

representative of an NGO assisting local conservancies, and Andrea Staltmaier, the white manager of a wildlife tourist lodge in the area. They debate the issue of tourists visiting the Himba village and arriving upon a scene of women seated on the ground with craft items arrayed before them for sale.

Staltmaier personifies the tourist gaze, stating, “Guests coming to this part of the world—they have a picture in their head already. They want to discover a really remote place, and it is not a nice feeling when you’ve traveled all the way around the world and you clearly can see that 700 people have been there before you and they all left a mark on the place.” Over footage of two lodge employees sweeping the jeep tracks back into the desert sand, Staltmaier says, “So of course we try to give the people the experience they are looking for. . . . But it’s always really off-putting when they approach the Himba village and they see already this whole strip of curios and they are meant to buy something. You want a real experience, you know? You don’t just want a set-up.”

An offended Kasaona disagrees. “Imagine if people came to your compound and just took pictures; these people are here to make a living—let them sell.” His response exemplifies the profound tension between Westerners’ idealized, nostalgic desire for an undiscovered Africa and the lived goals and aspirations of Africans for whom the continent is a reality, not an escape. The film is thus excellent at discussing issues of cultural authenticity, objectification, and commodification, as well as the key question of who has control of and benefits from representations.

The film’s title comes from the clever combination of a statement by Kinyaga—“we are milking the wildlife as we would milk cattle”—and the rhino, an endangered species and highly prized member of the Big Five, and thus a major form of capital at both Il Ngwesi and Marienfluss. In two parallel scenes, a rhinoceros raised by an Il Ngwesi ranger allows a jeep full of deeply moved tourists to pet him, while in Marienfluss, the Himba community has proven itself responsible enough to welcome its very first rhino, delivered in a giant container. This second rhinoceros embodies the achievement of the conservancy, the promising future of ecotourism, and the changes that have taken place in the valley over the course of a generation—from poaching and hating animals to desiring and protecting them.

With a DVD containing 83- and 54-minute versions as well as thematic modules, the film is well packaged for classroom use and is an excellent teaching tool for courses on Africa, environmental studies, sustainable development, colonialism and the colonial legacy, and tourism and the commodification of culture. Beautifully

shot, well researched, and with impressive coverage, *Milking the Rhino*’s subtlety and refusal to simplify the complex issues of African wildlife conservation are anthropologically sound, making it an excellent tool for anthropology courses as well.

Unmistaken Child

Directed by Nati Baratz, 2009, 102 minutes, color. Distributed by Oscilloscope Laboratories, Technicolor c/o Oscilloscope, 5491 E. Philadelphia St., Ontario, CA 91761, <http://www.oscilloscope.net>

Cameron David Warner
Aarhus Universitet

Unmistaken Child documents the four-year search of Tenzin Zopa, a Nepalese Buddhist monk, for the *yangsi* (rebirth) of his teacher Geshe Lama Konchog (1917–2001). The title derives from a scene in the film where Tenzin Zopa explains how he must find a child who is his beloved teacher’s indisputable reincarnation.

The film begins with Geshe Lama Konchog’s cremation at Kopan Monastery, a Tibetan Buddhist monastery on the outskirts of Kathmandu, Nepal. We see Tenzin Zopa and other senior monks sifting through Geshe Lama Konchog’s ashes for miraculously produced sacred relics and signs of his reincarnation. The film follows Tenzin Zopa through a series of events to discover the reincarnated boy. Tenzin Zopa first receives permission and encouragement from an associate of the Dalai Lama. He then relates prophetic dreams. The viewer watches Tenzin Zopa’s reaction to a video of a divination ceremony performed by a specialist of Tenzin Zopa’s Buddhist lineage. The divination results specify the first letter of the name of the boy’s father and his birth village. After Tenzin Zopa finds a candidate, he tests the boy by tempting him with the rosary of Geshe Lama Konchog. After the boy passes a more formal exam in the presence of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, a famous teacher of Buddhism with many Western students, he is presented to the Dalai Lama for formal recognition as the new Tenzin Phuntsok Rinpoche. Toward the end of the film, Tenzin Zopa obtains permission from the boy’s parents to raise him in Kopan Monastery. Against the boy’s pleas, his parents leave him at the monastery. At the time, he is apparently three or four years old.

