream/Gyeonggye* (2007), *Joongkyeong* (2008), *Iri* (2009), and *Dooman River* (2010), which won the Special Jury Prize at the Paris Cinema International Film Festival and a Special Mention in the 2010 Berlin International Film Festival. *Dooman River*, which is playing at this year’s HIFF, is about two middle-school-aged boys, Chang-ho, who lives in a town of the autonomous region bordering the Dooman River, and Jeong-jin, who has just crossed the river from North Korea, leaving his sister in hiding in a nearby mountain. The two

begin a friendship over a pick-up game of soccer, and Chang-ho gets Jeong-jin, who is an advanced player, to promise that he will play for Chang-ho’s village team against a rival. However, the tension between the villagers and the refugees create a tenuous environment in the village, and Chang-ho must make a decision that may affect his life.

The tone and images of this movie are spare, minimal and unrelenting. And that there is no soundtrack, no music (with the exception of the acappella singing of various characters, sometimes in levels of drunkenness), to enhance artificially any tension that the boys may encounter in the everyday—walking on the snow-covered dirt roads of the village, eating the bland fare of a spartan household, spying on the illicit activity of the village’s most prominent citizen, playing on a bare field framed by a frigid Manchurian skyline—there is but only a simple tension that runs and gathers and disperses throughout the film. Only the bareness of simple, stringent human emotions, of the most common elements that we seem to have taken for granted, are shown, are offered to the audience’s senses. Possibly Zhang Lu is saying to us that with all of our problems we need simply to go back to our home village. And this, ultimately, as seen through his cinematic vision, is perhaps the beauty of it all.

Enjoy.



JAPAN 2010

ENGLISH, JAPANESE W/ ENGLISH SUBTITLES | 89 M

Director:
Hisako Matsui

Screenwriter:
Hisako Matsui
David Wiener

Producers:
Hisako Matsui
Ashok Amritrai
Yuuki Itoh
Masao Nagai

Cinematographer:
Tetsuo Nagata

Cast:
Emily Mortimer
Shido Nakamura

Set in the early 20th century, this is the true life story of Leonie Gilmour, an American editor and journalist, who falls in love with a famous Japanese poet, Yone Noguchi, and gives birth to a son: Isamu Noguchi, the world renowned sculptor and architect.

After graduating from Bryn Mawr, a conservative women's university in Philadelphia, Leonie Gilmour was teaching at a girl's high school despite her dream of becoming an editor. One day, Leonie meets a charismatic young poet from Japan, Yone Noguchi, and a burgeoning romance develops. However, upon discovering Leonie is pregnant, Yone flees back to Japan. In order to escape racial discrimination against her son, Leonie crosses the Pacific Ocean. Through determination and perseverance Leonie raises Isamu, nurturing his artistic talents and paving the way for his long and celebrated career. This sweeping film from acclaimed director Hisako Matsui was shot on locations across Japan and the U.S. bringing together international talent to tell the tale of an American woman, a century ahead of her time, who raised Isamu Noguchi, a creative genius born of two worlds.

Dr. Gay Satsuma

Professor of Japanese
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Leonie narrates the life of Leonie Gilmour, the mother of Isamu Noguchi, the celebrated artist. Throughout the film, one can't help but feel the presence of the future genius. Without a doubt, Leonie's story gets told; but it is almost always rendered with the purpose of attempting to unearth the seeds of her son's artistry and complex personality. It should not surprise us that Hisako Matsui, the film's director, was inspired by Noguchi's biography, *The Life of Isamu Noguchi* (2000) by Masayo Duus. The film, therefore, is not a straight-forward biographical story but the telling of complex familial ties interwoven delicately and passionately, crossing America and the United States at the beginning of the 20th century.

From a few photos, we see Leonie as a woman of slight build with delicate features. An excellent student, she attended Bryn Mawr on scholarship and studied French literature at the Sorbonne. Her family was not poor, yet they were not well-to-do as most of the young women who attended Bryn Mawr were; in fact, her mother worked to raise Leonie and her sister as a single parent. After graduating from Bryn Mawr in 1895, Leonie dreamed of a

literary career but ended up teaching at a Catholic girls school in New Jersey. Still cradling this aspiration, she responded to an ad for an editor's position which Yonejir Noguchi had posted.

