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Foreign Capsule Reviews

Paris, Nov. 18.

Les Fils De L'Eau (The Sons of Water) (FRENCH; DOCUMENTARY; COLOR). Pleiad Films production and release. Written, directed and edited by Jean Rouch with photographic assistant Roger Rosfelder. At La Pagode, Paris. Running time, 60 MINS.

There can be money in these travel films about native customs, especially if the makers have some filmic gifts. Jean Rouch found this out when a series of his pix on French West African native customs began to win film fest prizes. A few were put together to make this 60-minute feature which delves into some rituals among various Afro tribes living alongside great rivers. The dances of possession and an explosively exciting hippopotamous hunt are well documented. But Rouch has a sense of the vital in denoting primitive conduct, and his pic holds dramatic interest.

Another Rouch item is "Les Maitres Fou" (The Mad Masters) on a native sect which went in for weekend meetings where the colonial leaders were strangely caricatured as they gave vent to this in trance. These two might make an offbeat package for specialized bookings in the U.S. It is strong stuff but with a fine technical finish. Color is good and the progres-

sion despite being made under actual conditions and being blown up to 35m Eastmancolor from 16m originals. Mosk.

Lettre De Siberie (FRENCH DOCUMENTARY; COLOR). Argos Films production and release. Written and directed by Chris Marker. Camera (Eastmancolor), Sacha Vierny; commentary, Georges Rouquier; editor and special effects, Arcady. At Boneparte, Paris. Running time, 60 MINS.

Good documentary travelogue footage is given a new feeling and tang by a witty commentary in the form of a letter from Siberia in this vehicle. Pic also has a built-in curio interest in this part of Russia which is so rarely filmed. Sudden comic interludes when the same scene is shown with propaganda aspects or inserted animation make this a medium-length pic which could be used on some specialized programs in the U.S.

Technical aspects are good. The film was yanked out of the Karlovy Film Fest in Czechoslovakia this summer when the Russians objected on the claim that they knew of no film having been authorized to be made in Siberia. However, this obviously proves there was permission, this pic validly and wittily makes this clear.