Aside from a few words on the screen at the film’s beginning and the dates and locations of each major scene, *Unmistaken Child* is completely devoid of narration. Tenzin Zopa’s confessions of his trials and

motivations, which provide a modicum of context, are the film's best moments. The responsibility of finding the child is a heavy weight on Tenzin's shoulders. The search brings out deep feelings of loss for his deceased teacher. For example, when Tenzin Zopa visits his teacher's dilapidated retreat cave above Tenzin Zopa's home village of Tsum, Nepal, we feel his loneliness. However, Baratz's edit of Tenzin Zopa's journey does not reveal the tremendous external pressure his lineage's leaders must have placed upon him. *Unmistaken Child* is ultimately most successful as an autobiographical account of the most important years of Tenzin Zopa's religious career, and this reviewer regrets Baratz did not focus more on Tenzin Zopa the man instead of his task itself.

The film has been widely reviewed in popular media as a unique and intimate portrait of the "mystical" and "mysterious" process of selecting *yangsi* in Tibetan Buddhism. However, the film is far from unique and this reviewer wonders as to the reasons behind the film and timing of its release. The *yangsi* selection process has been depicted previously as a "mystical" and "mysterious" process, most famously in Hollywood movies such as Bertolucci's *Little Buddha* (1993, 123 min., Miramax Films), Scorsese's biography of the young 14th Dalai Lama, *Kundun* (1997, 134 min., Touchstone Pictures), and parodied in the "Won't You Pimai Neighbor?" episode of the American cartoon *King of the Hill* (Boohwan Lim and Kyounghee Lim, dirs., 2000, Fox). Disappointingly, *Unmistaken Child* is completely devoid of any reference to these previous works; and worse, the film's narrative arc fits the clichéd image of *yangsi* selection—a cliché with dubious historical justification.

Unmistaken Child carefully constructs a romanticized narrative of *yangsi* discovery, which should be ostensibly an objective and independently verifiable result of one man's assiduous use of clear evidence. Baratz, through editing out himself and not including interviews with anyone else, fabricates this narrative through diligently following Tenzin Zopa as if as viewers we are invisible people lucky to witness firsthand key events and be present for normally closed-door, secret, or intimate conversations. Whereas this *yangsi* selection process must have involved the work of many senior monks, who would have made crucial decisions without Tenzin Zopa's input or at best only allowed him to be present if Baratz's camera were shut off. Therefore, some of the pivotal scenes record events as they happened, but the results of which have already been predetermined, giving the film an orchestrated air.

Unmistaken Child is also not ethnographically unique. One previous film, *The Reincarnation of Khensur Rinpoche* (Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam, dirs., 1991, 50 min., Snow Lion Publications/Mystic Fire Video/White

Crane Productions), now difficult to obtain, is exceptional for its intimate and unsentimental account of the father-to-son relationship between the deceased teacher and his student, which is then repeated as the student educates the young *yangsi*. Sixteen years later, filmmakers Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam returned to document the life of Khensur Rinpoche's *yangsi* in *Thread of Karma* (2007, 50 min., White Crane Productions). Compared with *Unmistaken Child*, *The Reincarnation of Khensur Rinpoche* and *Thread of Karma* provide a more nuanced pedagogical experience for students of contemporary religion.

Popular media reviews of *Unmistaken Child* completely miss an essential angle for understanding the hows, whys, and whens of the *yangsi* selection process. This film could be read as a defense of an otherwise controversial process of selecting toddlers and charismatic adults as reincarnated masters. For example, in 1995, Beijing arrested six-year-old Gendun Chokyi Nyima and selected another boy, Gyancaïn Norbu, to be the reincarnation of the tenth Panchen Lama in order to prove that the Communist Party, not the Tibetan Government in Exile, has the authority to choose the next Dalai Lama. And for 18 years the Tibetan community has not been able to decide definitively between two possible reincarnations of the 16th Karmapa. As a result, one faction produced a documentary film on their candidate's selection process—*The Seventeenth Karmapa's Return to Tsurphu* (1998, 100 min., Mystic Fire Video).

Tenzin Zopa and Geshe Lama Konchog's lineage has not escaped the *yangsi* controversies. Lama Thubten Yeshe (1935–84) and Lama Zopa, two charismatic Tibetan teachers, established a global Buddhist organization, "the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition" (FPMT). Kopan Monastery is the FPMT's crown jewel. Geshe Lama Konchog and Tenzin Zopa resided at Kopan, and *Unmistaken Child* ends with scenes of Tenzin Zopa teaching the *yangsi* at Kopan. From a cynical perspective, *Unmistaken Child* could be viewed as an apology for the process of selecting *yangsi*, especially given problems surrounding Lama Yeshe's *yangsi*, "Lama" Osel. Osel Hita Torres, a 24-year-old the FPMT chose to be Lama Yeshe's *yangsi*, lived and studied at the monasteries featured in the film. Osel reportedly rejected his status as a *yangsi*. In an interview with the *Guardian UK* (Dale Fucs, "Boy Chosen by Dalai Lama Turns Back on Buddhist Order," May 31, 2009), Osel criticized the selection process and education as medieval. In response to this negative coverage, the FPMT posted a message on their website in which Osel confirms he has returned to Spain to pursue a university education but denies making negative comments about the FPMT (Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana

Tradition, 2009, <http://www.fpmt.org/Teachers/Osel/>, accessed July 5, 2009).