Leonie fell in love with him. We have a note penned by Yone, dated November 18, 1903, stating "I declare that Leonie Gilmour is my lawful wife." The two never married. Yone returned to Japan, Leonie, pregnant with his child, went to live with her mother in California. She gave birth to their son in 1904, in a charity hospital in Los Angeles, registering herself as Mrs. Yone Noguchi. An article for the Los Angeles Herald, with the headline "Yone Noguchi's Babe Pride of Hospital," described her plight, "That the wife of the man who has achieved so much success in the literary world should be lying sick in the hospital, surrounded only by strangers, seems strangely sad, but Noguchi, the father, is far away in Japan and knows nothing of the little son who bears his name" (Los Angeles Herald, Nov. 27, 1904, p. 8).

Leonie and her baby faced the stigma of illegitimacy and discrimination in California. Fearing social scrutiny, she called herself Mrs. Noguchi at



the hospital. Desiring legitimacy, Leonie refused to name her baby, waiting for Yone to name and “claim” him. Her child also faced racism. The U.S. had already banned Chinese from entering the country and excluded the Chinese from receiving U.S. citizenship; with thousands of Japanese entering California, it wasn’t long before policies were enacted to do the same for Japanese. After her baby was born, California passed a law prohibiting marriage between whites and Mongolians. At that time, Japan was at war with Russia, and its victory represented the first time an Asian country defeated the West; while Asians around the world rejoiced, Americans began to see Japan as a threat. Thus, Yone’s letters asking Leonie to come with baby to Japan, although initially rebuffed, were ultimately successful in convincing Leonie to leave America. When they arrived in Yokohama in 1907, Yone met them and named their child, Isamu.

The country they arrived in would be as inhospitable as California had been. Japan experienced a long period of self-imposed isolation for over two hundred years, 1639 – 1854. Westerners forced Japan to open, and this action precipitated the fall of the Tokugawa Bakufu and became the motivating force behind major reforms that eradicated the samurai class and called for the Meiji Constitution and an elected assembly. Once the door was opened, Japan could not

close it again; however, many in Japan opposed this intrusion, and this opposition manifested itself into a loyalist movement called *sonnō jōi* (revere the emperor and expel the barbarian). This sentiment died down once the Bakufu fell, but anti-foreignism persisted. Thus, Leonie and Isamu entered a society which was eager to imitate the West and yet distrustful of it. More importantly for them, Yone did not become the father and husband that would have compensated for the social dislocation experienced by Leonie and their child.

Rather than wallowing in the isolation and alienation experienced in both countries, Leonie remained true to her uncompromising, independent character. Although she could not offer her children the comforts that financial stability would afford, her fierce confidence in their, especially Isamu’s, inherent artistic talent propelled them into the arts. Isamu fulfilled his mother’s prophesy of becoming the artist to bridge America and Japan.



FINLAND 2010
DANISH, GREENLANDIC W/ ENGLISH SUBTITLES | 95 M

Director:
Torben Bech
Otto Rosing

Screenwriter:
Torben Bech

Producers:
Mikisoq H. Lyngø

Cinematographer:
Bo Bilstrup

Cast:
Julie Berthelsen
Angunnguaq Larsen
Morten Rose
Lars Rosing

The most ambitious film ever to emerge from Greenland, and the first Greenland/Inuit-produced feature, NUUMMIOQ tells the story of a young man's odyssey from mundane existence into an acute sense of the sacred.

Malik is a 35 year old carpenter living in Nuuk. Like most regular guys in the tiny capital city, Malik works, cavorts with buddies, and fools around—togglng between Danish and Kalaallisut languages. When he is diagnosed with terminal cancer, he must decide to either leave his hometown to receive medical care that would perhaps prolong his life, or stay in Nuuk with family and friends and die within a few months. Without notifying anyone of his current condition, Malik and his childhood friend Mikael decide to go on a last boat trip into the fjord, where they seek out the carefree world of their childhood. During this boat trip, the two friends rediscover their friendship and Malik is given an opportunity to come to terms with his dire situation. What begins as an unremarkable outing becomes a transcendent journey at the edge of the world.

