

‘Culture-Specificity’  
of HIV/AIDS Media Materials

A media analysis and comparison of the film projects  
“Eschageada UKIMWI Datoga” (“Datoga, let’s  
be aware of AIDS”) and “WATU WA WATU”  
 (“People For People”) from Tanzania

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## Abbreviations

ABC	`Abstain`, `Be faithful`, or `Use a Condom`
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AMO	Assistant Medical Officer
ART	Anti-retroviral treatment
CHW	Community Health Worker
EE	Entertainment-Education
EUD	“Eschageada UKIM WI Datoga” (“Datoga, let’s be aware of AIDS”)
EMO	Essential Messages Outline
HAART	Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IEC	Information, Education, Communication
LLH	Lugala Lutheran Hospital
MAAA	Mankind Aids Arts Awareness
MTCT	Mother-to-child transmission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PRA	Participatory Rural/Rapid Appraisal
REF	Roland Ernst Futterer
SdNVP	single-dose Neviparine
STD	sexually transmitted disease
STI	sexually transmitted infection
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
WHO	World Health Organisation
WWW	WATU WA WATU – “People for People”

*“Escape from the clutch of custom  
gives an opportunity to do old things  
in new ways, and thus to construct  
new ends and means.  
Breach in the crust of the cake of custom  
releases impulses;  
but it is the work of intelligence  
to find the ways of using them.  
There is an alternative between  
anchoring a boat in the harbor till  
it becomes a rotting hulk and letting it  
loose to be the sport of every  
contrary gust.” (Dewey, 1922:170)*

## Abstract

The topic of this thesis study deals with efforts to produce and apply culture-specific HIV/AIDS media materials as part of HIV/AIDS prevention research and intervention programmes.

Entertainment-Education (EE) materials have been playing a central role in HIV/AIDS Information, Education and Communication (IEC) approaches right from the beginning of the AIDS epidemic. However, approaches in the production and application of IEC materials have changed enormously over time, along with a parallel shift of focus of scientific methodologies and strategies in HIV/AIDS research and prevention interventions, from individual behavioural change to social change agendas (Tufte, 2005:164-167).

The study is divided in three parts. **Part I** is exclusively theoretical and reflects the historical background of HIV/AIDS research and intervention programmes from the beginning of the epidemic to the present day.

It considers different evolving perspectives and approaches based on different concepts, theories and methodologies from various scientific disciplines (e.g. epidemiology, individual

and social psychology, anthropology, and communication in development) with relevant examples from existing academic literature.

Part I centers especially on the concepts of culture, culture-sensitivity, social change and transformation. It highlights the important role of communication as a broad issue with a variety of approaches using (mass) media as a tool to combat HIV/AIDS.

In particular, it focuses on the production and application of culture-specific HIV/AIDS media materials, especially video and film materials, from a historical perspective.

**Part II** entails a descriptive analysis and comparison of the two films mentioned in the subtitle preceded by study questions, objectives and methods of the study.

**Part III** comprises a discussion, which highlights the main findings particularly based on the literature reviewed in Part I, and the descriptive analysis and the comparison of both films in part II.

It argues the validity of both films, their potential and possible shortcomings as tools in HIV/AIDS prevention interventions in terms of culture-specificity as well as the limitations of the study.

Part III ends with a conclusion about the position of culture-specific HIV/AIDS media materials as part of HIV/AIDS preventive strategies.

This includes considerations about future challenges in the field of HIV/AIDS communication to improve both production and application of HIV/AIDS media materials, specifically in the case of the two films, within broader programmatic approaches of context-specific HIV/AIDS prevention and intervention research and practice.

# PART I :

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

#### **I.1 The emerging epidemic – a local and global challenge**

Since the first identified AIDS cases more than 25 years ago in East Africa the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) has spread continuously across bodies, families, tribes, cultures, classes, societies and nations, worldwide. In some (sub)-cultures the spread has happened faster than in others, in many of them at an unprecedented pace.

According to UNAIDS, until the year 2006, the estimated total number of infection rates has risen to almost 40 million (34.1 - 47.1 million), worldwide (UNAIDS, 2006:1). Sub-Saharan Africa still remains the region with the worst scenario with about 25 million infected individuals.

Here, a trend of 'feminisation' with extremely high HIV-prevalence among pregnant women aged 15-24 reported in a number of countries has become apparent in recent years (UNAIDS, 2004).

Globally, the death toll by the end of 2003 was estimated to be a total of 2.9 million with a total of 4.8 million newly infected every year (ibid.).

Relatively soon after the inception of the epidemic, scientific research discovered the essential biomedical facts about the virus and its modes of transmission, namely, through sexual intercourse (homo- and heterosexual), blood transfusion of infected blood or blood materials, accidental injuries with or through use of contaminated sharp instruments (e.g., needles, knives, razor blades) and from mother-to-child (perinatal).

Soon in the wake of the AIDS epidemic, with the recognition and general understanding of the modes of transmission and without any cure or life-prolonging treatment in sight, there was a growing awareness among researchers and politicians of the potential threat of an ever-widening epidemic.

An urgent need was realized for intensive research to find a pharmaceutical solution (medical treatment, vaccine) to be combined with effective comprehensive prevention strategies.

In spite of rapidly unfolding prevention efforts ranging from IEC campaigns with e.g. ABC messages (‘Abstain’, ‘Be faithful’ or ‘Use a condom’), to blood screening to STI treatment to programs for high-risk groups to MTCT programs in different national contexts, the spread of the virus could – so far – not be contained (DANIDA, 2002:8; Parker, 2004:1).

Simultaneously in the academic world, with the rising global HIV/AIDS awareness and the urgent need for prevention, there was a fast growing body of substantial literature based on epidemiological and biomedical analysis to explain the dynamics of HIV transmission in different national contexts as a basis for responding with prevention strategies to the crisis focussing on individual behavioural change. However, epidemiology has since then been criticised for insufficiently explaining “why transmission persists in certain contexts” (Ntseane & Preece, 2005:347).

The critique implies that epidemiological surveys lack “a clearer focus on the behaviours that are responsible for most exposure to HIV in a country” (Pisani et al., 2003:1386), and that primarily they do not take into account the varying ‘sexual’ culture in different communities (Ntseane & Preece, 2005:347; Blystad, 1995:86; Parker, 2004:2).

Since the first prevention efforts, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) were seen as imperative tools and integral parts in strategies aiming at influencing individual and social behaviour. However, most theories, behavioural models and frameworks used in HIV/AIDS prevention were derived from social psychology [1] (Parker, 2001:164; Airhihenbuwa & Obregon, 2000:6) and social communications – theories and strategies, of which many go back to family planning and population programmes and which have contributed to the understanding and application of IEC, but which have almost never been in-depth-evaluated concerning their applicability to differentiated contexts or circumstances of HIV/AIDS prevention and care (UNAIDS, 1999:19).

Regarding the applicability of such theories, approaches and strategies UNAIDS states in “Communication Framework of HIV/AIDS” (1999):

“Commonly used communication theories and models were reviewed by researchers and practitioners and found to be limited in their applicability to HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support. Many of these theories and models focus primarily on individual behaviour and make little or no allowance for the role of the social and environmental context of disease prevention interventions. This became increasingly obvious as, during early discussions, the influence of factors of social and



environmental context on the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS interventions in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean emerged” (UNAIDS, 1999:17).

It was obvious that reality demanded new approaches. How this shift of application from theories and models of behaviour change based on individual psychology to new communication frameworks to focus on non-Western cultures and societies took place, from a historical perspective, will be reviewed in the following chapter in greater detail.

## **I.2 From “risk” to culture to social transformation**

This chapter summarizes Parker’s analysis of the development of research in HIV/AIDS prevention from “risk” to culture to social transformation, from a historical perspective, including relevant references from other authors.

In his article “Sexuality, Culture, and Power in HIV/AIDS Research”, Parker (2001:163,165) mentions the growing importance of anthropologists in contributing with new research agendas in the face of the threatening AIDS epidemic, even though initially delayed.

As already mentioned above, from the first decade of the HIV/AIDS epidemic up to the present time prevention intervention strategies have been based predominantly on empirical data produced by bio-medically and epidemiologically driven behavioural research programmes with the focus on surveys of risk-related sexual-behaviour and on the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about sexuality that might be associated with the risk of HIV infection (ibid., p.165).

However, since the late 1980s, in the process of the development of behavioural research and interventions in diverse social and cultural contexts, research findings and practical experience around the world indicated again and again that information alone is insufficient to produce risk-reducing behavioral change and that such research based on individualistic dynamics cannot be taken to make fully plausible, let alone cause, changes in sexual conduct without taking into account “a far more complex set of social, structural and cultural factors”, which determine and “mediate the structure of risk in every population group” (ibid., p. 165). Approaches with an “epidemiological start point for understanding the spread of infection”, have, according to Dahl (1996:2), “contributed to identification of particular groups of people as sources of the further spreading of infection and thereby subjected them to (possible) stigmatisation”.

To continue with Parker, it became clear that both tools of research and ways of intervention had to be questioned since they showed only relative effectiveness. The difficulties of translation or adoption of research programmes as meaningful tools in other cultural settings had become obvious. Due to this experience of flaws in the application of generalising approaches and messages, communication theories and models underwent a shift from an individual-oriented focus to a focus on socio-cultural contexts that influence behaviour, from the notion of “sexual risk behaviour” to culture (Parker, 2001:166).

Recognising the need for research that draws on relevant community-based local knowledge and practice, from the late 1980s onwards, ethnographically grounded descriptive and analytic research on the socio-cultural construction of sexual meaning has become the basis for the development of culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate, community-based HIV/AIDS programs. These programs aim, since that time, at transforming social norms, values and beliefs embedded in the culture in culturally acceptable ways to ultimately result in risk-reducing sexual practices (ibid., p. 167-168).

In order to enable such necessary behaviour change to reduce infection, “the understanding of why *and* how people behave in the way they do” was seen as of paramount importance which is in line with Dowsett’s statement:

“Ascertaining the sexual culture of any such community is a central research task for effective health education, because all communities are differently structured” (Dowsett, 1999, in: Ntseane & Preece, 2005:347).

In a figurative sense, one could say that to join in a game of cards, it is necessary not only to recognize the attributes and movements of a single card, but also to be knowledgeable about the invisible fundamental rules that govern the game.

Further in his article, Parker mentions that, with these efforts for deeper cultural analysis that had come up to compensate for the factual limitations of earlier behavioural approaches, another important focus appeared as part of the anthropological response to the epidemic from the early to mid-1990s.

There was a growing attention to and interest in analysing geopolitical, economical and structural factors that can cause, increase or influence – both in negative or positive ways (as

facilitators for risk reduction) – the risk for HIV infection (Parker, 2001:168; Pisani et al. 2003:1384).

Research efforts to explore these structural and cultural factors that underlie rules, norms and regulations that condition the possibilities of sexual interaction between individuals, and the socio-cultural formation of sexual (as well as other forms of) inequalities or “structural violence” (Farmer, 2004:307) have thus led to alternative models and paradigms for responding to the epidemic, both locally and cross-culturally.

From this point, the promotion of “participatory and collaborative forms of action research” with e.g. vulnerable or marginalized women in patriarchal societies as a way to raise awareness about power relationships and enable the redefinition of gendered roles and socio-economic factors that have, to varying degrees, fuelled the HIV epidemic in many parts of the world seemed to become more and more crucial (Parker, 2001:171).

In this respect, since the end of the 1990s, a growing number of innovative HIV/AIDS intervention research projects have been carried out using strategies of “community mobilization and the stimulation of activism or advocacy” (or social engineering) whereby many of these works have drawn increasingly on theories of “social transformation” and “collective empowerment” (Parker, 2001:172; Parker, 2004:4) or “cultural empowerment” (Airhihenbuwa, 1995:27).

In fact, such development programs or Participatory Action Research (PAR) already evolved around the post-war period of the last century (Morrison and Lilford, 2001:436).

From the 1970s onwards, particularly in the field of agriculture and rural development, PAR was increasingly conducted and further developed to improve planning programs by actively involving the beneficiaries in the process (Rifkin & Pridmore, 2001:12).

In the chapter about social change, PAR, especially in the context of HIV/AIDS, will be considered and explained at greater length.

### **I.3 The cultural dimension of HIV/AIDS**

#### **I.3.1 Towards a `culture of meaning´**

To start exploring the cultural dimension of HIV/AIDS, the concept of culture has to be briefly considered.

Usually, when communicating in one's own or in other cultures or by trying to define `culture´, one uses personally acquired knowledge based on both personal experience and learned concepts as well as theories from one's own cultural background or intersubjective reality (Habermas, 1979: xi, 74,121; 1981:32, 107, 123, 149).

From such constructivist point of view, Geertz, a modern anthropological thinker, argues:

“The term `culture´ has by now acquired a certain aura of ill-repute in social anthropological circles because of the multiplicity of its referents and the studied vagueness with which it has all too often been invoked” (Geertz,1973:89)

But then, how do we define `culture´, interpret `culture´ and deal with it in a meaningful way , especially in the context of HIV/AIDS?

Probably the oldest definition of culture in the academic world stems from Tylor, 1871, which may illustrate Geertz's point of “the multiplicity of its referents and studied vagueness”:

“That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871, in: Gausset, 2001:510)

For this reason, Geertz suggests an unambiguous concept of culture that

“denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life” (Geertz, 1973:89).

This more abstract concept of culture seems more adequate for considerations of “culture” and “meaning” and will serve as a point of reference when later in Part II symbolic representations and rituals are discussed as part of produced and applied ‘culture-specific’ HIV/AIDS materials, specifically when discussing the meaning of the condom in a certain culture. The wider implications and possible explications of Geertz’s concept cannot, however, be discussed further in the limited frame of this thesis.

Generally, it can be said that the notion of ‘cultural meaning’, from a constructivist perspective, has been widely adopted and has become central to postmodern social science thought and action in the last five decades.

As the new emphasis lies on ‘meaning’, researchers are interested in the “why *and* how” people share e.g. a common sexual behavioural pattern (Ntseane & Preece, 2005:347) in contrast to what is their actual sexual practice in terms of e.g. partner choice or frequencies of sexual encounters (Parker, 2001:164).

More recently in anthropology, as MacDougall (2006:237) expresses it, cultural processes are increasingly understood “as embodied rather than abstract, variable across individuals and subgroups, and expressed in a panoply of patterns and symbolic forms involving material objects, the emotion and the senses” – a kind of constant reinvention of culture in the interactive movements of everyday life.

Taking the metaphor of language or text as culture, one can say that more and more Western researchers and health interventionists have seriously started to learn to speak non-Western languages, to carefully listen and to read between their lines, in order to catch the deeper meanings or semiotics (Habermas, 1979:11) behind hierarchically ordered networks of representational symbols, and to communicate and (inter)-act in culturally meaningful ways

or so-called appropriate, culture-sensitive or culture-specific ways – terms often applied synonymously in literature, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

### **I.3.2 Culture-specificity, culture-sensitivity and cultural appropriateness**

Until recently, the cultural dimension of HIV/AIDS was not given much attention in international health contexts (Parker, 2001:163-165; Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000:256).

However, the knowledge and recognition of the cultural dimension has existed for quite some time as a number of examples of approaches in health promotion and behavioural change programs show both in past and more recent academic literature, particularly in the field of HIV/AIDS research and intervention.

The list of ‘culturally appropriate’ research and interventions has a wide range: from examples of health promotion among native Indians where use was made of their legends, folktales and storytelling in connection with diabetes information (Tripp-Reimer et al., 2001:18); or among African-American women where cultural influences such as ‘spirituality’ and scriptures could be applied to promoting breast cancer screening (Holt et al., 2003); yet another example is from the natives of Hawaii (Hughes, 2001) where the revival of warrior traditions was a tool for promoting diet, physical activity and health.

The concept of culture-sensitivity is rather a complex one. It could be understood as the recognition and understanding of a cultural context and its similarity and interfacing with or difference from other contexts, on both a cultural and material level. A culture-sensitive or culturally competent person is aware of e.g. availability of local resources, of cultural habits, norms, values and beliefs, local knowledge and discourses, or the character of sexual meaning and practices shared by members of the community (Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000:264; Ntseane & Preece, 2005:347-348).

This is often understood as a presupposition, as a first step in creating or adapting research protocols or health intervention in a particular cultural setting.

Again, it is necessary, in a figurative sense, to learn to speak the same language, to find the right words, in order to be able to fuel a health message with the power of local culture, and thus to make it comprehensible and trustworthy for the target group as an appropriate communicative action (Habermas, 1979:64, 67-68; 1981:123), which also can be expressed as a way of changing culture through itself or to change existing discourses from within communities (Ntseane & Preece, 2005:349).

To be knowledgeable about the culture in question, to understand its inner dynamics, in order to finally create culturally appropriate health interventions or culture-specific education materials is not only crucial for 'outsiders' coming to a foreign culture but also, to a certain extent, for natives who are active in a program. Both etics (outsiders) and emics (insiders) need cultural sensitivity and to cultivate an understanding of what is appropriate and meaningful, which is a constant learning and inherently problem solving process.

As Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator, puts it:

“I cannot think *for others* or *without others*, nor can others think for *me*. Even if people's thinking is superstitious or naïve, it is only as they rethink their assumptions in action that they can change. Producing and acting upon their own ideas – not consuming those of others – must constitute that process” (Freire, 1970:89).

The concept of culture-sensitivity can be seen parallel with the historical shift from etic to emic perspectives, from a perception of culture as barrier or a set of risk factors to culture as a potential resource (Parker, 2001:167).

In itself, the concept can be interpreted as an indirect critique of developed societies “as 'the model' to be followed” (Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000:257).