Unmistaken Child could not have been released in direct response to the *Guardian UK*'s Osel interview. On the other hand, Kopan must have been well aware of Osel's dissatisfaction. Lama Zopa, the FPMT leader, is advanced in age and appears to be in poor health in the film. Therefore, the FPMT needs a *yangsi* to replace the loss of Osel and the pending loss of Lama Zopa. It is crucial for the FPMT to establish the legitimacy of their lamas and the selection process.

While *Unmistaken Child* brings the viewer into the personal world of a Tibetan monk charged with discovering the rebirth of a saint, it does not provide crucial background knowledge nor is it objective enough, something that could have been achieved by including the voices of Tibetan Buddhists critical of this cultural practice. Future films could delve further into the interpersonal relationships between Tibetan Buddhist monks, nuns, and yogis. For example, films could explore the familial ties between men, women, and children among families of yogis in Eastern Tibet or the homoerotic relationships on display in celibate institutions in South Asia, especially prevalent at the large annual gatherings of monks and nuns at Bodh Gaya, India, and Lumbini, Nepal.

Ideally *Unmistaken Child* would be shown in Asian studies courses when *The Reincarnation of Khensur Rinpoche* is unavailable, and where the instructor is qualified to provide the social and historical context the film lacks. *Unmistaken Child* would work well in courses on ethnographic filmmaking for its close attention to the aspirations and success of one religious man's quest to honor his own beloved teacher.

Wings of Defeat: Once, We Were Kamikaze . . .

Directed by Risa Morimoto and Linda Hoaglund, 2007, 90 minutes, New Day Films, PO Box 1084, Harriman, NY 10926, <http://www.newday.com>

Samuel Hideo Yamashita
Pomona College

In *Wings of Defeat*, documentary filmmaker Risa Morimoto returns to Japan to uncover what she had never known about her deceased uncle, that he had been a *kamikaze* pilot, one of the 3,843 Japanese pilots ordered to fly their aircraft into Allied ships and other targets in the last year of the Pacific War. (Called *kamikaze* [divine wind] in the West, these pilots are known as "special at-

tack" [J. *tokko*] pilots in Japan. The latter is the correct term.) To find out more about her uncle, Morimoto interviewed his brothers, sisters, and his now grown-up children. Her quest led her to the "special-attack units" (J. *tokkōtai*) to which her uncle belonged, and which the Imperial Japanese Army and Navy formed in the fall of 1944. The army and navy first broached the subject of "special attack" tactics in 1943. The discussion intensified in the spring and summer of 1944 when it was clear that Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto's strategy of using island air bases as "unsinkable carriers" failed.

Morimoto interviewed 16 other individuals, including five special-attack pilots who survived the war; six American veterans who had been on ships attacked by the special-attack units; three local historians, including a docent at one of several museums dedicated to these units; historian John Dower, the author of two prize-winning books on the Pacific War and its aftermath, and anthropologist Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, who has written a book on the special-attack pilots and translated and published a number of their diaries.

Wings of Defeat is an important addition to the documentaries on the special-attack units that air frequently on the History Channel. Morimoto and her codirector Linda Hoaglund are skilled filmmakers, and excerpts from Morimoto's interviews with former special-attack pilots suggest the men felt comfortable speaking frankly about why they wanted to join the air corps, what they remember about their training, and how they felt about being trained to die.

Morimoto's interviews also reveal the complexity of the former pilots' feelings. Takehiko Ena's guilt as a survivor becomes clear when he is filmed dedicating a memorial to his deceased comrades. Takeo Ueshima's ambivalence about what he was being prepared to do is summed up in his comment "we were crying on the inside, but on the outside we just kept smiling." Kazuo Nakajima's bittersweet feelings are conveyed in his observation that his comrades "mostly . . . died in vain," and his wishing that the emperor had ended the war sooner. Likewise, Shigeyoshi Hamazono's pride and competitive instincts as a pilot are obvious, although he also remembers that two-thirds of the special-attack pilots he knew "didn't even know how to fly in formation." In tracking down and interviewing these pilots and making these interviews available to an English-speaking audience, Morimoto has done us a huge service, especially as their number is rapidly declining.

Besides the pilots, Morimoto explores other views, beginning with her own amazement that her Uncle Toshio was a special-attack pilot. Her interviews with her uncles, aunts, and cousins reveal the wartime