Dr. Lilia Castle
Professor of Philosophy
Chaminade University

"Island –is the symbol of the beginning of being, the first dry land in the midst of the watery chaos, the eternal non-temporal reality exiting beyond the clamor of the temporal world"

"Anchored between the Arctic and Atlantic, Greenland is the island covered in ice and the home to a small population of some 60,000 indigenous Inuits and transplanted Danish. "

Filmed largely by a non-professional cast and crew, the first feature film from Greenland, "Nuummioq," is a remarkable accomplishment. Named for the capital city of Nuuk, the film's success is largely crafted by an outstanding performance by Lars Rosing who plays a 35 year old, handsome carpenter who enjoys such mundane pleasures as drinking, gambling, hunting, fishing and womanizing. This rather banal start to the film features Lars' cavorting with his close friends Michael and Carsten in and around working-class Nuuk. Life seems to be uncomplicated for friends, they are not burdened with existential questions, and their terse speech runs around their manliness and sexual insatiability. Their friendship is what gives

energy and dynamic to the first part of the film where otherwise nothing really happens; this is life in its horizontal dimension where people and events are interchangeable and replaceable; it is a life we traditionally live slithering (gliding) over the surface of the reality. Unbelievably blind, we are satisfied with just tiny pieces of the "ice for sale" (symbolically) represented in the scene where Michael is shooting at the glacier for an advertisement) not daring and not caring to penetrate the immensity of being, an 'iceberg' ascending in the midst of the primordial waters.

Life is symbolic as symbolic is the nature in this brilliant film. But one has to prepare the potential space to receive what is revealed. At the begin-



ning of the film Greenland's landscape is a bleak and unresponsive surrounding. It is the spiritual journey of Malik that turns nature into critically important part of the film. His transformation is inseparable from the revelations of nature that bring him to the very essence of being, and to the real meaning of life and death.

On a trip to the hospital to assist his friend Carsten with a medical emergency, Malik collapses suddenly. It is determined that he has terminal cancer. He is told by the doctors that he will surely die but that if he will go to the mainland to a Danish cancer treatment center, he will be able to extend his life. The quality of his life is uncertain, however.

In a stunning scene, Malik (Lars Rosing) sits in his pick-up and silently goes through a wave of different emotions. In understated fashion, the directors tell us a great deal without any speech or wasted words. Deciding not to tell his Inuit grandparents, his best friend Michael or his long-time girlfriend Nivi about his diagnosis, Malik decides to take a final boat trip with Michael. Their destination is the remote fiords north of Nuuk where Malik hopes to look at the land that has shaped his past for the last time. He is not even sure that he will return.

The sudden clarity of his coming death makes him consider suicide, but something stops him. It is not a weakness, but that which will give him

a very long life before he dies. The knowledge of his mortality reverses his perception of reality giving it vertical dimension. He steps into a sacred time and space that lies beneath the horizons of the phenomenal being. And the waters, he descends into in search of the secret of his parents' death, become the waters of his rebirth into a different reality where every second dwells in the eternal, where life is sacred and love is unique and everlasting.

Torben Bech and Otto Rosing make the film a masterpiece comparable with the works of Ingmar Bergman, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Andrei Tarkovsky. Carefully selected symbolic images and economic language of the film have persuasiveness and the power of myth suggesting more than describing the ineffable depth of our being.



SECRETS OF THE TRIBE

Director:
Jose Padilha

Producers:
Marcus Prado
Carol Nahra
Mike Chamberlain

Cinematographer:
Lula Carvalho
Reinaldo Zangrandi

UNITED KINGDOM, BRAZIL 2010 SPANISH, ITALIAN W/ ENGLISH SUBTITLES | 110 M

The field of anthropology goes under the magnifying glass in this fiery investigation of the seminal research on Yanomami Indians. In the 1960s and '70s, a steady stream of anthropologists filed into the Amazon Basin to observe this "virgin" society untouched by modern life. Thirty years later, the events surrounding this infiltration have become a scandalous tale of academic ethics and infighting.

The origins of violence and war and the accuracy of data gathering are hotly debated among the scholarly clan. Soon these disputes take on Heart of Darkness overtones as they descend into shadowy allegations of sexual and medical violation.

Director Jose Padilha brilliantly employs two provocative strategies to raise unsettling questions about the boundaries of cultural encounters. He allows professors accused of heinous activities to defend themselves, and the Yanomami to represent their side of the story. As this riveting excavation deconstructs anthropology's colonial legacy, it challenges our society's myths of objectivity and the very notion of "the other."