Experience and science show again and again that the Western paradigm with its traditionally fundamental “ideology of progress” and tendency to top-down agency, has not been able to realize repeatedly stated health goals in various contexts of the developing world (Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000:257).

A phenomenological study by Ntseane & Preece (2005) conducted among five ethnic groups in Botswana, a country with one of the highest prevalence of HIV (38.5 per cent of people aged 15 to 49), was able to show how current Botswanian HIV/AIDS prevention interventions fail. Strategies such as the ABC-approach, the introduction of testing centres, ART or efforts of capacity building – are all relatively ineffective because they are all imposed from outside people's own culture, disrespecting local, culture-specific behaviours and attitudes. Ntseane & Preece (2005) conclude:

“The findings of the study confirmed that sexuality and sexual behaviour are gender-laden, discursive practices embedded within particular contexts. The social function of sex demonstrated by different ethnic groups includes [...] sex as procreation,

entertainment, family property and healing. The study also revealed that cultures have indigenous sex and health education discourses (disciplinary power mechanisms) that are reinforced through the language of taboos and proverbs [...] that the ABC discourse alone is often ineffective when it conflicts with traditional sex education and practices [...]. Furthermore, there are high levels of mistrust about information being provided and its lack of synchronicity with cultural beliefs and values” (ibid., p. 350).

The study also emphasizes that in a patriarchal society such as Botswana where woman have no say, and where marriage is of such high value and social meaning, gender power relations are not adequately addressed by trying to persuade females to take control from now on.

The authors recommend (ibid., p. 362) that, alongside raising women’s consciousness about power-relationships, men should instead be targeted and empowered to take over the leading role as decision makers in issues of sexuality to meet the HIV and AIDS challenge.

In “Health and Culture, Beyond the Western Paradigm”, Airhihenbuwa (1995:28) requires that “any conceptual approach for health promotion programs should be anchored in a dialogic process that allows members of the targeted culture to address cultural sensitivity and cultural appropriateness in program development”.

In such a process of cultural communication to produce and acquire knowledge, Airhihenbuwa emphasizes the importance of the effective methods of learning through demonstration, “because the learner uses all senses - hearing, smell, vision, taste, and touch”, whereby Airhihenbuwa stresses, most importantly, the value of promoting the tradition of orature and orality.

By listening, imagination is triggered and intrinsic transformative visual and cognitive learning processes are stimulated. This has been common theory and practice in many parts of the African continent, in contrast to the Western methods with visualisation of written or graphical presentations (physical), e.g. slides and transparencies, as the basis for teaching and learning (ibid., p.12).

### **I.3.3 Towards a definition of culture-sensitivity**

There have been frequent calls and arguments by social scientists for the development of models for culture-sensitive approaches. Frameworks and models such as e.g. the PEN-3-model (Airhihenbuwa, 1989:60;1992:271) [2] and the “Essential Messages Outline” (Biella et



al., 2003) have been developed to guide and inspire culturally appropriate interventions. The latter has been especially developed for the design of culture-specific HIV/AIDS media materials [3].

However, there is seemingly little agreement in literature on defining as to what constitutes an intervention or a behaviour change strategy that is culturally sensitive according to Marín (1993).

Therefore, for community interventions to be culturally appropriate or sensitive, based on research with Hispanics in the US, Marín suggests a definition that meets “each of the following characteristics:

- (a) The intervention is based on the cultural values of the targeted group, (b) the strategies that make up the intervention reflect the subjective cultural characteristics of the members of the targeted group (i.e., attitudes, expectancies, norms) of the group, and (c) the components that make up the strategies reflect the behavioral preferences and expectations of the members of the group” (Marín, 1993:155).

The term ‘specificity’ Marín uses in the sense of levels of specificity, i.e. specific to a group or a subgroup or to individual members of a group. Specific, here, is interpreted as “to be of relevance”. He emphasises the need to limit specificity (ibid., p.157), i.e. the atomization of community interventions in order not to become unmanageable, as desirable as they may be in order to increase personal relevance.

Further in this paper, the author will partly refer to Marín’s definition of culture-sensitivity. In addition, with the word *culture-sensitive* the author will emphasize an *action* of a person (intervention), whereas the term *culture-specific* shall apply to *materials* produced or used in culture-sensitive interventions, in the sense of “fitting or belonging to the culture”. *Cultural appropriateness* shall remain a pure synonym and cover both, action and materials (cultural sensitivity and specificity).

Another partially useful concept of cultural sensitivity, to be referred to later in the discussion section of this thesis, is borrowed from Bayer (1994:896) who suggests three different ways in which the concept can be framed: the semantic, the instrumental and the principled.

The first two are of a pragmatic nature, the last one has roots in ethical and political arguments.

The *semantic* concept of cultural sensitivity refers to the application of the linguistic and stylistic characteristics of a targeted group, so that the content of the message is understandable. The demand is that e.g. ABC as universalistic and uniform messages of AIDS prevention be translated or packaged in a way that is appropriate for a certain audience.

The *instrumental* concept of cultural sensitivity, according to Bayer, emphasizes the importance of the cultural context. Interrelating socio-cultural factors that condition sexual, drug-using or procreative behaviour leading to HIV transmission have to be addressed in order to induce the transformations of those behavioural norms.

Cultural, gender and psychosocial forces and influences have to be identified within communities. By reflecting and working with them critically, they can be modified, harnessed and ultimately transformed into powerful agents towards HIV risk reduction.

According to Bayer, these two pragmatic ways of being culturally sensitive are compatible with the goals of scientific health promotion.

The basis of the third category, the *principled* concept of cultural sensitivity, is described by Bayer as respect for the cultural integrity of the targeted individual or collective with the moral claim of pluralism in multi-ethnic or cross-cultural settings. In this ethical and political sense of cultural sensitivity, for example, the ABC approach or parts of it as HIV prevention messages may seriously clash with socio-cultural norms that inform and structure sexual (or drug-using) behaviour or be altogether incompatible with reality (ibid., p. 895-7).

This happens e.g. in the case of many conservative Christian communities and of political leaders that embody right wing agendas which favour AB over C, with stigmatisation of C (ibid., p. 896; Dowsett, 2003:27; Murphy, 2006:1443; Gausset, 2001:514).

### **I.3.4 The development of culture-sensitivity**

The question then is, as a person (a social scientist or health interventionist or a member of a community such as e.g. health workers), how to develop culture-sensitivity, how to begin with it?

Anthropologists suggest informing oneself by reading about the culture in question or by searching databases covering sources dealing with the cultural and social issues before going into the field; an attitude of being humble, open-minded and respectful to the people and their

environment where the intervention or research is planned to take place is seen as fundamental and crucial (Hahn, 1999:8).

Modern anthropology, in general, offers different methods to follow in a research or intervention situation such as participant observation, the use of interviews (structured/unstructured or narrative) or focus groups (ibid., p.16-18), and (self)-reflexivity (Harper, 2007) among others.

However, participation – not only as a means of observation, but rather to work with the targeted group and share their daily life as interactive experiences – is definitely fundamental to (culture-sensitive) learning and teaching processes (Dewey, 1938:43-44) and of paramount importance when it comes to social dynamics as reflected on at greater length below (Rifkin & Pridmore, 2001:28).

### **I.3.5 Cultural change, participation and social transformation**

Geertz (1973:5) believes (with Max Weber) “that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun” whereby culture constitutes those webs.

Usually, we refer to a group of people when speaking of a community who share a common culture, or, in other words – dimensions such as identity, a set of social representations and the conditions and constraints of access to power, materially and symbolically (Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000:264).

This set of social representation, mediated through language, mutually organises and mirrors the world view of community members and their culture – a world view (i.e. ethno-centric, world-centric) which, in turn, functions as reference point for dealing with the reality of everyday life in the community” (Airhihenbuwa, 1995:15; Habermas, 1979:67-68, 121).

How is this dialectic process possible and how does it come about?

The answer social scientists suggest is through the process of participation, as the enactment of these above-mentioned dimensions, whereby community is “actualised, negotiated and eventually transformed” (Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000:264).

Therefore, culture and cultural continuity, logically, is only possible through dynamic processes, the ability to change and to adapt on the basis of the flexibility and creativity of its participating members (Habermas, 1979:121-122, 172).

This, however, has, especially in the past, been denied by colonialists (and early anthropologists) and is often still being denied by neo-liberal actors in the process of globalisation – an imperialistic tradition which holds on to the view that non-Western cultures are static and, therefore, lack the potential for change from within.

Rekdal (1999:23) has shown in “The Invention by Tradition”, with the example of the Iraqw (Tanzania), how culture possesses a potential for internally generated creativity, flexibility and innovation to re-shape its tools (e.g. customs, rituals) for handling modern and traditional phenomena in ways that make sense – as a “continually changing *authentic* Iraqw culture” in the fast changing modern world.

Of course, when it comes to interventions based on cultural research, there is often a large grey area of what is, at long last, externally imposed on or adapted from within a culture.

To minimize possible “top-down” tendencies or “cultural assaults” (UNAIDS,1999:24), broad-based and holistic-oriented approaches in research and intervention programs, PAR, as mentioned in chapter I.2., all aim at – in contrast to many mainstream approaches – putting the rhetoric of Alma Ata, 1971, into practice, namely, to respect and strengthen “the voices and choices of the poor”, and to involve beneficiaries of projects in their planning, implementation and evaluation processes (Rifkin & Pridmore, 2001 :ix).

Rifkin and Pridmore argue in “Partners in Planning” (2001) well aware of the socio-economic and geopolitical dimensions and implications of such approaches:

“Three decades of experience with participatory methods in both industrialized and low-income countries have shown that with knowledgeable and skillful partners communities can gather the data and create the information they need to better understand the choices they should have, and to begin to claim those choices. It may be a counsel of perfection, but if every community of poor people was so empowered the world could be transformed and the forces of globalisation influenced to benefit rather than further impoverish people” (ibid., p. ix).

It is clear that this approach builds on democratic thought and Human Rights.

In this context, Paolo Freire (1970:68-105), spoke of “praxis” – an ongoing process of transforming the world by speaking “a true word” that is the expression of reflection and action. “Praxis” is the basis of creative *dialogue* between teachers and learners which, in turn,

leads to *conscientisation*, the stimulation of critical thinking and awareness to liberate people from structural oppression.

This movement towards liberation is, again, summarized by Rifkin & Pridmore (2001) in the short and simple hierarchical formula:

“Information is KNOWLEDGE  
Knowledge is POWER  
Sharing knowledge is EMPOWERMENT” (ibid., p. 2).

Participatory approaches are action-oriented and provide and make use of a huge variety of communication strategies such as focus group discussions, folk media (drama, forum theatre, dance and ritual), visualisation aids like maps “related to the geographical location” (e.g. to resources or social relationships) or “related to time” (e.g. seasonal calendars or historical profiles) and many others (ibid., p.65).

These creative and flexible methods are inherently culture-sensitive and ‘natural’, especially the above mentioned folk media, since they are designed and produced by the people themselves and could be termed as cultural reference points of orientation or ‘cultural site’ (Schechner, 1990:119,123).

They enable the communities to perceive and identify their own needs, generate and express genuine local knowledge and find creative solutions within a common intersubjective context. Further, they enhance transformative (learning) processes both in the performing (participating) individuals and their environment (Schechner, 1990:128; Habermas, 1979:74, 121).

Most recently, to include different participatory approaches fitting different environments (urban, rural) and time-frames (short-term, long-term), the umbrella term PLA, Participatory Learning and Action, has been introduced.

To continue with Rifkin and Pridmore (2001:12):

“The main idea behind PRA/PLA is that generating information for planning is valuable as a step-by-step or systematic learning process in its own right and not only because it generates accurate information. By ‘handing over the stick’ or giving

control of the information to be generated to the intended beneficiaries, both professionals and local people learn from and with each other”.

### **I.3.6 The first step towards participation and mobilisation**

To start such a process of mutually learning and teaching towards development and social transformation in e.g. relatively information-naïve society – in other words, to become culturally appropriate in action, in knowledge and material production – community mobilization and sensitization are an essential part of and, at the same time, constitute the first step in this process.

This is often done by finding the ‘key informants’, culture-competent facilitators or local “ambassadors”, ‘the fiery souls’ that are able to communicate messages in close relation to the targeted groups and communities and “to create relevance and authenticity”, often with the function of “opinion makers and ‘first movers’” (Pedersen, 2002:22).

Being an integral part of their own culture, the ‘real insiders’, they act as communication channels who are able to reach the minds and hearts of their people, raise issues and win the trust of the community.

Without trust, participatory projects cannot start or in fact must fail, especially in the context of HIV/AIDS, which is often connected with fear, stigma and social isolation in most societies.

Therefore, the local (indigenous) messenger with command of the local language or vernacular and a deep understanding for the message at stake, being a trustworthy or, ideally, charismatic person is of paramount importance (Windal, 1997:20; Tripp-Reimer, 2001:17).

He or she could be any respected key person or informant of society – a teacher, doctor, political leader, tribal chief, a peer group leader, priests or any socially active person.

### **I.3.7 The combination and relationship of IEC materials and participation**

In their manual “CONFRONTING AIDS TOGETHER, Participatory Methods in Addressing the HIV/AIDS Epidemic” Skjelmerud & Tusibira (1997) emphasize the combination and interrelation of IEC materials and participation:

“Traditional IEC approaches need to be combined with participatory methods. One of the important lessons is that IEC work alone has strong limitations. To influence behaviour, it must be combined with other measures that make people actively involved. Making them feel that they can deal with their own situation is the key objective of participation. They may then discover that they need more information, and will then be more open to accepting new knowledge. Thus posters, brochures and lectures about AIDS, including the use of drama presentations, may be used to get a sense of common purpose, and be a good means to keep the issue of AIDS “hot” in the community” (ibid., p. 22).

In the next two chapters the role of media as EE in IEC in HIV/AIDS prevention will be reviewed and discussed, focussing on video and film production.

#### **I.4 The role of the media in HIV/AIDS communication strategies**

The word *media* is the plural form of the Latin word *medium* which translates into “a means”, a system, action or method by which a result is brought about. The media as a plural form relates to the main means of mass communication, especially television, radio and newspaper (The New Oxford Dictionary of English, 2001) and nowadays, increasingly, the internet. In its original and broader sense of a means it covers even folk media such as song, drama, dance, storytelling or the visual arts.

Generally, arts in the wide spectrum – with increasing levels of abstraction e.g. from practical (design) to pictorial (painting, graphics) to dramatic (stage drama) to narrative (novel, story) to musical (song, dance) to filmic (combining levels of abstraction) – are all representational and constitutional aspects of culture. Both are part and means of verbal or non-verbal communication networks (Monaco, 2000:28).

In this sense, all arts are based on mediating materials and, in a general sense, can be seen as media themselves. However, it has to be emphasized that not all media are arts, as becomes clear in the case of the photograph or film: “The media existed before the arts” (ibid., p. 38), and, also, language is not necessarily arts.

In any case, the media have gained, in their broader sense, as information, education and entertainment channels – in the era and context of the widening HIV/AIDS epidemic – rapid attention and significance in prevention research and intervention programs. It has been realized that:

“HIV/AIDS has a close relationship to emotions and feelings. Behaviour change does not occur in any particular way. Entertainment, music and humor are central elements of Latin American and Caribbean cultures and must be used in education and prevention programs” (UNAIDS, 1999:65).

There is probably no culture, world-wide, that does not acknowledge these elements, though, maybe in more or less extroverted ways.



With the potential of powerful modern communication technologies such as radio or TV to reach the millions, earlier communication campaigns mainly focussed on safer sex, e.g. condom use or the ABC approach targetted the behaviour of the individual, but hardly, if ever, addressed local or (sub)cultural contexts (ibid., p. 26-27).

This failure or lack of contextually focused frameworks was seen as a major limitation (as local, national and international experience in the course of the pandemic showed) and became the motivation for UNAIDS to develop a context-based communication strategy, following the call of other organizations such as the Rockefeller Foundation which promote 'communication for social change' (Figueroa et al., 2002:3) which advocates, again, a move away from exclusively individual behaviour change communication towards social and political agendas or social change communication (UNAIDS, 1999:27).

The future step to translate the new framework into national communication strategies should be a "community-based media having the potential to educate, entertain, and inform, while providing opportunities for discussion and debate on issues such as HIV/AIDS" – dialogues, which from now on would come up genuinely in public fora instead of being scripted exclusively by foreign policy makers of international NGOs and agencies:

"Once greater pluralism and democracy begin to guide the process, " UNAIDS (ibid., p. 67) states " [...] more dynamic strategies will animate these debates. Entertainment education is an example".

A variety of EE projects have been conducted in past and recent history (Tufte, 2005:160; Piotrow, 1994:4) – among them examples which illustrate the integration of creative techniques such as role-play and various forms of group work (Janz et al., 1996:95; Fuglesang, 1997:1250), of art forms such as drama or popular theatre (Bagamoyo College of Arts et al., 2002:333; Panford et al., 2001:1562; Elliot et al., 1996:322; McEwan et al., 1991:155; Gausset, 2001:516), and media e.g. video, TV (Igartua, 2003:525; Goldstein et al., 2005:472; White, 2006:128) in health, sexuality and HIV/AIDS education, and which demonstrate their positive impacts on the behaviour of young people and whole communities.

Realizing that the messages reach the audiences, John Hopkins, in addition to other organisations, has been behind a great number of enter-educate projects including TV series

and specials, radio dramas, songs and music videos in the developing world, as Piotrow (1994) writes in “Entertainment-Education: An Idea Whose Time Has Come”:

“Evaluation of a dozen enter-educate projects assisted by John Hopkins consistently shows that audiences pay attention to enter-educate productions, that they understand the messages, that they approve of the messages, and that a significant percentage responds by talking to their spouses and families, going to a clinic, using family planning, or practising safer sex. Studies illustrate this hierarchy of effects from paying attention, to understanding, to finally acting upon the idea” (ibid., p.4).

The question why media works [4] has a theoretical basis that arguably goes back to Aristotle, as mentioned by Piotrow.

Aristotle gave instructions for moral education by using the emotional effects drama can produce. In modern times it was Bandura who formulated a social learning theory during the 1970s and 1980s [1].

This builds on the fact that humans learn by observing and imitating the behaviour of others, in real life or in media, with the result of adapting it later to their own lives. This theory became the basis for or part of a number of health research and intervention programmes and also modern media productions (ibid., p. 5).

The last chapter of Part I of the thesis will deal briefly with the history of culture-specific media materials and visual anthropology as a sub-discipline of anthropology, which will finally lead us to the core issue of the thesis – the production and application of culture-specific HIV/AIDS media material in subchapter I.5.3 – as a transition to Part II of the thesis.

## **I.5 Culture-specific media materials in the context of HIV/AIDS**

### **I.5.1 A brief look at the history of culture-specific media materials**

The production of visual representations in the form of still photographs has been part of anthropological field work since the beginning of the discipline in the late nineteenth century (around the 1870s).

From the end of the nineteenth century onwards, the first moving picture cameras were available in industrial societies and could be used by anthropologists to shoot film footage to be used “not only as research documentation, but also as visual aids in public lectures in museums or teaching classes at universities” (Prins, 2007).

These media materials – “photographs, slides and later also films served to illustrate the prevalent theories of the day” (ibid.). This possibility of visually recording encounters with other societies was the beginning of the ethnographic film.

The usual definition of ‘ethnographic’ film, according to de Brigard’s “The History of Ethnographic Film” (1975) is: a film that reveals cultural patterning, a definition from which it follows “that all films can be called ethnographic, by reason of their content or form or both.” And de Brigard (ibid., p.13) concludes: “Some films, however, are clearly more revealing than others”.

In 1888 the physician Félix-Louis Regnault was the first person to make an ethnographic film, filming a Berber woman making pottery at the colonial Exposition Ethnographique de l’Afrique Occidentale in Paris (ibid., p.15) followed by others among which Robert Flaherty is to be mentioned here due to his demonstration of a completely new use of film with the production of “Nanook of the North” in 1922.

Unlike Regnault who used the camera as a research tool to collect data about human behaviour and culture in a strict positivist sense, Flaherty, without any formal anthropological education, without being evidently self-trained or having sought out professional advice or assistance by anthropologists, chose a participatory and reflexive approach during his Eskimo expedition in 1915-16.

Flaherty actively involved the Inuit in the film production. He asked the Inuit to be his collaborators and sought feedback from them about his understanding of their way of life. He

intended to show the Inuit, not from the civilized point of view, but the “way they saw themselves, as `we, the people” (Faherty cited in Ruby, 2000:87).

He realized that, in order to achieve this, he had to approach his work in a completely different way, a new way that actually worked.

The Inuit themselves began to make suggestion as to what to include in the movie. Additionally, to make “Nanook” a genuine collaborative production, Flaherty trained some Inuit technically. With this, being far ahead of his time, Flaherty began a tradition of participatory filmmaking that continues to this day (ibid., p. 83-88).

Many other filmmakers during the decades to follow, especially Jean Rouch, borrowed from Flaherty’s idea of participation.

Rouch called it “shared anthropology” (ibid., p. 13), in which the recorded share power with the director.

Instead of as recorder observing and following actions and events in a detached way (today known as observational-style film), naively assuming that this would not significantly influence the scene unfolding, Rouch adopted an opposite approach, that of the participatory camera.

This is evident from his earliest films onwards e.g. in “Bataille sur le grand fleuve” (1951)(ibid., p.12).

Feeling “that the presence of the camera could provoke a ciné trance in which subjects revealed their culture” and whereby, as MacDougall analyzes (2006:27, 251), the viewer could be absorbed even stronger into the “fabric of the events themselves”, Rouch’s approach actually attempts “to unite the perspectives of maker and viewer”.

In other words, “the camera is both an observer and a participant, shaping the space around it geographically and temporarily”, as MacDougall (ibid., p. 251-252) notes, and “through it, we as observers also come to inhabit this three-dimensional world”.

In this kind of “ethnodocudrama” or form of neorealism, Rouch shares, like other contemporary filmmakers around the 1950s and from then on, an “interest in pushing the limits of documentary realism“ and “a desire to allow us to see the world through the eyes of the natives” (Ruby, 2000:13).

Other examples of film production with a participatory and collaborative dimension is the Navajo Film Project (1970) by Sol Worth and John Adair, in which Native Americans were

taught the technology of filmmaking without following an ideological Western script (ibid., p. 215).

This trend has, in the accelerating process of globalisation and the starting digital revolution, grown exponentially since the 1980's into an increased number of indigenously produced media, worldwide, partly embracing and transcending the traditional notion of "ethnographic" film by addressing not only cultural but also political dimensions (Levine, 2004:65; Englehart, 2004:74; Pink, 2004:4).

From the Western perspective, this development can be interpreted as a way "to be less ethnocentric and to be culturally relative about other people" both in scientific study or research and, basically, in the encounter with other cultures in different contexts (Ruby, 2000:13-14).

From a non-Western perspective, the new media possibilities might be seen as as a means of indigenous "media advocacy", "cultural activism" opposing political oppression and social injustice, or, more generally, a modern tool for liberation from ongoing cultural imperialism (Levine, 2004:65; Englehart, 2004:74; Pink, 2004:4).

Before moving to culture-specific video and film in the context of health promotion, especially in HIV/AIDS prevention, a last word has to be said about visual anthropology as a subdiscipline of anthropology.

### **I.5.2 The closing gap between visual anthropology and "a discipline of words"**

One of the most prominent researchers in the relatively short history of anthropology, Margaret Mead, was, from the 1930s until her death in 1978, a tireless promoter of the scholarly use of ethnographic photography and film.

In 1973, at an international visual anthropology conference in Chicago, she provocatively introduced her now famous article "Visual Anthropology in a Discipline of Words [...] charging (with some exaggeration) that anthropologists only took pencil and paper into the field" (Prins, 2007; Mead, 1975).

Anthropology has for almost the entire twentieth century been presented with the dilemma of how to bring the different methodologies of the written account and the visual representation of studied cultures together.

The history of visual anthropology, according to MacDougall (2006:237), has been an “erratic” one, not following a straight line, but rather “focussing on tendencies that were present from the beginning but were often overlooked or discounted in the years that followed”.

During the last quarter of the twentieth century, as Ruby (2000:5) writes, more and more anthropologists became interested “in the production of pictorial materials and the analysis of pictorial and visual manifestations of culture joining together under the rubric of the anthropology of visual communication”, and, at the end of the century, “ethnographic film finally seems on the verge of some serious theoretical debates and critical reexamination of film as a way of communicating anthropological knowledge”.

And some years later, seemingly the gap between visual anthropology and “the discipline of words” is finally closing as MacDougall (2006:237) suggests: “Visual anthropology has by now acquired the semblance of a history, although far from a definitive one”.

He points out that much of what was the early interest of “a few unorthodox anthropologists” (and non-anthropologists as in the case of Flaherty) and other ethnographic filmmakers, “the embodied experience of individuals, the relation of people to places and material objects, the performative aspects of social life, have now become part of the anthropological mainstream” (ibid., p. 237).

### **I.5.3 Culture-specific film material in HIV/AIDS communication**

This final chapter of Part I touches the core of the thesis, namely, culture-specific HIV/AIDS materials, especially video and film.

From now on, the use of the word film will cover both video and film productions, however, the word video will be used in its particular meaning.

The application of culturally appropriate media materials (education-entertainment), e.g. in HIV-related interventions, with ethnic minorities has become a widely recognized practice (Herek et al., 1998:705; Tufte, 2005:168; Stadler, 2004:92; Biella et al., 2003:13), however,

only a small amount of empirical research has been conducted to prove the relative effectiveness of different techniques for creating culturally specific AIDS educational film materials (Herek et al.,1998:706).

From the “few studies that have focused directly on AIDS videos for minority audiences”, the main conclusion “is that videos with culturally similar content are superior to culturally dissimilar videos” (ibid., p. 707; Roye & Hudson 2003:149).

To address the question of how cultural sensitivity can best be achieved, Herek et al. conducted two field experiments with three samples of African American adults (N=174, 173 and 143), based on social psychological research on communication and persuasion, to assess how source characteristics (race of communicator), message characteristics (multicultural message vs. culturally specific message), and audience characteristics (racial distrust and AIDS-related distrust) influence:

- Perceptions of the credibility and attractiveness of the message (as *proximal* variables)
- AIDS-related attitudes, beliefs, and behavioural intentions (as *distal* variables) [italics REF]

For this purpose, the researchers created three different AIDS videos whereby they controlled the script and the production techniques, so that the videos differed on only two dimensions, namely, “the race of the announcer and the cultural “ “framing” ” of the informational message” (Herek et al., 1998:711).

They found that “an AIDS video with a culturally specific message was rated as more credible, more attractive, and of higher quality than was a video with a multicultural message”, whereby the multicultural message delivered by a white person was rated less favourably than when the announcer was a black person (ibid, 1998:706).

Another video study indicated, with a second community sample, “that a multicultural message might be more effective if delivered in a culturally specific context, namely after audience members watch a culturally specific video” (ibid., p. 706).

For the distal variables – AIDS-related attitudes, beliefs, and behavioural intentions – minimal changes could be found and the researchers argue that it is necessary to influence proximal

variables, “though not sufficient for effecting long-term change in AIDS-related attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours” (ibid., p. 706).

These studies and other film production projects share “a general conclusion that AIDS films are more effective when they include images and content that are consistent with the day-to-day experience of their target audience” (ibid., p.707; Roy & Hudson, 2003:157; Goldstein et al., 2005:466).

Concerning long-term effects in terms of changed risk behaviour, Roy and Hudson (2003) conducted theory-based video research and intervention targeting Hispanic and African American adolescent woman, and come to a different conclusion. They argue that, based on combined constructs from the health belief model, social cognitive learning theory and the theory of reasoned action [1], and with use of focus group technique from the targeted population to inform the culturally relevant, video-based interventions that embody relevant community and/or cultural issues are successful tools in achieving positive outcomes in various aspects of HIV/AIDS risk reduction, including long-term behaviour change and long-term reduction of STDs (in the case of their own video through the dual-method).

They underpin their statement (ibid., p. 149) by referring to findings from previous studies by O’Donnell et al.(1994:143) using video intervention such as “Porque Sí” with an inner-city Hispanic population showing that “video interventions have significantly been successful in changing HIV/AIDS-related risk behaviours and *long-term STD incidence*”.

What many research-based video interventions have in common is that they use focus group methodology as a useful format to obtain information to develop culturally relevant educational film materials, based on one theory or a set of theories from individual and social psychology. However, as emphasized in a video project by Murdaugh et al., focus groups, useful as they are for research as well as practice, also have their limitations:

- The method might provide information about what is culturally appropriate and relevant, but the discussion leader has less control of the group compared with the individual interview
- Participants influence each other in the process of interaction to a great extent
- Analysis of the data acquired is often difficult as information must be interpreted within the social context created by the interaction



- The technique of leading the group needs careful training and special communication skills
- Groups from the same cultural background can be so different that sufficient groups sessions must be conducted to balance possible idiosyncrasies of single discussions (Murdaugh et al., 2000:1512).

Another even more critical point is, one can argue, that due to different theories, frameworks and approaches underlying the development and application of culturally specific HIV/AIDS media in different cultural settings and complex contexts it is difficult, if practically not impossible, to compare their effectiveness.

Herek et al. (1998:708) mention a former “review of more than 100 AIDS educational videos by Herek & Psychosocial Research Group (1991, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997)“ where two common approaches to cultural sensitivity could be identified: the multicultural and the culturally specific approach.

The former group of videos target multiracial audiences featuring “communicators from multiple ethnic and cultural groups and discuss problems posed by AIDS for all of the different groups”, the latter target a single ethnic or racial group featuring “communicators exclusively from that group and discuss AIDS specifically as it affects that community” (ibid., p. 708).

In terms of their effectiveness, the researchers conclude that: “Both multicultural and culturally specific AIDS videos generally respect the sensibilities of viewers in their target audience. However, whether or not they are differentially effective in reaching particular audiences is not clear” (ibid., p. 708).

Yet another critical point seems to be that with videos and other media materials that use strategies that aim at enhancing self-efficacy and inducing behavioural change, there is an assumption or a belief that the barriers to action are mainly located in the individual, and to be exclusively remedied on that level.

Such belief or “fiction” ignores the fact of the “health impact of objective blockages, such as trans-personal factors, social ostracism, poverty or the high cost of pharmaceuticals” (Biella et al., 2003:15).

## PART II : MEDIA ANALYSIS AND COMPARISON

### **II.1 Introduction**

Part II of this paper comprises a study of the two HIV/AIDS films “Eschageada UKIMWI Datoga” (“Datoga, let’s be aware of AIDS”) and “WATU WA WATU” (“People For People”).

A descriptive analysis is conducted and followed by a comparison of both productions.

The descriptive-analytical results are based on the actual film material, but also take into account relevant literature and research material related to the films. In addition, both films are compared, in general terms, with a selection of similar HIV/AIDS film materials from contemporary literature.

All of this is preceded by the study questions, objectives and methods of the study.

In the course of the following media analysis, the abbreviation EUD will be used for the above-mentioned film “Eschageada UKIMWI Datoga” and the abbreviation WWW for the second film “WATU WA WATU”.

### **II.2 The study questions**

The study questions regarding the films EUD and WWW are as follows:

1. Are the films EUD and WWW valid and relevant examples of HIV-risk reduction strategies in terms of ‘culture-specificity’, based on a descriptive analysis and comparison of both productions?
2. If the answer is affirmative, which additional facts support the argument that the films are culture-specific and effective intervention instruments for HIV-risk reduction?
3. What are the limitations of the study?

## **II.3 Objectives of the study**

### **II.3.1 The overall objective**

The overall objective of the study is a media analysis and comparison of the two films to enable a discussion about the validity and potential of the films to as effective HIV/AIDS intervention tools in terms of culture-specificity, and as instruments for community mobilization, involvement and empowerment, all of which is seen being fundamental for contending with cultural barriers to HIV/AIDS education and promoting the ultimate goal of risk-reduction behaviour.

### **II.3.2 The specific objectives:**

- A descriptive analysis of the two films
- A comparison of similarities and differences of culture-specific and cross-cultural characteristics of both films
- A discussion of the validity, potential and possible shortcomings of the films as effective HIV/AIDS intervention tools in terms of culture-specificity and as effective instruments for community mobilization, involvement and empowerment
- A discussion of the position of the films among other culture-specific HIV/AIDS film productions
- A discussion of the limitations of the present study
- A conclusion about the study and possible future research and intervention requirements regarding alternative approaches and frameworks for the production, application and evaluation of HIV/AIDS culture-specific media materials

## **II.4 Methods**

### **II.4.1 The descriptive analysis of each film**

This includes the identification of properties of each film concerning:

- The background of the film (scientific, historico-cultural, demographical and educational)
- The objectives of the film (as public health research and intervention)
- The contents of the film (topics, contents, structure, symbols and synopsis)
- The film methods applied (approaches, techniques and styles)

### **II.4.2 The comparison of both films**

This includes:

- the comparison of characteristics found according to II.3.1
- the general comparison of both films with a selection of similar cross-cultural media productions from contemporary literature

### **II.4.3 The method of (self-) reflexivity**

The method of (self)-reflexivity [5] is applied in the study, since the author of this study has been involved in the production of WWW at different stages.

This method will be used throughout the following chapters of the thesis, mainly referred to as *self-reflexive notes*.

## **II.5 Descriptive- analytical results of EUD**

The film EUD has been well described in "Eshageada UKIMWI Datoga! A culture-specific film project from Mbulu/Hanag, Tanzania" (Rekdal et al., 2006).

This and the actual film (Rekdal et al, 2004), but also other relevant authors serve as source for the analysis.

All descriptive-analytical findings regarding background, objectives, film methods, contents and additional information are presented in a structured form below.

These findings shall serve as broad basis with many relevant reference points for the comparison of the films in chapter II.7.

## **Background**

<i>Research / Intervention</i>	Culture-specific research and film project based on 15 years collaboration between Norwegian medical anthropologists and members of a Datoga community, Tanzania; the project is funded by NUFU (The Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Higher Education) for 2002-2007; the project targets at the Datoga, particularly the non-schooled segments of the population (Blystad, 2004:49).
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<i>Culture</i>	The Datoga ethnic group is a minority ethnic group from Mbulu/Hanang District, Tanzania; herdsmen (pastoralists) speaking a Southern nilotic language (in contrast: 95% Bantu-speaker in multi-ethnic Tanzania); estimated population number is about 100.000; religion: Christian and non-Christian (animist), the latter belief centres around ancestral spirits as protectors of fertility and moral mentors (Rekdal & Blystad, 1999:139).
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<i>History</i>	Harsh and painful experiences in recent history: many conflicts under (German) colonial rule (e.g. execution of ritual experts, mass arrests) and with postcolonial governments (Datoga pasture land turned into agricultural areas, demolition of sacred spaces of spiritual refuge and practice); consequences in form of marginalisation and impoverishment and a “considerable degree of scepticism in the Datoga population towards external intervention” (Rekdal et al., 2006).
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*Aids epidemic* Little HIV/AIDS research has been conducted; adult HIV prevalence is estimated much lower than in other Tanzanian regions; high prevalence of syphilis which together with a number of cultural practices indicate the potential of rapid HIV-spread; condoms are hardly available in the region, the use of condoms is a foreign concept to most Datoga; informants report cultural and moral concerns ( Blystad, 2004:60).