Dr. Les Sponsel
Professor of Anthropology
University of Hawaii at Manoa

The Yanomami are one of the world's most famous indigenous cultures. About 21,000 Yanomami reside in the Amazon border area between Brazil and Venezuela in some 360 scattered communities with an average size of 30-90 individuals. Their world is intensely intimate, socially and ecologically. By now more than three dozen anthropologists have worked with them and more than 60 books have been published about them.

Late in the year 2000 a raging fire storm swept through the anthropological establishment. It was ignited by investigative journalist Patrick Tierney with a book provocatively titled *Darkness in El Dorado: How Anthropologists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon*. His detailed and shocking account is based on a decade of field and archival research. Much of the controversy over the book involves his allegations concerning a multitude of diverse violations of professional ethics and human rights by Napoleon A. Chagnon and several other researchers among the Yanomami. Most of the specific ethical questions revolve around power, reciprocity, respect, and accountability in conducting research with

human subjects. Many of the allegations that Tierney identified and elaborated on had been voiced off and on over a period of four decades by numerous anthropologists including several who have worked with the Yanomami. Several points in Tierney's book were examined by various researchers, universities, and professional organizations like the American Anthropological Association (AAA); some points were refuted, but others were confirmed.

Tierney's book and the ensuing controversy was the initial inspiration for the documentary *Secrets of the Tribe* by the famous Brazilian filmmaker Jose Padilha for the BBC and HBO. In this film he skillfully juxtaposes opposing views on a succession of major points of contention voiced by several of the principal scientists featured in Tierney's book and others. Among the many issues considered are the image of Yanomami as fierce primitives; competition for animal protein, reproductive fitness, or trade goods as three alternative hypotheses to explain their supposed warfare; anthropology as inferior to sociobiology as science; one anthropologist's introduction of prostitution into several villages; interethnic and



interracial marriage; transparency in Cold War research for the Atomic Energy Commission; genocide; and problematic medical treatment of Yanomami during a lethal measles epidemic.

Thanks to Padilha's interviews with Yanomami, this film is not a simple re-hashing of points and issues identified by Tierney. The history, controversy, and its varied consequences are given a new airing, as Yanomami individuals voice their own opinions about being research subjects as well as their memories of the measles epidemic and its deadly outcome. Some angrily refer to anthropologists as liars, transmitters of disease, and no longer welcome in their territory. In the absence of any narration, the filmmaker leaves viewers to draw their own conclusions about this sordid history, the meaning and impact of some research in the Amazon, and Tierney's allegations that such work involved ethical misconduct and human rights violations.

This documentary would have benefited from a thorough and critical examination of the role of the AAA in attempting to investigate and document Tierney's allegations and resolve the controversy. The failure of the film to consider the decades of heroic applied research and advocacy work by various anthropologists on behalf of the survival, welfare, and rights of the Yanomami may leave many viewers with the misleading impression that all research with

Yanomami is socially-bankrupt. However, the greatest omission of all is the lack of attention to the continuing plight of the Yanomami in the face of external threats such as illegal gold miners and devastating Western diseases. The film ends with scenes at the annual convention of the AAA, implying that some of the issues transcend the particulars in the controversy, and perhaps even indicting anthropology as a whole. One anthropologist wonders if we can do no better.

While many may view this film as merely exposing embarrassing and disgusting secrets about some anthropologists and their tribal warfare, scrutiny reveals that far more substantial issues are involved. This provocative film is destined to become a most valuable historical documentation of a primitive phase in the evolution of professional ethics in anthropology.

For viewers who wish to learn more, by far the best source on this unprecedented scandal is the 2005 book *Yanomami: The Fierce Controversy and What We Can Learn From It* edited by Robert Borofsky of Hawai'i Pacific University.

SUMMER PASTURE



CHINA, UNITED STATES 2010 TIBETAN W/ ENGLISH SUBTITLES | 85 M

Director:
Lynn True
Nelson Walker III
Tsering Perlo

Producers:
Lynn True
Nelson Walker III
Tsering Perlo

Cinematographer:
Nelson Walker III

In recent years, growing pressures from the outside world have posed unprecedented challenges for Tibetan nomads. Rigid government policies, rangeland degradation, and the allure of modern life have prompted many nomadic families to leave the pastures for permanent settlement in towns and cities. SUMMER PASTURE chronicles one summer with a young family amidst a period of great uncertainty. Locho, his wife Yama, and their infant daughter, nicknamed Jiatomah ("pale chubby girl"), spend the summer months in eastern Tibet's Zachukha grasslands, an area known as Wu-Zui or "5-Most," the highest, coldest, poorest, largest, and most remote county in Sichuan Province, China.