*Education* Low general level of education and command of Swahili (the *lingua franca* of Tanzania); large numbers of Datoga live in small enclaves in remote geographic areas, they are practically out of reach for most mainstream HIV communication and prevention interventions.

## Objectives

- to be a community-based HIV/AIDS prevention research and intervention project to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS among Datoga communities;
- to be a culture-specific in the production of knowledge and education materials (based on the concept that steps to change cultural practices should be taken from within a cultural group);
- to meet the urgent need for alternatively communicating the vulnerability of the Datoga to HIV and prevent its spread;
- to target culturally deep-seated local norms and practices and both “traditional” and “modern” unsafe practices in culturally appropriate ways;
- to bridge research and intervention in a way that makes a difference for those researched in terms of benefit;

- to create local technical competence to secure future independent development and adjustment of educational materials and create culturally relevant messages in the light of new perspectives and methods to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS;
- to demonstrate that acquired local technical competence can be a point of departure for similar interventions in neighbouring areas.

## Content

<i>General topics</i>	HIV/AIDS is a modern disease that has crossed national borders threatening the Datoga people but also other national and international communities; the ways of viral transmission, especially the sexual transmission of HIV/AIDS as well as HIV/AIDS symptomatology are introduced in basic terms.
<i>Main topics</i>	The “ratta” institution that implies legitimate sexual relations between a woman and her husband’s “clan brothers”; the “ratta” is a recurring theme throughout EUD, featured and acted upon from different perspectives, and in different ways by actors in order to underpin its - in the context of HIV/AIDS – nowadays perilous potential; to avoid the spread of the virus the local discourse on sexuality is the basis for possible behavioural changes, i.e. to reduce the number of sexual partners inside the “ratta” and keep to this category of partners which applies for the married (also referred to the traditional concept of ‘respectability’); for the unmarried the focus is still on the traditional “substantial restrictions on premarital sexual intercourse” regulated by formal youth meetings, but also generally “in normative complexes present in daily and ritual talk, song and prayer” (Blystad, 2004:51); the modern problem of combination of increasingly common alcohol consumption (monetary) with sexual practices breaching the above mentioned

<i>Minor topics</i>	recommended sexual norms (the new ones to be adapted and the traditional ones to be reinforced) is the second cardinal topic. Condoms receive marginal attention for reasons discussed below; also traditional male circumcision, scarification practices, the custom of widow inheritance or the increased availability of anti-retroviral treatment are minor topics.
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<i>Structure</i>	The film’s length is 58 minutes and is in six sections: about the first half of the film contains the story of the young man Gidemeda, how he contracts HIV and spreads it to his ratta (section 1) followed by shorter sections where Gidemeda appears as real-life person addressing the Datoga viewers to learn from the film (section 2); further, the story of Gidemeda is told again in form of a song (section 3); hereafter a men’s meeting is depicted discussing Datoga customs in the new context if HIV (section 4); this is followed by a traditional Datoga women’s meeting where the women discuss HIV, sexual issues and ways of protection and communication (section 5); a speech of a Datoga District Commissioner advocating sexual behavioural change among his people closes the film (section 6).
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<i>Symbols</i> <i>(general):</i> <i>(specific):</i>	Many symbolic elements (representations) central to Datoga culture and communication throughout the film, both in verbal and non-verbal forms (narration, dialogue, visualization) are used; An account of creation of the first two Datoga from Lake Basotu (Datoga mythology) opens the film ( the lake re-appears at the end of the film) ; the picturing of the typical Datoga day-to-day reality itself is of symbolic character: the portrayal of Gidemeda and the “ratta” as a typical social institution, the home (landscape, village, hut, eating customs and everyday commodities), his activity as a herdsman tending cattle (the existential living source and potential source of wealth), selling oxen at the market and so on; the employment of a vernacular, in general, and especially for communicating sexual sensitivities, e.g. during the women’s meeting when they use the
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expressions to “eat big” or “minimize the intake” referring to sex, primarily with clan brothers of the husband; rituals like the 9-month “bung’ed”, a funeral ceremony or special burial for certain distinguished Datoga, where thousands of Datoga gather from all over Tanzania [6] (snapshot 1, see Pictures); other minor local rituals are the “throwing of stones” by a diviner or the performing of a healing ritual (as shown in section one).

### **Film methods**

*Approaches* Use of Datoga language (a vernacular apt to meet sensitive issues in the challenging HIV/AIDS context), subtitled in English throughout the film; central Datoga song, dance and ritual as integral parts of EUD reinforcing the message at stake; recruitment of culturally competent individuals to the project of different social ranking and educational levels; actors, speakers and presenters are all known persons in Datoga society who are met with trust and respect, including healers, diviners and other men and woman of traditional authority, but also modern examples of authority ( a Datoga businessman and a high-ranking government official); the individuals involved co-decide and co-identify main topics and themes to be addressed in EUD, and the way to present them (Blystad, 2004:47).

*Techniques* Initial two-week intensive training workshop (by an anthropologist/filmmaker) for participants to be introduced to basic skills of filming with a small video camera and electronic editing in order to bridge the distance between the filmmakers and the recorded persons; emphasis on cultural competence among the recorders and editors (partly with higher education) who knew what was relevant to focus upon; use of an open-ended approach: culture-competent individuals

behind the camera appeared as attentive participants shooting the essentials of events unfolding in front of the camera; the occasional use of a tripod enabled camera and microphone to film without the presence of a recorder to disturb the situation.

*Style*

Indigenously produced HIV/AIDS teaching film; a fiction in “realist” narrative style (particularly section 1). The fate of Gidemeda, a young Datoga (see below) is visualized in a “quasi-real”, culturally typical manner. An invisible male narrator accompanies and clarifies Gidemeda’s experiences in third person speech. The verbal narration and rhythmic flow of images build an entity. After the presentation of Gidemeda’s story (section 1) shorter sections reflect, picture and comment on Gidemeda’s experiences in different narrative styles including song (section 3) and traditional speech (section 4 and 5) - each of them from a different perspective. There are two short sections framing section 3 to 5 showing Gidemeda and a known high-ranking Datoga (section 2 and 6) in quasi-real time and space as mentioned above, in a quasi-documentary fashion, both placed *within* the invention of the overall narrative which constitutes a “stepping into the screen” [7].

**Full Synopsis**

*Full synopsis* see Annex I

## II.6 Descriptive-analytical results of WWW

The film WWW has partly been treated earlier this year in the essay “The Film “WATU WA WATU” – People for People – or Unifying Tools of IEC in Local Contexts of HIV/AIDS” by the author (Futterer, 2007) and is integrated into the analysis.

Further, the actual film (MAAA NGO, 2006a) and other relevant authors serve as sources for the analysis. All descriptive-analytical findings regarding background, objectives, film methods and contents are presented in a structured form below.

The findings shall serve as a broad basis with many relevant reference points for the comparison of the films in chapter II.7.

### Background

<i>Research/ Intervention</i>	WWW is an attempted participatory documentary of a community-based HIV/AIDS sensitisation festival (2005) in the area around Malinyi, Ulanga District, Kilombero Valley in rural Southern Tanzania; the festival and its documentation is part of an initiative taken by an evolving grassroots movement (first steps of a PLA) in collaboration with the author without external funding; participant-observation and open-ended interviews in the preliminary phase of the festival [8].
<i>Culture</i>	The population in Kilombero valley is heterogeneous including Wandamba, Wapogoro, Wambunga and Wahehe ethnic groups, all with their own language, but sharing Swahili as <i>lingua franca</i> ; the majority of people of the region are Christians (with a prevalence of Catholics), Muslims and animists (Minja et al., 2001:615-6); there are a few Maasai in the region (herdsmen) and growing numbers of incoming Sukuma in search for pasture and farmland; the majority of the local population are poor small scale farmers; agriculture is the primary source of income (95%); altogether an estimated 90.000

people live in the catchment area of the nearby Lugala Lutheran Hospital (LLH), covering 41% of Ulanga District (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, 2004).

*History*

People in the region share the painful history of colonial oppression with the rest of Tanzania; memories of cruelty from the Maji Maji wars of 1905 to 1907 in Southern Tanzania, but also memories of pride have been transmitted through the generations. The Maji Maji rising against the German rulers “has been connected to the struggle for independence as well as to pre-colonial, domestic and symbolic struggles” (Becker, 2004:22); in post-colonial times the region suffered from its “marginality in terms of public investment and human development” with birth mortality rates among the highest in the country (Green, 2005:8); today, the area of Ulanga-Kilombero is described as politically stable (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, 2004); huge scale slash-and-burn of riverine forests for teak cultivation for international commerce as well as of scrub land by some ethnic groups so as to extend agriculture is seen as very problematic by many local observers and disastrous environmental consequences for both wildlife and a growing human population are feared.

*AIDS epidemic*

No epidemiological HIV/AIDS data for the region around Malinyi were available during the preliminary period of the intervention, however, indications were found of an ongoing spread of HIV in communities [9]; knowledge about HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention methods in the communities is incomplete [10] and influenced by both local and global discourses on ABC in the context of HIV/AIDS and sexuality. The condom is available in the area.

*Education* The literacy rate in the region is about 50%; due to low socio-economic status, the great majority of the farmers' children cannot attend secondary school (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, 2004); the command of Swahili in the majority of the population is fairly good; the area has practically been out of reach for bigger media campaigns in the past, and probably still is today, due to the absence of TVs and a very limited number of battery-driven radios in very few households and shops.

### **Objectives**

- to document a community-based sensitisation festival in a participatory and interactive manner;
- to use the documentary/film footage as teaching and learning material targeting the same community, but potentially also other Swahili-speaking communities in a national context;
- to reflect local information and knowledge produced by individuals and groups in the community, both in culturally appropriate verbal and visual (arts) forms (folk media);
- to unify the different folk media (song, drama, information boards etc) or IEC materials on a more abstract film level;
- to introduce the condom among interested youth in a destigmatising way, without leaving out or disrespecting the more religiously motivated A and B messages - all of them reflecting the dominant local discourses, contradictions of and gaps of ABC messages;
- to stimulate and strengthen cultural competence and cultural pride; to be distributed among WWW members for evaluation and application;
- to serve as a departing point for group sessions and group discussions.

## Contents

<i>Topics</i>  <i>(general)</i>	The importance of confronting HIV/AIDS together as “WATU WA WATU” (“People for/to People”) – stressing the values of unity, commitment, transparency, mutual respect and understanding – HIV/AIDS, its ways of transmission and its impact on individuals and communities in a local, cultural and cross-cultural context; the role of sexuality and the importance and challenge of talking about it in the context of HIV/AIDS; the historical perspective of culture and the impact of HIV/AIDS on the sexual discourse within (inter-generational, interpersonal) and across cultures in times of globalisation; cultural practices and beliefs to be addressed in the face of the threatening epidemic;
<i>(Specific)</i>	The discourse on ‘abstinence’ and ‘faithfulness’ as protective measures being often religiously motivated (mainly articulated in two songs); the condom mentioned as a protective measure against HIV; peer demonstration and modelling of condom use.
<i>Structure</i>	The film is 18 minutes long; it has six sections: a black screen opens the film with a religious song and continues with the empty festival site in the morning (section1); an overview of the “whole” festival is given (section2); a lyric about sex in the times of AIDS is sung (section3); the speech “On WWW” is presented (MAAA NGO, 2006c) and the festival shown from different perspectives (section 4); a Sukuma ethnic group celebrating in the fields performing a “condom-drumstick-happening” is shown [11], accompanied by a second speech “To the African Youth” (section 5) (ibid.); a street performance with a mix of dance and song at dusk closes the film (section 6).
<i>Symbols</i>	The use of symbolic language and “infrastructure” materials; the creation of new cross-cultural (arts) symbols [12].

## Film methods

<i>Approaches</i>	The use of Swahili throughout the film, with English subtitles; the attempt to bring together two cross-culturally tailored speeches with forms of folk media such as song, drama, dance, visual arts and symbols created by the participants themselves.
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<i>Technique</i>	Local students (two) are briefly instructed before the festival in the use of a video camera on tripods (one VHS and one digital camera with e.g. on/off technique); amateur use of the digital camera mainly by the author; external aid to edit WWW [13].
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<i>Style:</i>	WWW is a cross-cultural documentary on the basis of the camera- as both a “witness” (Sontag, 2006:214) and tool of interaction with festival participants; recorded events (speech, song, dance or drama) were not explicitly “staged” for the camera, but happened spontaneously; the documentary attempts to reflect the participatory reality both in real-time, but also as “modified reality” by integrating and/or combining different moments of the festival with pre-and post-festival events [14].
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## Full Synopsis

<i>Full Synopsis</i>	See Annex II
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## **II.7 The Comparison of EUD and WWW on the descriptive-analytical level**

The comparison of both films on the descriptive-analytical level, based on the findings above, highlights basic differences and similarities of EUD and WWW concerning their background, objectives, contents and film methods.

### **II.7.1 The comparison of backgrounds of EUD and WWW**

#### **Research and Intervention**

The production of EUD as a community-based intervention, a HIV/AIDS education campaign, is based on long-term ethnographic research with adequate funding of the matériel and infrastructure required for that purpose.

WWW as an amateur documentary of a sensitisation festival was produced in a more spontaneous and experimental fashion, without external funding for initial preparation or final realisation [8]. However it is based on short-term data collection, alongside recently taken grassroots steps towards a participatory community-based intervention program (PLA) initiated by a local medical doctor from Kilombero Valley.

Neither in the case of EUD or WWW, is there data so far from pre- or post-exposure studies concerning their effectiveness in terms of behaviour changes.

#### **Culture and History**

Both targeted populations live in Tanzania. As a mono-ethnic, pastoral minority group with its own language, marginalized and impoverished within the Tanzanian historico-politico-cultural context, Datoga reality, however, is quite different from the situation of the multi-ethnic, mainly agricultural and nationally more integrated population at Malinyi in Kilombero Valley, with Swahili as their shared *lingua franca*.

Also, as large numbers of the Datoga are animists, cultural and religious customs and beliefs differ from communities in Kilombero Valley where the majority of people has been christianised since colonial times.

As a result of these marked socio-economic-cultural disadvantages Datoga people have been facing within Tanzanian society (ostracism, stigmatisation) there is probably greater



scepticism towards external influences among the Datoga than in the case of the population at Malinyi which can constitute a stronger barrier to message reception if messages were perceived to come “from sources of oppression”, as ““top-down” demands”, or if they are delivered in “non-local languages” (Biella et al., 2003:35).

### **HIV/AIDS and Education**

In spite of low HIV prevalence among the Datoga at the time of film production there is a potential rapid spread of HIV due to high prevalence of syphilis and cultural practices such as the “ratta”.

At Malinyi, no previous local HIV/AIDS research or prevention campaigns had been conducted. Here, hospital data from HIV-tested pregnant women in 2004, however, indicated the possibility of a HIV adult prevalence of 5-10% in the heterogeneous population.

Geographical remoteness, low educational levels (even lower in the Datoga communities), language barriers as well as lack of modern communication channels mean that the targeted populations in both cases are out of reach of mainstream HIV/AIDS mass campaigns.

In Datoga society, condoms are hardly available and it is not a common issue discussed to date.

In Kilombero Valley, most citizens have heard of HIV/AIDS. Condoms do exist in the area and are theoretically available, though not affordable to a great number of the multi-ethnic population, especially the youth. Moreover, knowledge about modes of transmission and prevention (e.g. the proper use of condoms) is limited.

Also, the issue of the condom in the local (and national) religious and patriarchal context, here, is either a complete taboo or very controversial. Due to the traditional socio-culturally gendered role of women and girls as subservient to men, an open female discourse or communication about sexuality and HIV/AIDS prevention remains frozen, guided or dominated by the male perspective on reality.

## **II.7.2 The comparison of objectives of EUD and WWW**

The similarities found concerning objectives of the films are that both films emphasise the concept of community participation, mobilisation and involvement of beneficiaries towards community empowerment and cultural change.

Each of them aims at contributing to raising awareness about HIV/AIDS issues and containing the further spread of HIV in their respective communities (the “survival of all people in the time of a pandemic”) by addressing basic biomedical facts and the cultural dimension of the disease in a culturally appropriate way (Biella et al., 2003:21).

They both attempt to reflect and stimulate local discourses on HIV prevention, produce local knowledge and education material (culturally tailored messages), create local cultural competence and strengthen cultural pride by deploying local messengers (e.g. actors, speakers with the “local skin”) communicating in locally comprehensible languages, and by integrating central culture-specific (folk) media such as song, dance and ritual.

In other words, both films make “abundant local references” coming “from credible sources” (ibid., p. 36).

Both target the local communities and serve as a departure point for dialogue, group discussion and debate as well as for development of similar future education material and activism at home and in neighbouring communities with the ultimate goal of sexual behaviour change and HIV reduction.

Differences of objectives are that EUD focuses on the concept of “changing culture through culture” as a genuine culture-specific approach including Datoga locals to invent, to plan, and to be trained to implement and to evaluate their own fiction and teaching film on HIV/AIDS whereas WWW as a documentary is a production based on cross-cultural initiatives of individuals, within a multi-ethnic local, national and international context, in an ongoing collaborative atmosphere of cross-cultural partnership and pluralistic participation without professional training of locals for film purposes.

By targeting culture-specific behavioural patterns (e.g. the “ratta” institution) with the inclusion of culture-inherent symbolic song, dance, communication forms and core rituals throughout the film, EUD is a film “belonging to” and targeting the Datoga.

WWW, on the other hand, contains culture-specific elements of the heterogeneous population, attempting to “unify” information and folkmedia (IEC materials). It intends to mirror a “typical” multi-ethnic Tanzanian community and the initial steps being taken as a grassroots movement in the process of mobilisation and involvement, on the basis of the common national language, Swahili.

Through reflection and stimulation of the already existing discourses on sexuality and morality, in the local and national context, by mentioning and visualizing the controversial condom on equal footing with messages of abstinence and fidelity, WWW can be perceived, at least to some extent, to be representational for other Swahili speaking rural audiences as well.

### **II.7.3 The comparison of contents of EUD and WWW**

Both films address the meaning of HIV/AIDS as a health threat with disastrous consequences in a more local and national, but also international context, and the importance of community empowerment and socio-cultural change.

Both touch upon topics of sexuality and the meaning of local culture in the context of HIV/AIDS. EUD elaborates the Datoga-specific “ratta” institution, which in the face of HIV/AIDS has turned into a potential source for HIV infection.

EUD suggests the avoidance of risky behaviour, illegitimate sex, i.e. sexual contact with people outside the “ratta” (e.g. other clans or ethnic groups) or contact with Datoga travellers, and to show “respectability” among the partners inside the “ratta”, the legitimate sex, with reduction of the traditionally possible number of sexual encounters as effective HIV/AIDS preventive measures (Blystad, 2004:59).

This becomes a big challenge in connection with the more recent common tendency of alcohol consumption in Datoga communities which is exemplified with the story of Gidemedda (snapshot 2, see Pictures).

The condom is mentioned tangentially as a preventive means. It is pointed out in the film that condoms are locally not available. Likewise the global concepts of abstinence or faithfulness with their inherent moralistic messages, the use of condom is a foreign thought that does not match with the sexual cultural reality and practice of the Datoga.

As Blystad (ibid., p. 61) summarizes: “They [the ABC concepts] easily become incomprehensible or meaningless for a person adhering to Datoga custom”.

As such it becomes problematic to try to translate ‘A’ and ‘B’ into a Datoga context.

In contrast, WWW has been produced in a different context of 'sexual culture'.

There is an increasing overlapping of traditional norms and modern thinking in the multi-ethnic population around Malinyi in the present globalisation process.

The euro-centric concepts of ABC with all its confusing and distorting potential as a communication model (Kampen, 2005), to be discussed further below in greater length, have entered the local discourse. WWW attempts to emphasize the equal importance of all ABCs in the multi-ethnic setting, from different, often colliding socio-cultural perspectives (gender, secular, religious) on intra-personal, inter-subjective and inter-generational levels as a basis for further discussion and dialogue in the communities.

#### **II.7.4 The comparison of cultural symbolism in EUD and WWW**

Both film contain a wealth of local cultural symbols.

EUD, as a fiction, can be seen to represent a symbolic entity with the integration of rituals lying at the core of Datoga culture, all pointing at Datoga reality and everyday life, to a homogeneous system of deeper cultural meanings. The story of Gidemeda and his HIV/AIDS infection is embedded in a holistic circle of culture-specific meaning including Datoga creation (myth), fecundity, life, death and re-birth in spirit realms "incorporated" in this life (e.g. as a sacred grove).

WWW, as a non-fiction, reflects reality with its existing culture-specific symbols in a multi-ethnic setting in form of folk media and language with composition of new symbolic material, from a cross-cultural perspective, intending to stimulate, cross-culturally, inter-acting and inter-changing systems of meaning.

## **II.7.5 The comparison of film methods of EUD and WWW**

As already mentioned, both films build on the production of knowledge, participation and involvement of credible community members integrating local culture in the form of folk media, local language and other symbolic elements of the respective culture.

In the case of EUD, the emphasis is on local technical and logistical competence by recruiting culturally competent individuals to be taught basic skills of shooting scenes and edit them, and the use of open-ended scripts to minimize the distance between producers and the recorded.

In the case of WWW, there were no special technical preparations, since the film was initially not intended to be learning or teaching material or an end in itself. The emphasis was rather on mobilizing the community at large to participate with their own contributions (artistic performances, speeches, folk media) and the “cameras” to be another “participating and observing media”. WWW’s editing was a Western-specific process.

In style, the films EUD and WWW differ completely.

EUD as a fiction– in contrast to documentaries – is based on a form of realism with symbols “pointing at reality” (Vilem Flusser, 1998, in: Schadt, 2002:23). It is narrative in style including quasi-documentary sections creating and unifying multiple perspectives and dimensions, at the same time [7].

WWW is a participatory-observational documentary, consisting of segments of reality (non-fiction) and narrative in the sense that the editing (montage of cuts as “composed reality”) attempts to reflect its content and meaning for both participants and producer [15] as a shared experience which can be referred to the notion of “shared anthropology” of Rouch as mentioned in chapter I.5.1.

## **II.8 A general comparison of EUD and WWW with “Steps for the Future”**

As a body of film productions with culture-specific and cross-cultural characteristics integrated in the essay “*ESSENTIAL MESSAGES The design of culture-specific HIV/AIDS media*” (Biella et al., 2003), the “*Steps for the Future*” collection (in short: “Steps”) is briefly introduced in this chapter and will allow a general comparison with both EUD and WWW in terms of culture-specificity.

“Steps” videos as, for example, “A Luta Continue”, “Not Afraid”, “A Red Ribbon Around My House”, “Dancing On The Edge”, “The Ball”, “Master Positive”, or “Choose Life” – just to mention a few – all belong to a series of thirty-six cross-cultural documentaries “shot in Southern Africa, many of which have won impressive awards” (ibid., p.13).

These videos are integrated in the hypermedia version of the above mentioned essay, both as illustrations in the form of clips with a short description and as topics treated in some accompanying essays (ibid., p. 14).

To summarize, the production of the “Steps” documentaries has been followed closely by ethnographers to find out about the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS messages in specific cultural contexts and circumstances emphasising “the need for works to be made in local languages and idioms, in order to break linguistic structures of silence” (Ginsburg & Abrash, 2004).

This focus on anthropological studies as the basis for intervention is similar to EUD, whereas WWW draws on short-term data collection by non-anthropologists using participatory observational methods.

Both EUD and WWW make use of the locally appropriate language and cultural symbols in their respective context with the inclusion of local song, dance (EUD and WWW) and other folk media (WWW).

“Steps”, despite being a trans-national (North-South) project deploying professionals in documentary film from 15 different countries to support and assist local communities in South Africa, emphasises the collaboration with local talents (e.g. filmmakers, facilitators, writers) belonging to the targeted community with the aim of producing personal narratives of people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, in local film styles (ibid.).

Also, both EUD and WWW stress the importance of participation and involvement of local people with cultural competence in a collaborative atmosphere.

As “real” narratives, “Steps” particularly portrays individuals and their fate in the context of HIV/AIDS, though from a positive perspective (ibid.).

EUD, in comparison, though telling the story of a person (Gidemedda) is a “realistic” fiction with sad and mostly serious passages, but a hopeful ending, whereas WWW is a documentary about a community movement during a celebratory HIV/AIDS sensitisation event without a personal story, though an abstract film narrative.

The “Steps” films address “powerful and entrenched attitudes – denial, stigmatisation and discrimination – which have fuelled infection rates and debilitated treatment programmes” rather than messages about preventive measures to promote behaviour change (ibid.).

With regard to attitudes or cultural beliefs, EUD targets deeply embedded traditional patterns of sexual meaning and practice, and provides basic information about HIV/AIDS in an information-naïve population at a point of time where the disease has not fully entered the community. Likewise, WWW stresses more the need of basic information and education about ways of HIV transmission and prevention.

The “Steps” films, being both informative and entertaining, aim at stimulating a positive emotional response in the viewer and “provide a forum for those affected by HIV to discuss, debate and exchange information and opinions at an individual and community level. Above all, the films seek to inspire viewers to take responsibility for their lives, to join hands with members of their communities and face head on the reality of HIV/AIDS” – in short, the main objective of the films is to sensitise and mobilise people in order to catalyse personal transformation and thus bring about social change (ibid.), all of which is also valid for both EUD and WWW.

The “Steps” films as a trans-national project were funded by the Finnish government together with other sponsoring agencies mainly from Scandinavia.

The films were produced without commercial interests and are seen as an alternative to the commercial or state-driven media.

They are engendered by “affected communities for themselves” and exemplify a “democratizing shift in voice and power” to be screened and made available through a large distribution network of activists, peer groups, youth organisations, health authorities, various institutions and broadcasters in many South Africa countries (ibid.).

As already mentioned, EUD is a funded project, whereas WWW as video is based on the footage recorded mainly by the author “as participatory camera” during a community-based HIV sensitisation festival without a budget.

Both EUD and WWW are intended to be screened locally to foster dialogue and discussion, and thus function as a horizontal communication channel, to further and strengthen local competence and cultural pride in the respective communities towards empowerment and social change, though on a far minor scale (geographically, technically and logistically) than “Steps”.

Evaluation in the form of qualitative research has been done extensively in the case of “Steps” and could show positive responses through screening of the films in targeted groups and communities.

This impact was further enhanced by using methods such as the “stepping out of the screen” i.e. protagonists of the films later become facilitators during post-screening sessions (ibid.; Stadler, 2004:86).

As mentioned earlier, no results exist yet for EUD and WWW from pre- and post-screening studies.



## PART III :

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### III.1 Discussion

The literature reviewed in Part I together with the comparison of EUD and WWW on a descriptive-analytical level conducted in Part II form the basis for the discussion in the thesis and refer consecutively to the study questions posed.

Are the films EUD and WWW valid and relevant examples of HIV-risk reduction strategies in terms of culture-specificity?

As shown in Part I there is a variety of existing concepts and approaches in literature and practice relating to the notion of culture-specificity, cultural appropriateness or culture-sensitivity. These terms are often used interchangeably by different scientific disciplines without a shared basis of what constitutes them.

Definitions for culturally appropriate interventions have rarely been ventured as in the case of chapter I.3.3 of Marín.

In the light of Marín's definition (1993:155) and the present media study, both EUD and WWW as intervention strategies with many components could be said to build on the cultural value system of the targeted communities, to reflect attitudes and norms embedded in the culture as well as behavioural preferences and expectations of community members.

To identify these characteristics or components, anthropological research has been conducted in the case of EUD. At Malinyi, information and data collection (open-ended interviews and participant observation) preceded the WWW sensitisation festival and the production of WWW complemented by local knowledge of participating community members.

Marín's definition of culturally appropriate interventions to promote behaviour change is, on the one hand, very helpful since it considers the fact that "cultures differ across a number of dimensions" (ibid., p. 158).

On the other hand, one can argue, the aspect of participation or community involvement for intervention design and implementation, as demonstrated with EUD and WWW, is not emphasised in the definition.

Rather, it focuses implicitly, though expressed by Marín elsewhere, from an etic perspective, particularly on the aspect of preliminary research, “that properly identifies” the above mentioned characteristics or “basic cultural values as identified by previous research in anthropology, sociology, psychology, and the other social and behavioural sciences” (ibid., p. 156).

All in all, according to the definition, both EUD and WWW would be valid culture-specific interventions. However, without additional information on how exactly or to what extent researched cultural characteristics are to be reflected in the strategies, the definition in itself is too general and vague to draw definite conclusions in the case of the present study.

To understand the deeper implications of cultural appropriateness, Bayer’s concept of culture-sensitivity offers different perspectives (chapter I.3.3).

According to the *semantic* aspect of cultural sensitivity, linguistic and stylistic characteristics have to be applied to translate universalistic or uniform messages such as e.g. ‘Be abstinent’ or ‘Use a condom’ into culturally typical expressions whereby the *pragmatic-instrumental* aspect of the concept stresses the cultural context with interrelating socio-cultural factors that condition sexual behavioural patterns.

Both aspects of this concept of cultural sensitivity are necessary for interventions to be effective i.e. “to promote, support, and sustain the behavioural modifications that are the sine qua non of AIDS prevention” (Bayer, 1994:895).

In EUD, the Datoga present the message of HIV/AIDS within their traditional system of sexual meaning both in speech and in play and in a way that is consistent with Datoga identity, their cultural environment and world view, as do the different individuals and (peer)-groups with their self-created songs, speeches, drama and performances in WWW reflecting the general sexual and cultural discourse in the population as seen as crucial elements of culture-sensitive approaches by other researchers mentioned in Part I (Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000:256; Ntseane & Preece, 2005:355-6).

Thereby, as they almost *embody* the intervention culturally, both EUD and WWW meet both the *semantic* and *pragmatic-instrumental* criteria.

On this ground, EUD and WWW are arguably compatible with the objectives of scientific health promotion and have the potential to “reach their intended audience”, to be “understood by those who are reached” and to be “accepted by those who understand” instead of to “provoke outright opposition” (Bayer, 1994:895).

The *principled* side of the concept touching the ethical and political dimension is often less obvious and much more controversial.

This side demands that we respect and protect the “cultural integrity of those to whom public health efforts are directed” and may “prohibit those interventions that violate cultural norms” (ibid., p. 896).

Bayer gives examples of profound clashes between norms and public health goals, such as the culturally embedded imbalance of power between men and woman being a barrier to the limitation of heterosexual transmission in many societies;

in the US, where some groups encouraged by the Roman Catholic Church and by fundamentalist Protestants interpret condom promotion “as an assault on parental prerogatives and the values of their own communities” (ibid., p. 896).

Yielding to all implicit demands of the principled sense of the term, Bayer concludes, “would be inimical to the goals of AIDS prevention” (ibid., p. 896).

He suggests overcoming these cultural barriers in more powerful social groups by applying methods of dialogue and persuasion to politically protect “the efforts of those committed to AIDS prevention” instead of trying to impose standards on people, especially and more so on social and ethnic minority groups, in order to avoid humiliation and the provocation of resistance (ibid., p. 897).

Accordingly, the choice to pick out e.g. the “ratta” practice as a central theme featured as a cultural barrier to HIV prevention in EUD and the attempt to modify it by emphasis on reducing the number of sexual contacts within the institution while sticking to this minor sexual network at the same time, with marginal attention to condom use, could be discussed controversially.

As mentioned before, the application of the global concepts of ABC in a Datoga context can become very misleading. The emphasis in EUD lies on the culturally-tailored messages of modifying behaviour, namely by “keeping away” from foreign sexual categories –

particularly in connection with modern (monetary) alcohol consumption, which can easily undermine such a precept.

Again, this means to “respect” the principles of the “ratta” like in former times, but now with a reduced number of partners.

This attempt to modify the “ratta” has its rationale in the fact that the availability of the “rubber thing” among the targeted Datoga - as the condom was termed by Gidemedda in the film - at the time of the film’s production was practically “non-existent” (Rekdal et al., 2006:9).

In this situation introducing and advocating condom use without the continuous provision of condoms would be ethically untenable [16].

Nonetheless, the condom like other themes e.g. ARV treatment, traditional circumcision and types of scarification are touched upon in the film and can be taken up as departure points for discussion during public screening sessions (ibid., p. 9).

Results from post-exposure research of EUD due to be published will show how the film with its message and “the challenges linked to the customary institutionalisation of multiple partners and ‘modern’ risky practices” is received, translated and eventually actualised by Datoga community members (ibid., p. 10).

These results will be of paramount importance since the question concerning health promoting interventions which attempt to alter certain cultural practices in the context of HIV/AIDS is also reflected in ethical debates within the social sciences.

Some authors argue that “culturally specific beliefs and practices” (or “exotic” behaviours), that do not constitute a health hazard, from an ethical perspective, should receive attention but not be altered (Airhihenbuwa, 1989:62; Airhihenbuwa et al., 1992:272).

Where one side views condom promotion as an ethical imperative (Benagiano et al., 2000:455), another side emphasizes the reality of diverse contexts within cultures, with condoms being only “effective in some circumstances” and demanding respect for the social function of sex including e.g. procreation, pleasure and spiritual interrelationships “which may be far more important than the risk of HIV infection which may or may not kill you after a few years” (Ntseane & Preece, 2005:361).

Others, for instance, Gausset (2001:516), maintain that in the context of HIV/AIDS, exotic features of African cultural and sexual practices (as exist in other cultures) such as e.g. polygamy are not the right targets for AIDS education at all.

The problem he states is “rather infidelity or unsafe sex which may transmit the virus from one sexual network to another” (ibid., p. 516).

He argues that in Western countries the official agenda does not “choose to blame homosexuals or drug addicts for their behaviour, but rather to make their practices safer by encouraging the use of condoms or clean needles” (ibid., p. 517). He appeals to anthropologists “to stop being exclusively culturally relativistic and to study sexuality in its universal aspects” (ibid., p. 517).

Further, he charges anthropologists either to “have studied cultural practices in a decontextualized and ethnocentric way” encouraging “a fight against these practices”, or because “they have come to believe that everything (including the spread of AIDS) can be explained by cultural differences” and that “they have overlooked the universality of the major problems linked to AIDS prevention” (ibid., p.517).

He concludes that by studying only one single ethnic group “is already to imply that the problem of AIDS among this population is different from the same problem among the neighbouring group, as if different risks were attached to different ethnic identities because of their different cultures” (ibid., p. 517).

This may mislead the the researcher to assume that certain “cultural practices are to be blamed for the spread of AIDS” (ibid., p. 517).

Rather, he suggests, instead of taking on the role of “social engineers, remodelling or fighting against the culture of people they study”, anthropologists “should engage in a constructive dialogue, in which they learn how to adapt the discourse of prevention to the local realities” (ibid., p. 517).

Gausset is convinced (ibid., p. 516).that e.g. the problem of availability of and access to condoms, and “confidentiality, the association of condoms with mistrust and infidelity and the lack of communication between the partners” are much bigger problems than the exotic practices themselves.

His arguments refer to an intervention among the rural Tonga in Zambia with an impact study of local drama groups (ibid., p. 515) disseminating “information about HIV sexual behaviour and condom use” in one area, with role modelling and group discussion at the end, versus two

other comparable areas, “where normal state intervention or the training of CHW had taken place”.