The story of a family at a crossroads, SUMMER PASTURE takes place at a critical time in Locho and Yama's lives, as they question their future as nomads. With their pastoral traditions confronting rapid modernization, Locho and Yama must reconcile the challenges that threaten to drastically reshape their existence.

Dr. Daniel Kwok

Professor of Asian History
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Winner of numerous prizes and awards, Summer Pasture sensitively documents the family of Locho, Yama and baby Jiatomah in 2007 facing challenges to their nomadic way of life. The story, in intimate details, is fraught with thought provoking reminders of the larger temporal, spatial, and natural as well as human-wrought dimensions of the nomad story.

The venue is Kham (Kangba in Chinese), 14,000 feet above sea level, and a region overlapping parts of Chinese provinces including Sichuan. Described as the land of five-zui ("five-most": highest, coldest, poorest, largest, and most remote), it is situated in the eastern part of the Tibetan plateau. Its ruggedness consists of deep and precipitous valleys, home to four great rivers and six mountain ranges of Asia. Forty percent of the sparse population is nomadic. Abutting the southwestern parts of agrarian China, it is a zone of cultural transition, therefore of conflict as well as convergence. Throughout history, the two modes of life have depended on each other: the nomadic on the sedentary for sustenance and surcease, the other on the nomadic for its mobility and distributive transportation. But, when conditions are hard, either man-made or natural, conflicts arise as basic securities of one or both are threatened.

The film begins with yak dung gathering for fuel, a lesson in nomadic recycling. The production of fuel does not involve the exploitation of natural resources (production) which forms the rationale of "modern" civilization. This intimate detail makes one realize that nomad culture actually faced a "modern" threat eight or nine thousand years ago when agriculture replaced the hunting and fishing modes of life. Agriculture was the first modernization that nomadism, which is more akin to hunting and fishing, faced. Production, sedentary cultivation, distribution, market, and all that followed are in stark contrast to the way and life of mobility and natural recycling.

The scene of the township cadre visiting and talking about reporting heads of yaks, horses, sheep and the forbidden gathering of more than four persons is a reminder of China's attention since 1950 to this region. However motivated, the Chinese state's attention comes from its experience with agricultural and agrarian economy. In the early years of the republic, the attention to land was more agrarian than agricultural, visiting upon all regions with collectivization and communization. This was the mid-century "modernization" that Tibet faced: zoning, counting, and forced quotas of meat production and so on. From 2003 on, it was tuimu huancao ("lessening



herding to recover grassland"). The film was made in the fourth year of this measure. In any event, China's policies in this regard have always shown unease with mobility.

The biggest issue of all facing Tibet is climate change that has earned this region the name of the Third Pole. The melting of icecaps and the drying up of river sources hold catastrophic prospects for the dependence on seasonal pastures. Here we can note the frequent references to the meaning of the seasons.

Even with the freer moral code of nomad society, Yama is tied to a life of day-long drudgery. Yet she cheerfully wishes for a little surcease and personal growth as well as better life for her daughter. Hers is a life of true compassion. Witness what she says about her husband's siring a child with another woman. He, Locho, exemplifies Kham manhood, boastful of his potency in siring a child out of wedlock, remorseful of the wrongs he did, and quite attentive to how he looks. Actually Kham is noted for its handsome men, known as Kangba hanzi, for whom a small village is so named.

Urbanized Kham people are noted for their business acumen. Locho, however, as seen in his trip to town, is not easily taken in by wily business practices. Also, caterpillar fungus is a prized herb which brings much needed cash. He knows its

worth, not its wider use. In fact, it shares with ginseng the reputation of being an elixir taken in tonic form. A gift box of it on the market could fetch \$300-400. Locho does not think in terms of the plant's productive dimensions, only in how it will serve his family as it tries to retain the nomadic way of life. "*What good is a nomad without animals?*" is the opening and closing refrain of the film.

This documentary, without invoking larger chronicles, successfully evokes human delight and compassion, and, in the end, understanding of human effort and aspirations.

NOTES