Results of the survey showed a significant increase in condom use (4.5%) among informants only in the area targeted by the drama groups (ibid., p.516), an area, however, where condoms were already known, discussed and used by 10.8 % before the exposure (ibid., p. 516).

Here the existence of and the discourse about condoms obviously co-create a specific context. But, polemicists might reply that Gausset can only think himself morally on the safe side because he argues as if raising awareness of the issue of sexuality through local play and dialogue can be separated from habits and practices and just be covered by a condom without changing or at least influencing the same habits.

In the case of WWW, the montage, i.e. the juxtaposition of messages of ABC combined with speeches by a young female voice, also carries with it the potential of colliding with ethical and moral claims of conservative Christian or Muslim viewers, or with patriarchal stances held by male members of different ethnical or social groups. This could be criticized as “cultural assault”, on the part of the author.

However, the fact that during the WWW festival condoms could be mentioned by the young female Chagga student and other local speakers with the public announcement of and the demonstration of condom use (banana model) together with condom distribution by young peers at the back of the classrooms of Nawigo Primary School (snapshot 4, see Pictures), indicates that the topic of sexuality related to certain cultural practices in the context of HIV/AIDS with the ABC options – even though incompatible for many individuals at that time – has nevertheless entered the socio-cultural discourses in many of the local communities with partial acceptance of the condom.

WWW attempts to reflect and respect these existing discourses with locally dominating moral and religious viewpoints in the population.

However, at the same time the film wants to shift the focus over from the overemphasis on only-AB contents, which implicitly and often explicitly condemn sexuality (pre-, post- and extra-marital) and with it the condom by visualising or embodying neglected interests and needs (the condom) especially among the youth of the area.

As already mentioned, among the Datoga the condom is practically unknown and unavailable. In order to “read an image” in a film i.e. produce a meaning, denotatively or connotatively, e.g. of the condom, presupposes the inclusion and combination of both optical, mental and

cultural experiences for the conception of the sign in which the word, the signifier, is related to its mental experience, the signified (Monaco, 2000:176).

In other words, if there is no mental or cultural experience of the condom among the Datoga, the condom can not be “read” or decoded in a film.

In contrast, the secondary school teenagers at Malinyi have at least heard of, or even seen condoms depicted in magazines such as “Femina Hip” (Fuglesang, 2002; Chezasalama, 2007) and started to discuss the matter among each other. They know that condoms are available in the village shop.

That means condoms have entered the system of cultural meaning, however vaguely conceived, but important and interesting enough to be explored further by many young people.

Thus, EUD and WWW clearly differ concerning the issue of the condom. At first glance some might think that the reason why they diverge is because the one is more culturally appropriate than the other; however, by reflecting their different background realities with the interplay of interpenetrating contextual factors (from inter-subjective to socio-economic to structural to geopolitical), which all co-create the respective context and therefore can limit external choices (in the short or the long run), another picture is revealed.

On this basis of knowing the respective background, the logic (of external viewers) must be that not showing condoms in EUD is as culturally appropriate as showing the condom in WWW, indicating in addition that culturally appropriate or culture-specific material and action are, ideally, flexible with a “plasticity” to take on meaningful forms to fit the reality and dynamics of small contexts within larger ones.

In short, difference of cultural choice affects and is affected by difference of cultural meaning.

In her article “The ABC Disaster” Joke van Kampen (2006) expresses her view of the devastating effects of the ABC model worldwide, but especially in Africa, a model she condemns because of “the misleading connections it has created, and the double standards it has promoted”, as well as being a communication which “in itself is full of hidden and not so hidden moral messages on what sexuality should be (and not on what sexuality actually is)”.

It is true that the confusion of messages and minds can be seen as unfortunate or even as a disaster. For instance, the order of ABC can easily get somebody to believe what has to come first or what is of higher value (Futterer, 2005).

Or, for example, people with a conservative religious stance are likely to stigmatize other people for choosing C because this implies infidelity or immorality (Gausset, 2001: 514; Murphy et al., 2006:1446).

Considering all these implications of ABC, however, it can be maintained that it is not the single message that is wrong nor their constituting a set of possible prevention categories, each of equal importance with ramifying implications within a given context.

Rather, the dilemma is that they are instrumentalized, presented in moralizing, unreasonable, simplistic, one-sided, reductionist or explicit terms, and outplayed against each other, just reflecting the motivation of respective actors as single individuals, groups or communities.

Different group- and worldviews and identities within societies around the globe propel different opinions and messages which can hardly be prevented from spreading.

The question then is, what is the alternative?

Obviously the only chance is “to reach for understanding” (Bayer, 1994:897) and seek dialogue, which is stressed by many authors, in order to relax the tension and bridge the gap between traditional and modern thought, the individual and the collective, reason and morality, so that:

“A, B, and C interventions can be adapted and combined in a balanced approach that will vary by cultural context, the population addressed and the stage of the epidemic” (UNAIDS, 2004:73).

To be more precise, it is about time for researchers and activists around the world to realize that:

“[...] unless the communication about HIV/AIDS takes the cultural contexts that shape risk behaviour fundamentally into account, such campaigns will continue to fall on deaf ears, and may cause more rather than less suffering in many local African communities” (Blystad, 2004:62).

To close this ethical part of the discussion, a last word by Buber (1947:27) may be cited referring to the importance of meaningful and respectful communication as a dialogical process towards mutual understanding: “The limits of the possibility of dialogue are the limits of awareness.”



Finally, taking into account Marín's general definition of cultural appropriateness followed by the discussion of the semantic, instrumental and principled aspects of Bayer's concept of culture-sensitivity, the author argues that, although both EUD and WWW are challenging existing cultural and sexual practices and discourses in their respective context, they both respect the local social, cultural, political and ethical dimension of reality. Both fulfil the semantic and instrumental criteria and offer the possibility for ongoing group discussion and public dialogue as the basis for growing awareness, adoption of new behaviours and social change and, thus, *do* have the potential to be effective intervention prevention tools in terms of culture-specificity. This is supported and underpinned by the fact that both EUD and WWW are community-based, participatory and inter-active approaches. This is already part of the answer to the next study question.

If the answer is affirmative, which additional facts support the argument that the films are culture-specific and effective instruments for HIV-risk reduction?

As previously mentioned in Part I, a variety of empirical studies in different fields support the conclusion that culturally tailored messages e.g. in AIDS films are more effective than culturally neutral or dissimilar ones, since message attractiveness, acceptability and credibility is heightened in the targeted groups and thus enables cultural barriers to be overcome, which arguably applies to both EUD and WWW (Herek et al., 1998; Janz et al., 1996; O'Donnell et al. 1994; Marín, 1993; Roye & Hudson 2003; Igartua, 2003)

EUD like many other indigenously produced media since the 1980s can be said to follow in the footsteps of earlier ethnographic films. With its focus on production based on collaboration and native participation in a monoethnic context and thus as a "cultural embodiment", the film can bring about particularly strong responses in the Datoga community with it yet to be determined to what degree within or between different (sub)audiences.

WWW based on a "participatory-observational camera" also has the potential to trigger vivid responses in a multiethnic population of viewers since community dynamics are mirrored from different perspectives. However, not each individual or group of viewer might identify with each and every scene as strongly as in the case of EUD since there is a greater inter-cultural variation of audience, presenters and presentation of messages.

The entertaining component of EUD and WWW, as with folk media in general – based on creativity and the participation of local talents as role-models and actors (drama, song, dance etc) – additionally endorses the argument of potential effectiveness in terms of culture-

specificity since messages that not only trigger cognitive but also emotional responses in the viewer have been found to have a synergistic positive effect on message reception and personal and “collective efficacy” (Bandura, 2004:159; UNAIDS, 1999:65)

Moreover, information conveyed through play or ritual always involves inner and outer participation (Gadamer, 1977:31), i.e. interaction and personal experiences in a continuous learning process (Dewey, 1938:51) which can enhance individual self-esteem, dignity (White; 2006:130), skills, self-knowledge (Fuglesang, 1997:1250), solidarity and collective cultural pride as shown to be of great importance for both individual and collective empowerment (McEwan et al., 1991; Piotrow, 1994; Elliot et al., 1996; Igartua, 2003; Englehart, 2004; Goldstein et al., 2005; Tufte, 2005; Gausset, 2001).

In this regard, taking into account the components of local production of entertaining-educating materials and messages by planners and actors with the possibility of post-screening discussion and dialogue, both EUD and WWW are comparable with “Steps”, although “Steps” emphasises a non-didactic approach.

Again, EUD as a fictional story comprises a highly condensed form of edutainment material as does the WWW documentary depicting community members delivering information in a celebratory atmosphere whereby both put equal weight on education and entertainment.

In general, many authors stress the importance of messages in films not only being received by individuals via mass-media but as face-to-face communication in small (peer) groups with the possibility of exchanging ideas, discussing the shared experience and building networks of support to “encourage the adoption and maintenance of self-protective behaviors” (Airhihenbuwa et al., 1992:271; Stadler, 2004:88; Englehart, 2004:83).

This face-to-face communication or post-screening forum is intended to be carried out with both EUD and WWW in connection with future evaluation and screening sessions in communities. This approach of combining and integrating traditional and modern IEC materials (e.g., mass media and interpersonal communication) with participatory methods in PLA, as mentioned earlier, is inherently culture-sensitive and constitutes a powerful strategy to involve and mobilize people on a long-term basis (Skjelmerud & Tusibira, 1997:23). Together they can “create a supportive environment for change” (Molefe, 2002:26).

Both EUD and WWW can be seen as such integral participatory and interactive interventions. However, WWW is produced as a part within the larger context of an evolving social movement with the first steps towards a HIV/AIDS PLA process initiated by a local doctor in

the region around Malinyi, including other HIV/AIDS prevention measures on different levels planned for the future.

In this overall context, WWW could have an additional synergistic effect as a motivational part of ongoing dynamics.

Without pre- and post-exposure research, however, nothing definite can be concluded about both EUD and WWW in terms of effectiveness i.e. their potential to influence attitudes and beliefs or to induce behaviour change.

What are the limitations of the present study?

The fact that the author was involved as a participant in the organisation of the WWW festival, the production (the filming as “participatory camera” and editing from a Western perspective), despite being interactive at certain stages, can be perceived as constituting a major bias in the present study.

His knowledge about WWW gained from short-term personal experience, data collection and communication practice must naturally differ from the theoretical knowledge gained through studying EUD as a film and in literature, both based on long-term research.

Also, as a Western medical doctor and non-anthropologist his view of East African cultural realities is one of an outsider taking on “short-sighted” insider perspectives mediated through a selection of local individuals. Many of these individuals have a background of higher educational attainment (e.g. secondary school students, students, academics) and reflect the diverse culture and day-to-day experience of their people in the region from different perspectives and angles when translating or producing local cultural knowledge.

Nevertheless, the author argues that through the descriptive analysis of identified and demonstrable concrete characteristics of the actual films and the properties derived from background information supported by the method of (self)-reflexivity extensively applied throughout the process (mainly found in the *Notes* – though at the expense of better readability of the thesis), an ‘objectified subjectivity’ as broad foundation is given to minimize or at least counterbalance this possible bias.

Moreover, seen as a step in a beginning PLA where partnership with locals and openness for ongoing mutual learning and teaching through participation are integral parts and presuppositions, possible errors could be taken up and corrected in the long-term process.

In the case of EUD, extensive anthropological research has preceded its production (and application) to minimize possible biases. Nevertheless, limitations are part of any project and have to be taken into account.

As already mentioned, usually, when films communicate topics with complex implications, by nature of their “special language” (media), they encode messages in different verbal and/or non-verbal (visual, symbolic, abstract) forms, referring to a complex system of socio-cultural meaning, messages that must be “read” or decoded by each viewer according to the cultural background before being understood as a message (Monaco, 2000:176).

As the medium film is completely new to the Datoga (which by the way also applies to a large extent for communities around Malinyi) the issue of film reception is a critical one.

Without being historically and culturally adapted to “moving pictures”, to “read” a film, the interpretation of what is reality and fiction may become a problem, especially when the fiction is a composition of “realist” elements with integrated quasi-documentary sections as in the particular case of EUD.

Due to this possible blurring effect of ‘real’ and ‘unreal’ the concept of synergy of entertaining and education towards behavioural change could become questionable. Where the film might be entertaining and enhance cultural pride, behavioural changes might remain fictional.

In addition, cultures are never monolithic, not even mono-ethnic groups such as for instance the Datoga, but rather consist of different subcategories or social groups which constitute an intra-cultural variation.

Even in EUD, the fact that some of the local individuals recruited to be informants and participants to produce local knowledge (in group sessions) are literate, highly educated people in a Western sense, or of a higher social ranking with the possible adoption of Christian beliefs and values compared to a targeted non-schooled and animist population, bears the potential risk of thematic incongruence of messages (Howard & Barry, 1994:1) – a term borrowed from consumer psychology – , distorted modelling or, at least, can have the effect that messages are received differently from one audience to another or within audiences. This brings us back to the point of limitation concerning focus group technique to inform the culturally relevant as already reflected in Part I (chapter I.5.3) and which can be said to apply here also.

Taken to the extreme, whereas means for messages might be extremely culture-specific, with local actors, messengers or ambassadors (all with dark skins!) and all in local style, the ends might not be.

Again, especially in the case of an educational *fiction* (that means an invention by some individuals which attempts to point at reality), the issue of thematic congruency of messages with audience views, customs and attitudes, all embedded in “socio-cultural rules of emotion in historical perspective” (Eder, 2005:119), inherently becomes critical.

By the way, the same critical consideration of such limitation applies to the nature of documentary film with selected and combined cuts (montage) as a dramatizing pattern to stimulate and guide cognitive and affective responses in the viewer (ibid, 2005), and more so in a cross-cultural context.

Yet another limitation of the study of both films in terms of culture-specificity must be discussed relating to the subject of the recruitment of local participants to produce local knowledge and teaching materials.

The ideology or concept of community participation has been used to argue an “inherent” culture-specificity of EUD and WWW in this paper.

The social anthropologist Green (2003:134) considers in the journal “Critique of Anthropology” the recent situation in Tanzania with a common tendency of “professionalisation of participation in workshops settings and the association of workshops with status” where participants are attracted by daily allowances, and projects workshops are created “as a kind of entity separated off from other kinds of social realities in order to make it manageable”.

She continues that such endeavour follows a “neo-liberal logic of New Public Management” (ibid, 2003:137) for progress that guarantees its self-perpetuation by encouraging participants (by giving them money or symbolic gifts of international status and development) to produce the project documentation desired by “the bureaucratic machine which overrides the agency of the individual” (ibid. p.127).

Against the background of such critique of common tendencies “to manage” participation, one can also raise the question to what extent EUD and WWW respectively have put the rhetoric of participation into actual practice (to argue their “inherent” culture-specificity), since some participants (especially those of higher social, educational or political status)

might benefit more from the intervention than others in terms of gained knowledge, (technical) skills, materials and power within the “social hierarchy” as an “embodiment of inequality” (Nguyen & Peschard, 2003:68), possibly leaving the masses of poor and disadvantaged behind again.

This thought could be elaborated further, however, apart from the fact that both films are still in an evaluating phase and the present background information is not sufficient to draw definite conclusions to what degree the original idea of participation was realized (however suffice it to say that it is attempted in both cases), such discussion would also exceed the limits of this paper.

## III.2 Conclusion

This thesis has so far considered the three major aspect of the topic “‘Culture-specificity’ of HIV/AIDS media materials”, namely HIV/AIDS, culture and media, on a theoretical level in Part I, on a descriptive-analytical level in Part II and on a discussion level in the present Part III.

As a whole, the study reflects the overwhelming complexity of interrelating dimensions involved in the context of HIV/AIDS research and intervention in the field of communication, locally and globally.

However, at the same time, by highlighting basic concepts, different approaches and efforts made by researchers in the international health arena as well as by communities – from a historical perspective – Part I breaks up the complexity of the issue to some extent and allows the topic to be viewed from different perspectives.

By having approached the concept of ‘culture-specificity’ theoretically and connected it with the analysis, comparison and discussion of the films EUD and WWW, both in their locally specific contexts, the following short conclusion will bring the study into line with the latest developments and future challenges in HIV/AIDS communication research and intervention.

The concept of ‘culture-specificity’ is far from definite and depends strongly on the different perspectives of researchers. Nonetheless, most of the concepts share aspects stressing, for instance, the necessity and importance of native messengers, production of local knowledge, employment of the appropriate language (e.g. native vernacular or lingua franca), the use of local communication channels (traditional forms of meeting, folk media), collaboration based on openness, mutual respect (ethical and political) and understanding, and – most importantly – the concept of community participation and cultural empowerment.

Many medical and social scientists have realized that all these aspects combined in respective local contexts, can be an authentic, credible and effective tool not only to create trust in the communities and fuel the messages at stake with the ultimate goal of health promotion, but also to allow a mutually enhancing process of democratisation, cultural transformation from

within, and personal and collective growth towards more awareness, self-initiative, self-determination and independence (Ruger, 2004:121-122).

Both EUD and WWW among other comparable media productions such as the “Steps for the future” collection are based on these aspects of ‘culture-specificity’. Their potential as effective HIV prevention and intervention tools in terms of that concept was affirmed in the discussion part.

However, again, the conclusion must be that further research is needed to show the film’s effectiveness in terms of message acceptance, emotional responses, changes in the direction of knowledge, attitudes and sexual behavioural practices in the targeted populations through pre- and post-exposure studies, in order to render evidence to the arguments in favour for both interventions.

This will be one of the research challenges mentioned below. One has to bear in mind that sexual behaviour change can take up to several years since it is “one of the most difficult behaviours to change as it is deeply rooted in cultural and social values” (Pedersen, 2002:25) which is one of the different reasons why impact studies are in many cases only of limited value and applicability.

### **Future research and practice**

However vital the role of (mass) media might be to reach a large number of people, to raise public awareness and to increase knowledge, without linking it to networks of interpersonal or face-to-face communication (discussion and dialogue in small groups), people are not likely to change their behaviour (ibid., p. 21) and “communications campaigns alone cannot change community infra-structure” (UNAIDS,1999:73).

In this respect, in the future, both EUD and WWW will only be meaningful and effective instruments in synergy with other communication forms (e.g. folk media, peer groups, in-school HIV/AIDS education and others), programmes for prevention and treatment (e.g. VCT, treatment of STDs/STIs, ART) and care.



Of course, as Pridmore says, there is no “magic bullet or gold standard intervention to be rolled out around the world” (Pridmore, 2002:45). Rather, the future challenge in the field of communication is to establish a collaboration between researchers, policy makers and practitioners to strive for “a more supportive policy context and greater flexibility and openness in programme planning to encompass new forums of educational provision” which require a “broad-based programmatic rather than intervention approach” with “a good understanding of participatory methodologies (as well as methods) and sensitivity to issues of poverty, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic and cultural background” (ibid, 2002:45).

To date, the HI-virus continues to spread in a complex and rapidly changing world of diverse geo-political and socio-cultural settings. Due to this diversity of contexts the pandemic has different epidemic “phases and faces”.

For prevention and communication practices to succeed, responses need to be manifold including a variety of approaches and long-term programmes, rather than short-term interventions, on many different levels, matching the specific context.

Context-specific, synergistic or integral approaches to achieve greater impact, however, ideally interweave real-life (local) expertise, environment and policies with combined interdisciplinary theories, strategies, perspectives and results (triangulation) e.g. from communication in health, anthropology, epidemiology, medicine, sociology, psychology and pedagogy (Pick et al., 2003:422; Rehle et al., 2007:14).

This is a process that will require widespread community participation, more horizontal communication network campaigns, thorough research and practice with comprehensive strategic frameworks for communication and action at the community, district and national level (Rifkin, 1996:90; Schapink, 2001:27); advocacy; strong political will; team work; adequate and balanced funding; long-term perspectives; patience to experiment and creativity.

As the seminar “Communicating HIV/AIDS Prevention to Young People in Low-Income Societies: Experiences and Challenges” organised by Danida (2002:51) concludes:

“The overall challenge for communication in HIV/AIDS prevention is to bridge the different traditions, practices and expertises in the three fields. That means bridging both interpersonal and mass media with the mobilization and engagement in communities”.

Yet, another central question and concerns the issue of money.

How much money is needed for horizontal communication strategies and community-oriented prevention programmes and how should it be used?

Traditionally, funding and donor mechanisms have been following and supporting interventions that are for various reasons, “very heavily focused on a rigid behaviour change agenda” rather than social change agendas (e. g., PLA) (Deane, 2002).

Morrison and Lilford see the fundamental problem in “the current gap between mainstream research and action research in terms of the certainty of the answers sought to research questions. Mainstream research has wished to insist on a level of statistical precision set by convention, not by service need or practicality” (Morrison & Lilford, 2001:448).

In the light of all these challenges faced by the international health community, for both the Datoga communities and the multiethnic population around Malinyi, as for many communities in the developing world, thorough programmatic and integrated approaches may remain utopian in the near future, but a distant glimmer of hope beyond the horizon.

Nevertheless, EUD and WWW are both contributions and first steps to sensitise, involve and mobilise people, to be further developed and integrated in a recently initiated and ongoing process towards cultural transformation.

Both films contain HIV/AIDS messages and information on HIV/AIDS to be discussed, deepened and shared in dialogue so as to actually be adopted and translated into action.

Moreover, they are an expression of cultural pride and cultural competence both being of intrinsic value and which are, at the same time, a remedy for colonial and post-colonial inflictions on cultural identity and dignity, and the bottom pillars for a self-conscious future life that can claim its human rights and freedom from external oppression in whatever form.

Having emerged as a grassroots' effort both films reflect people's inherent potential and creativity for personal and social change and can thereby serve as guide, inspiration and motivation for all people and audiences involved, but also for other people and activists within and across cultural and national borders to start a truly transcultural dialogue with "affection" being "transformed into communicative contagion" (Bibeau, 1990:309), and to continue and strengthen efforts to confront HIV/AIDS together.

– End –

## Pictures



Snapshot 1: The “bung ´ed”



Snapshot 2: Gidemedea and the barmaid



Snapshot 3: The information board made of local seeds reading FAHAMU UKIMWI SIKIA, JIFUNZE (“Know AIDS Listen and Learn”)



Snapshot 4: The condom demonstration

## Notes

1.

In the domain of social psychology we find a range of theories and models of behaviour change such as the health belief model (HBM), the theory of reasoned action, social learning/cognitive theory or social marketing, just to mention some of the most important ones.

All of them have found application and are seen as continuously pivotal in many HIV/AIDS prevention programs, either as single methods, key elements in other approaches or as combined models within larger frameworks (UNAIDS, 1999:22).

The HBM is a tool to “predict individual response to, and utilization of, screening and other preventive health services” (Airhihenbuwa & Obregon, 2000:7).

The theory of reasoned action is applied to explain individual behaviour “by examining attitudes, beliefs, behavioural intentions and the observed expressed acts” (ibid., p. 7)

The social learning/cognitive theory by Bandura attempts to understand individual behaviour as a result of the interaction among cognitive processes, behaviour, environmental and physiological factors. It emphasises the importance of modelling (Maibach & Flora, 1993:541), i.e. the imitation of others who act as role-models as a means towards “self-efficacy” which is interpreted as the ability of somebody to adapt new (recommended) behaviours (Bandura, 1989:1175).

The social learning/cognitive theory has been developed by Bandura since the early 1970s. More recently, however, he has also started to address the importance of “collective efficacy” (Bandura, 2004:159). Here, the focus has shifted towards a social approach – a focus “on collective enablement for changing social, political, and environmental conditions that affect health” (ibid., p.159).

Social marketing as the last example is an approach using mass media to promote “the acceptability of a social idea” with its traditional “four Ps – product, price, place, and promotion” and a more recently added P which stands for “positioning with regard to recognition of competing campaigns on the same subject in the same location” (Airhihenbuwa & Obregon, 2000:8).

In the context of HIV/AIDS it has lately found extensive application, namely in condom promoting programmes. However, one of the most important concerns about social marketing is of ethical nature since it utilizes manipulative methods and often ignores the complexity of

socio-cultural problems by conveying a simplistic top-down message at the expense of community dialogue and participation (ibid., p. 8; Pfeiffer, 2004:96).

2.

The PEN-3 model is a conceptual health education model in low-income countries in order to “address cultural sensitivity and cultural appropriateness in program development” (Airhihenbuwa, 1989:60; 1995:28).

It considers three dimensions of health and behaviour, namely (1) health education, (2) educational diagnosis of health behaviour and the (3) cultural appropriateness for health behaviour. All three dimensions interrelate and inter-depend in a dynamic process. Each dimension contains three levels or categories abbreviated by PEN.

The first dimension is concerned with health education on the levels of P – person, E – extended and N – neighbourhood.

The second dimension looks into factors, influences and forces that are P – Predisposing, E – enabling or N – nurturing (or hindering) for changing attitudes and health behaviours on the subjective or inter-subjective levels (1).

The third dimension is the most critical and pivotal for education programs and interventions to be culture-sensitive and adequate. It entails P – positive behaviours that should be encouraged, E – Exotic behaviours with no harmful health impact and no need to be changed and, finally, N – negative behaviours with harmful health consequences and which “health providers should attempt to help people change” (ibid., p. 61).

3.

Recently, in Visual Anthropology, the media researchers and anthropologists Biella et al. examined more than a hundred publications concerning cross-cultural HIV/AIDS education materials. They analysed obstacles, shortfalls and successful outcomes of these strategies (campaign strategies ranging from workshops, peer group activities, folk media, printed media, graphics, radio, web sites and films).

As a result of their study they constructed the “Essential Messages Outline” which is a comprehensive, culture-neutral, hierarchically structured model or catalogue of abstract properties to be considered in HIV/AIDS education, “of the requirements that must be met

and problems that must be faced by HIV/AIDS educators regardless of cultural setting” (Biella et al., 2003:13).

It identifies and consists of “messages essential for health and reduction of HIV-risk, universal and culturally-imposed barriers to risk reduction, and media-based countermeasures to the barriers” (ibid., p. 13).

The Outline lists essential messages, cultural barriers as well as media countermeasures for HIV-risk reduction in a hierarchical fashion, i.e. both on a macro- level addressing the objective factors (nation to nation campaign) and on a micro-level looking at subjective factors (person to person campaign).

Additionally, in their article *Essential Messages: The Design of Culture-specific HIV/AIDS Media*, where the abstract EMO is presented, Biella et al. describe, as complementary footnotes to the model, “hundreds of concrete, risk-reduction strategies that have been tried in more than forty cultural groups”, all being “examples of culture-specific research” (ibid., p. 13).

These examples illustrate certain aspects of the model and appear as the index behind the hierarchically listed, abstract properties allowing an intellectual movement between illustration and abstraction. In an appendix to the article by Biella et al. forty-three specific culture groups are listed and “cross-referenced to those footnotes which are pertinent to them: there, the movement is between the culture group and all strategies we found used in them” (ibid., p. 13).

The researchers recommended that to read the summarized Outline in a CD-ROM/html version, as hypermedia presentation, which makes it possible to switch between filmographic illustrations, bibliographic sources, the EMO and the appendix cultural groups at a very high speed by means of (back)-links between the different sections and hot-links to selected clips from all the films with additional short descriptions (ibid., p. 14).

4.

Piotrow summarizes the strengths of EE approaches in “the 7 P’s”.

EE activities are (1) pervasive i.e. mass media are spreading rapidly worldwide; (2) popular which means that people voluntarily seek what appeals to them; (3) personal referring to the fact that entertainment touches innermost feelings from crisis to triumph and coincides with the intimate ideas of audiences; (4) passionate i.e. intense feelings are often stronger than logical arguments and reinforce the message at stake with the further effect of turning



awareness into action; (5) persuasive because entertainment offers the possibility of internally changing roles with characters in the drama; (6) practical as entertainment serves as a vehicle for social messages, a vehicle consisting of talents and delivery infrastructure often already in place, and last but not least; (7) profitable because entertainment, in contrast to other forms of health communication, can generate profits and promote careers (Piotrow, 1994:5).

To a certain degree, P's 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 resonate with the idea of cultural or situational appropriateness since the material must be well designed or persons and characters portrayed in ways that connect with the viewer's inner and outer life, in order to make sense, create meaning and unfold increased effects.

However, there is hardly any real participatory or collaborative aspect in this kind of media consumption. The viewer is involved with the "material" and the characters on a virtual plane, emotionally, passively, but does not as such participate in a real event unless the message channelled one-way is followed by discussion or dialogue with other viewers and translated into a real personal and collective experience.

One explanation for their limited effectiveness is that exclusively mass-media messages have a lack of real interpersonal communication. Both channels of communication ideally complement each other and together have been shown to be most effective (Airhihenbuwa, 1995:39; Pedersen, 2002:21).

5.

Reflexivity is a term and a method applied in anthropological research.

Generally, according to Harper (2007), the method of reflexivity can be defined as "a keen awareness of the effect that anthropologists themselves have on their research", whereby "self-reflexivity of anthropologists is distinct from the reflexivity of the people whom anthropologists study, the ways that people perform socially, that they "tell stories about themselves", but the two are related; both acknowledge that people (those being studied and those doing the studying) are 'contextualized persons', and that what they say about themselves and others emerges from that context, and does not as such represent an objective reality", in contrast to a researcher (who, of course, could be a non-anthropologist) with a "non-reflexive position of authority, able to understand better than the people themselves what is going on".

In this sense, (self)-reflexivity is also an integral part in ethnographic film research (Heider, 1976:58; Ruby, 2000:154; Hockings, 2003:340; MacDougall, 2006:236-237,266) where self-involvement and participation of researchers or interventionists play a decisive role.

6.

The ritual “bung’ed” is a special burial for distinguished Datoga individuals, a means for “transforming a human being into a spirit at death” (Rekdal & Blystad, 1999:139).

The corpse is buried in a foetus-like position in a mould that is enlarged as snapshot 1 shows (see Pictures).

The ritual is performed “in front of the `entire´ Datoga community” and after the ceremony, which is also characterized by symbolic performances of fertility and growth, the deceased is believed “to be reborn into the spirit world” (ibid., p. 139).

Through the years the huge burial mould naturally decays and is “transformed into a sacred grove of trees” (ibid., p.139).

Here the Datoga come for spiritual purposes, to receive “blessings and redemption” from the reborn spirits, “the ancestors of the land”, being the protectors of Datoga fecundity and well-being (ibid., p. 139). However, their power has also a moral aspect and they may inflict a penalty or sanction on individuals or the whole community in the event of immoral behaviour (ibid., p. 139).

7.

Selv-reflexive note:

The “stepping into the screen” in a quasi-documentary fashion gives the film an additional dimension.

The two speakers of higher social ranking interpret the narrated story from “inside” the overall frame of the film and, at the same time, from inside actual Datoga culture and reality because they are known to the audience as respected representatives in Datoga society. They appeal to the Datoga viewer to learn from the experiences and knowledge the story of Gidemeda offers.

With their speeches and appearances as integral part of the film they reinforce the film’s message, with which they completely agree and identify.

Through this, one can hold, they magnify their power and influence as real-life social or political agents by means of the media.

From a filmic perspective, fiction, quasi-documentary and reality interpenetrate each other – message, actors and Datoga viewers are unified and transcended into the Datoga system of cultural meaning through the new reality of media and the culture-specific and artistic way it is used.

8.

Self-reflexive note:

The author spent more than 6 months preparing the WWW festival together with the physician Dr. Mwemi, his family and members from different communities in Kilombero Valley.

Having also visited other places in Tanzania and Kenya for several months on different occasions in 2005, the author's command of Swahili consisted of about 700 hundred words and a few short sentences and was still insufficient for conversations during this period of time.

The purpose of the author's visits to Malinyi and other parts of East Africa was to collaborate and co-organise culture-sensitive HIV/AIDS prevention interventions with local activists and artists (e.g. theatre workshops with production of video materials and youth conferences).

Together with the evolving WWW movement, but also other HIV/AIDS activists in Tanzania, Kenya and Germany, the author founded the Mankind Aids Arts Awareness Society (MAAA e.V.) in Berlin in 2004, for future networking and collaboration purposes.

The main language used to communicate with local people was English, whereby at Malinyi, Dr. Mwemi, other health staff, teachers, priests and selected students with a good command of English acted as translators and key informants.

The author worked with Dr. Mwemi both at LLH, but also in the local communities.

Preparations for the WWW festival started in summer 2004 at Malinyi.

As a first step taken by Dr. Mwemi, his family and the author, inspired and guided by the manual "Confronting AIDS Together" (Skjelmerud & Tusubira, 1997), different tribal

leaders, communities, priests, teachers, schools (kindergarten, primary and secondary schools), peer groups and artistic groups were visited.

These visits included participant observations, theatre and performance attendance and interviews of people (unstructured and narrative, partly VHS videotaped) about their factual knowledge, needs and concerns related to HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening conditions.

Written information about sexual education and HIV/AIDS prevention was also sent to key persons in society such as teachers, priests, village, youth and tribal leaders.

In particular artists – painters, songwriters, ngoma (drums), performance and drama groups – were asked to share and discuss their work related to HIV/AIDS communication with the organizers.

All visited and interviewed groups were invited to participate in the planning and implementation of a village sensitisation arts festival with voluntary contributions planned for the forthcoming winter. All of them were informed about the participatory nature of the event and future plans of a community-based HIV prevention program.

As with past health campaigns (e.g. against malaria) in the district, the HIV/AIDS sensitisation WWW festival at Malinyi was organized and guided by Dr. Mwemi. Meanwhile preparations for the festival went ahead with a WWW Committee formed at Malinyi with Dr. Mwemi as President, consisting of leaders of various groups: village leaders, upcoming women's “WWW Mama Group”, youth groups e.g “AMANI” (“peace”), drama- and performance groups, football and other peer groups.

The festival took place on 7th August 2005 in the grounds of Nawigo Primary School at Malinyi. About 2000 people especially teenagers and children attended the celebratory event (MAAANGO, 2006b).

The festival programme included teaching sessions by Dr. Mwemi and several speeches held by local HIV/AIDS activists, youth group leaders, village politicians and religious leaders from the region, but also guests from other Tanzanian urban centres and two international NGOs.

Speeches and teaching sessions alternated with a variety of artistic performances. Both art performances, teaching sessions and the speeches given addressed the biomedical and local socio-cultural dimension of HIV/AIDS.

The condom and its use was mentioned by many speakers as an important preventive measure.

Moreover, trained peer condom demonstrators and distributors for selected youths supported the event with modelling and training sessions at the back of the classrooms (snapshot 4, see Pictures).

A large number of condoms were provided by members of invited Swiss NGOs.

An arts gallery created by local students was open to all visitors.

The 7-hour event closed at dusk with disco music.

9.

Self-reflexive note:

Unfortunately, at the time of the author's visit at Malinyi there was no data on HIV prevalence available for this specific area.

At LLH, from a clinical point of view, the devastating impact of the AIDS epidemic in the area around Malinyi in 2004 was obvious.

The hospital with its official number of beds being 57 serves a population of about 90,000 and has been used by a growing number of patients presenting Stage III and IV (WHO) symptoms of AIDS in recent years.

On the maternity ward of LLH, women aged 14-45 from different tribes such as the Bena, Sukuma, Maasai and other ethnic groups had been tested for HIV at times when rapid Capillus test assays were available, for reasons of intrapartum sdNVP prophylaxis or elective Caesarean section.

Reviewing patient records from a period of the recent three months (144 females aged 15-49), the number of HIV-positive tested females (though not confirmed by a second test) indicated a possible adult prevalence of 5 -10%.

HIV prevalence (capital city) in young pregnant women (aged 15-24) in Tanzania was estimated to be 7% in 2002 (UNAIDS, 2004).

10.

Self-reflexive note

The message of AIDS as a deadly disease has reached the communities since some locals travel to other nearby urban centres. In a small shop at Malinyi condoms are available.

Open-ended interviews with teachers and especially group discussions with e.g. secondary school students revealed that the modes of transmission are known to a great extent, however, in many cases, knowledge was incomplete and marked by many uncertainties and misconceptions.

Recently, a small peer group of students has gathered sharing and discussing knowledge gained from “Femina Hip” (Fuglesang, 2002; Chezasalama, 2007), a modern popular Tanzanian youth magazine dealing with issues of sexuality and HIV/AIDS.

However, generally, questions if the virus could be transmitted by mosquitoes or by kissing a partner were repeatedly asked by many students. Some students asked if it was true that condoms have holes or if it was better to use two condoms.

Little knowledge among students was found of how exactly to use a condom which also became obvious during repeated sessions where 5 students were trained to become condom demonstrators and distributors for peers during the festival and thereafter.

On the part of the students (aged 15-20) there was great interest to get “to know more about the condom”.

Asking many teachers about the issue of the condom, most of them replied that it was “unusual” to touch upon the topic, let alone explain or demonstrate the use of condoms, because people are traditionally too “shy” to talk about sexual matters, but more so due to the religious belief that condoms “promote promiscuity”, that talking about it “fuels sexual desire” and that the answer most people choose was abstinence and faithfulness according to the teachings of the Bible and the church.

A majority of people in the area are Christians (more Catholics than Protestants) with minorities of Muslims and animists.

Usually men are the decision makers in society. Women discussing sexual issues are perceived to be “loose”.

11.

Self-reflexive note:

The use of drumsticks to demonstrate the use of condoms interpreted and understood as “ngoma salama” (“safe drumming”) by participants and the author can also be referred to or linked to the advice of the popular “Cheza Salama” (“Play Safe”) campaign in Tanzania (Chezasalama, 2007).

12.

Self-reflexive note:

Example for symbolic language:

The word “Watu Wa Watu” as the plural of the existing singular “Mtu wa Watu” is an invented word with a triple meaning with a poetic and comical property.

“Mtu”, a human being, is the singular of “Watu”, people. “Mtu wa watu” means “human being of/to people”, somebody who is special since she or he is serving other people, and therefore

“Mtu wa Watu”, in a figurative sense, also signifies a “hero”. As a new word (in the plural) with the triple symbolic meaning of “People from People”, “People to/for People” and, on a metaphorical level, “Heroes” people are amused when hearing or using it.

In this sense, “Watu wa Watu” could be interpreted to reflect and unify all the qualities of a society of truly social beings.

Examples for symbolic materials:

All materials for building the “infrastructure” for the festival were local e.g. materials for decoration (banana leaves, grass, maize cobs, bamboo, local fabrics, seeds) and belong to everyday life and experience of people in the area.

The festival location was on a football pitch right in front of a primary school yard. “The table of honour” placed under a huge mango tree with its trunk wrapped in a “WWW” sheet (bed-sheet with letters sewn on to it with typical fabric) looked onto the “stage” that was constructed in the round form of a “boma” made of bamboo and strings (normally a “boma” consists of wooden material from trees, e.g. twigs or small trunks, and is used for keeping

cattle in the home places of most ethnic groups) and decorated with pieces of fabric and bunches of maize tops.

The maize top was chosen as the symbol for WWW as a new movement and also for the festival by WWW members.

Information boards were created by students, made of local seeds (snapshot 3, see Pictures) using e.g. red chillies for writing UKIMWI (“AIDS”).

13.

Self-reflexive note:

One student who was already more acquainted with the VHS camera took shots in standing or moving position with a close-up technique as did the author, in a spontaneous and interacting fashion, with a small digital camera.

All recorders including the author were amateurs with no editing skills. There were no initial plans to use the footage to produce a learning or teaching documentary. This idea only came up later when viewing the recorded material.

Both the students and the author were announced publicly as “technical assistants and were given the role of the “media” at the beginning of the festival.

The editing of WWW was only possible with studio support (limited to 4 days) by the German charitable culture-and-media promoting society Latücht, whereby the author had to limit the length of the film to 20 minutes by selecting “the most important cuts” out of more than 8 hours footage and decide about the structure of the montage.

The first digital version was converted into VHS in 2006 and distributed among leading WWW members to explore the documentary, suggest and, if necessary, modify it before showing it to larger communities or publishing it e.g. in the internet in the future.

14.

Self-reflexive note:

Again, the fact has to be stressed that the length of the documentary was limited from the very beginning. The film is an attempt to express, in condensed form, the essence of the WWW movement and the main messages given at the WWW festival by participants.



The combination of different segments with speeches and songs at different times was first of all inspired by this need to limit the film. It happened without having thought of the Brechtian method of “alienation” (Brook, 1994:104), but can actually resemble it. The author was trained as psychodrama leader in the past, which might have influenced the decision.

In using a psychodrama approach, different time and space realities, can exist as different levels of reality, simultaneously, with an actualising or dramatising effect (Moreno, 1989:37).

However, by the way, “a composition of non-fiction” as the audio-visual montage also defines a documentary apart from just being non-fiction (e.g. a video-camera in a ware-house) and provides its dramaturgical effects (Schadt, 2002:26).

An example of such montage in WWWW is the second speech “To the African Youth” from preliminary preparations of participants, held at Marangu, Northern Tanzania (MAAA NGO, 2006c) that was combined with a day-after-festival scene in a Sukuma enclave and integrated into the festival documentary by the author.

The original real-time speech was held in front of teenagers in a conservative (Catholic) Christian teachers’ college (Teachers’ College Hall at Marangu) by the same female student who later co-organised and attended the WWWW festival where, again, she gave a speech entitled “On Watu Wa Watu” (MAAA NGO, 2006c) also integrated into the film.

Both speeches are heard and combined with music and events from during and after the festival though without picturing the student, in order to protect her out of ethical considerations in the future, with the (un)-intended extra stimulating effect on the viewer’s imagination.

At Marangu, due to the above-mentioned conservative environment, it would have been problematic to mention condoms in a public talk addressing students gathered from different secondary school classes.

In the film WWWW this second speech addressing the African youth in general, accompanies images from the Sukuma celebration the day after the WWWW festival. On this occasion, a spontaneous happening of absurd and funny condom introduction, a sort of culture jam, took place as mentioned in note [11].

In other words, through such juxtaposition of different real-time and real-space events and merging of different socio-cultural perspectives (e.g. a female holding a speech and the visualization of condoms) the documentary attempts to represent and reflect in a nutshell the

dominant cultural discourses, contradictions and tensions between generations, gender relations, traditional African and modern thought (norms, values and beliefs), or government and church messages.

The condom, as shown and demonstrated in the film WWW, being usually a very controversial issue, especially in a conservative religious context, both on local, national and international level, might, as part of the overall composition of the film, comprise a provocation and an ethical problem to some viewers, yet to others be a welcomed stimulation for dialogue, discussion and debate.

Therefore, it is clear that a warning that condom demonstration is part of the documentary should always precede any screening by facilitators.

15.

Self-reflexive note:

The short comparison of film methods chosen in EUD and WWW in this present study is quite general. Neither in the case of EUD or WWW, the author has sought direct advice from media experts or anthropologists to “classify” e.g. the films’ style.

The film styles as described and termed in the chapter II.5, II.6 and II.7.5 are interpretations by the author deducted from literature studies on media and film (Heider, 1976; Ruby, 2000; Monaco, 2000; Hockings, 2003; Schadt, 2002; Grau & Keil, 2005; MacDougall, 2006; Sontag, 2006).

The assumption is that the interpretation is correct. In any way, the film styles (as well as techniques, contents and symbolism) can be seen as the result of the local and cross-cultural pre-conditions found and preparations done (e.g. research, personal and collective involvement) in each case.

For a comparison of both films from the perspective of visual media research, however, to determine their “[scholarly] significance” as “visual works”, the Society of Visual Anthropology in the US recommends that academic evaluators should consider to categorize such works “as: 1) research footage and documentation that adds to the historical and/or ethnographic record, or is used for further analysis (such as linguistic, dance and art); 2) ethnographic media that contributes to theoretical debate and development; 3) innovations in new media forms; 4) media designed to enhance teaching; 5) media produced for television

broadcast and other forms of mass communication; 6) applied media made with and/or for the benefit of a particular community, government or business” (Prins, 2007).

Moreover, it is recommended to ask visual media specialists for their assistance and evaluation as well as statements from ethnographic film juries e.g. during film festivals, or from reviews of these works in scholarly publications all of which can contribute and present additional evidence of significance.

Writing and reading are linear and cumulative processes whereas film is composite by nature and requires additionally contextual reading (MacDougall, 2006:37).

Written accounts cannot reflect and convey the same forms of knowledge visual media can.

The latter gives access to audio-visual worlds “of practice and belief, they also make available opportunities to contemplate and experience the relationship between theory and observations from the field” (Prins, 2007).

Concerning “shot selection and composition, visual montage, image/sound juxtaposition and narrative sequencing”, Prins holds that “all are designed to present the author’s intellectual interpretation and analysis. Visual media therefore link textual argument and image. They intrinsically align theory and documentation in the tradition of print scholarship” (ibid.).

16.

The availability and access to condoms in Africa has so far been one of the biggest problems for meaningful prevention interventions.

In an article of the BMJ edition from 2001, the estimated condom rate provided to sub-Saharan Africa is only 4.6 per man per year (Shelton & Johnston, 2001:139).

17.

Courtesy translation of all lyrics in WWW by Dr. Robert Mwandishi, Tanzania, during his stay at University of Bergen, 2007.

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## Annex I

### Synopsis of EUD

The film EUD has six sections. The overall length of the film is 58 minutes.

#### Section One:

The first section covers the first half of the film. The viewer is introduced in both a visualizing, musical (song) and narrating form into the world of the Datoga.

At the very beginning we see the sacred Mount Hanang with the surrounding landscape, cattle and Lake Basotu mentioned as the origin of the first two Datoga according to Datoga myths.

The narrator starts out with the intention of the film, to caution the Datoga people “about the great danger that faces Tanzania”, because AIDS already has killed millions of Africans and “this disease will cause disaster to the Datoga if they do not change their behaviour”.

From here, the story of Gidemeda starts. He is a young healthy Datoga man with four wives living in a small village in Northern Tanzania. One day he receives a message from a place called Marembeda, the Datoga homeland: An important ritual expert has died and Gidemeda and all his people are invited to a large-scale funeral, a “bung’ed” (Snapshot 1, see Pictures). Gidemeda leaves his home together with one of his wives after having sold three oxen at the market. The long journey towards Marembeda leads them through several major urban centres by bus.

Taking a break in Dodoma, Gidemeda enters a bar to have a few beers. Quickly intoxicated by the foreign brew, he becomes sexually involved with the barmaid, an event that he later identifies as the source of his disease (Snapshot 2, see Pictures).

In Marembeda he attends the “bung’ed”, the most central ritual and social event in Datoga culture, together with several thousand Datoga, most of them coming from large parts of the Tanzanian mainland. During this occasion, he has sexual encounters with women married to members of his patrilineage.

Later, back home again, the narrator states that Gidemeda continues such relations. After a certain time, he develops symptoms of recurrent fever, cough and diarrhoea. A search for therapy begins. He visits a diviner who employs a local ritual technique (“throwing stones”), with the predicting conclusion: “this man will not live long”, and to Gidemeda “You will die”. From here Gidemeda is directed further to a certain Datoga healer from a powerful clan, who conducts a healing ritual and gives Gidemeda both medicine and advice. But Gidemeda

continues to suffer. Following further advice to seek modern medical help, he is admitted to Haydom Lutheran Hospital.

At this point in time we are informed that even two of his wives and a newborn baby have fallen sick. At Haydom Hospital he is tested and found to be HIV-positive. He is counselled by a male nurse who explains basic biomedical facts about HIV/AIDS and how to avoid infecting his wives and his “ratta”.

Discharged from the hospital in better condition, Gidemeda continues to seek help from healers from other ethnic groups. One of the healers shown disappoints Gidemeda promptly: “I can’t treat AIDS”.

Here, at this stage, Gidemeda’s health becomes worse. At the end of section one, Gidemeda, lying in the compound of a relative in Haydom, is talking to Gesso Bajuta, a real-life Datoga businessman, who gives Gidemeda advice after reflecting with him on the new disease, its meaning for the “ratta” institution and the threat it poses, in general, to the larger Datoga community.

The second half of the film has several shorter sections.

#### Section Two: “Hayte Madotay Mudinangi”

In this section, the actor Hayte Madotay Mudinangi playing Gidemeda, addresses the audience as a real-life person (he is “stepping into the film”) reinforcing the message of AIDS as a worldwide disease and its deadly potential as exemplified by the story of Gidemeda who had infected his “ratta” with the virus. He appeals to his people to learn from the film.

#### Section Three: “The song of Gidemeda’s wife”

“The song of Gidemeda’s wife” re-tells the story of Gidmeda by a group of young men accompanied by visual images, a “flash back” series of central events from the first half of the film. It ends with the appeal “Please, let us be aware!”

#### Section Four: “The men’s meeting”

A gathering of Datoga men is depicted, the typical traditional form of communication in Datoga culture and everyday life. They discuss HIV/AIDS related issues. Again, worries about the incurable disease AIDS, about the “ratta” practice as a way of transmission or, again, the danger of alcohol consumption are expressed by different speakers who finish their

speech with a call not to give AIDS a chance to enter the community, receiving a vigorous “We agree!!!” from the audience.

#### Section Five: “Women’s meetings”

Datoga women exchange their ideas about how to protect the community from AIDS by changing the “ratta” practice. It is vital to “minimize the intake” i.e. either “remain with the owner of the house” and “stop eating outside” or “close the door”. Some of the women stress the necessity to communicate the message quickly from mothers to daughters, from husbands to sons.

#### Section Six: “Mathew S. Sedoyeka”

This last section shows Mathew S. Sedoyeka, the present District Commissioner of Karatu District, a highly respected person within the Datoga community giving a speech in which he expresses his genuine concerns for his people. At the same time, he endorses the message of Gidemeda’s story and advocates for behavioural change within the Datoga community, namely to abandon the practice of the “ratta” and widow inheritance, since none of these practices is safe any longer.

## Annex II

### **Synopsis of WWW**

The film WWW is 18 minutes long. It is structured in six sections.

#### Section One:

The film starts with a black screen.

A new lyric created and sung by the “WWW MAMA Group”, in a common Tanzanian tune (borrowed from a love song), “Knock at people’s doors in Malinyi” with the message of the deadly danger of AIDS and the advice to be careful, opens the film.

Section one ends with showing the still empty, but decorated morning site of the festival, and the women’s choir for a short while, merging with the evening sky of the festival.

#### Section Two:

This section gives an overview of the festival.

The screen is divided into four parts showing different changing scenes from different points of the festival.

While listening to drum music the observer’s eye can travel from one scene to another. It represents the festival visually as a whole and tries to show as many of the participants and audience as possible.

#### Section Three:

It shows a “Rasta-man” from the community accompanied by other musicians from the area, all with improvised and partly self-created instruments.

Their song is based on a well known East African tune. The new simple lyric asks “how can sex be possible if she is not a virgin” in the times of the killer disease AIDS. It does not give any answers or suggestions, but remains with the question.

#### Section Four:

The focus here is on the main speech of the festival “On WWW” (MAAA NGO, 2006c) given by a female university student of Chagga origin.

However, the charismatic and enthusiastic speaker is not visualized in the film. Simultaneously, the festival is looked upon from the periphery, from different angles.

The speech stresses the concept of WWW, which is participation, unity, mutual respect and understanding. The speech appeals generally to the urgent need to learn about the modes of HIV transmission and HIV prevention, to discuss and to understand cultural-specific sexual practices.

The speech also accompanies a visualized peer condom demonstration and modelling session from the back of the classrooms (snapshot 4, see Pictures).

#### Section Five:

This section shows a Sukuma village celebrating in their fields the day after the WWW festival as their chosen link to the WWW movement and the festival.

During the drumming and singing session condoms are put, as a spontaneous happening, on drumsticks by a Chagga male visitor introducing the condom in a playful and humorous way.

The music and images are accompanied by the second speech “To the African Youth” (MAA NGO, 2006c) by the same female student as in Section 4, targeting the new generation.

Again, she is visually absent (“out of space”), talking about the transformation of cultures in the process of globalisation and the challenges for the youth of to deal with the negative and the positive aspects of modernisation, especially the impact and threat of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

In this speech the use of condoms is not mentioned explicitly as a means of protection. However, speech merges with the condom-drumstick-happening.

#### Section Six:

It shows the “WAZIMA MOTO” performance (“fire brigade”) where huge letters (composed of intact matches) reading UKIMWI (“AIDS”) – one prepared on a wooden board and one laid on the street – to be set alight at dusk as a symbol for *AIDS the bushfire* and *AIDS in the streets* with a dancing “fire-brigade” extinguishing the fire to the sound of the drums.

The film ends with a religious lyric by the “WWW Mama Group”: “look at all the parents who have gone and the orphans left behind [.....] the only vaccine is the word of God” merging with the image of singing kindergarten children and the evening sky of the festival [17].

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*Roland E. Futterer*

*Berlin, December 2008*

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