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CINEMA AND TELEVISION IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES

by

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FOREWORD

The present report makes no claim to be an exhaustive study of television in the Arab countries and of its relationship with the cinema; it merely sets out to provide on this important question certain information, derived from the most reliable sources, which we think may be of assistance in determining the main objectives to be pursued in connexion with the improvement of the standard of audio-visual media of mass communication in the Arab world. While the most substantial part of the study bears on Lebanon, care has been taken, despite the inadequacy of the documents available, to give as large a place as possible to the other Arab countries, and, in particular, to the United Arab Republic which, in regard to cinema and television, unquestionably has the lead.

We have made use of statistical data whenever these appeared likely to shed light on the problems in hand, but without excessive recourse to this method, since it seemed to us that a "comprehensive" study, based also on monographs, interviews and public opinion surveys, would be better adapted to our subject. We hope in this way, despite the fragmentary nature of our documentation, to have succeeded in presenting a reasonably accurate overall picture of the present situation of the Arab cinema and television. Lastly, we have been constantly concerned to relate these two media of expression to the general frame of Arab culture, the main characteristics of which we have attempted to indicate in the Introduction.

CINEMA AND TELEVISION IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES

INTRODUCTION

For any well-grounded study of the problems of cinema and television in the Arab countries and their relationship with traditional Arab culture, the first requisite is at least a brief definition of the main features and essential components of that culture. The degree and success of the exchanges between modern media of expression such as the cinema and television, on the one hand, and the classic forms of literary and artistic culture, on the other, are, indeed, closely bound up with the characteristics of that culture, its relevance to the present time and the favour it still enjoys among the general public. No work, whether poetic, narrative, dramatic, musical, philosophical or religious, is likely to be used or adapted by the cinema and television unless it appeals to popular sentiment, either because it is in tune with the feelings of the man in the street or because it reflects his anxieties and problems. It is from this angle that we view the question whether traditional Arab culture, in its main features, is still sufficiently in harmony with the minds and feelings of the Arab masses to be able to maintain a successful relationship with the cinema and television.

It is impossible to analyse the main elements of traditional Arab culture without considering the problems to which the Arabic language gives rise. Not only is literary Arabic practically the sole vehicle of Arab culture, but it is itself one of the components of that culture. More often than not, in addition to giving a work its form, its adornment, it also constitutes - partially, at least - the actual substance of that work and its raison d'être. For instance, it is not rare to find in Arab poetry and oratory that, instead of the language serving to express feelings and ideas, these are apparently providing the raison d'être for verbal brilliancy or syntactic acrobatics. Fortunately, however, this tendency has been on the wane for some years past. Even in music, the words have almost as much importance as the rhythm and the melody. This primacy accorded to speech, this rhetorical aspect of traditional Arab culture, must be reckoned with in any attempt to estimate the likelihood of that culture's winning a place in cinema and television. These media often hesitate to use literary Arabic, an erudite language not always understood by the masses, which would, moreover, seem hardly suitable for programmes drawn from contemporary life or depicting the everyday scene; its use would cause a strong impression of artificiality, such as might be produced by Sicilian peasants speaking the language of Petrarch! The literary language, then, stands in the way of an association of the Arab cultural heritage with the media of mass communication.

It would be rash, however, to conclude that, in the matter of language, the situation of the Arab masses is comparable with the situation in which the French or Italians would have been placed if France or Italy had kept Latin as the official language, disseminated by the schools, press, radio and government services; for, unlike the languages deriving from Latin, dialectal Arabic, although it is a mosaic of local forms of speech, is fairly close to literary Arabic, which is the common language of all the Arab peoples. In addition, the Koran continues to secure for the literary language a very wide dissemination and a perenniality that is beyond question. Nevertheless, its comparative remoteness from the spoken language, and the small place it occupies in everyday life, do not mark out literary Arabic as the language for television and cinema programmes; this explains the slightness of the relationship between classical Arab culture and these media of expression. Might it not be possible, at least, to contemplate "adapting" the

great works, "modernizing" the language in which they are written, so as to bring them within the comprehension of the general public? Theoretically, this is feasible, and it is a method that has produced fairly satisfactory results elsewhere; but a major difficulty is encountered in the case of Arab works, due to the fact that the charm of most of these works lies essentially in their form and that, in a translated or adapted version, they are liable to appear sadly mutilated or impoverished.

But, beside this classical culture, erudite and sometimes seemingly set in a comfortable immobility, the Arabs have a "modern" culture, with a simplified language for which they are indebted to the press and to the novelists and playwrights of the past 30 years. Nor should we overlook the popular culture, rooted in very ancient tradition and with dialectal Arabic as its medium of expression. The main forms of this popular culture are singing, folk-dancing and dialectal poetry, known as "zajal". It is in these last two forms of the culture that we should seek the elements likely to influence television and cinema. Moreover, springing as it does directly from the soul of the people, requiring their participation and spontaneously expressing their attitude towards life, this "second" culture, is the most faithful reflection of popular feeling. It should, however, be pointed out that, unlike the classical culture, the popular culture assumes expressions which vary greatly from one region to another; it nearly always has a local aspect, and does not possess the universality that would enable it to be used on a large scale by television and cinema.

Reference should be made to certain efforts - such, for instance, as the publication of books and journals concerned with "zajal" - aimed at giving a written expression to dialect and thereby raising it to the status of cultural language. These efforts, few in number, have nevertheless met with a favourable response in some quarters, more especially in Lebanon. A particularly unusual effort was that made by the Lebanese poet, Said Ake, who recently published in Latin characters two anthologies of poems written in dialectal Arabic. As curiosities, these were a success with a small section of the intellectual élite; but the attitude of the majority of Arabs towards any initiative which might involve a threat to the literary language would still seem to be negative, if not actually hostile.

PART I

TELEVISION AND CINEMA IN LEBANON

I. GENERAL REMARKS

1. The development of television in Lebanon

Television has existed in Lebanon since 26 May 1959 when broadcasting was begun by the Lebanese Television Company. A second station called Télé-Orient started to broadcast on 6 May 1962.

The programmes of Télé-Orient and the Lebanese Television Company reach all parts of Lebanon and, according to reports from neighbouring countries, they are also received in large areas of Syria, Egypt, Jordan and Cyprus which are within the broadcasting radius of channels 4, 7, 9 and 11. Benghazi was also recently reported to have picked up Lebanese television programmes.

There is an equal number of television viewers of both sexes in Lebanon. Urban density is highest along the coast. Surveys have shown that 22% of the inhabitants of the city of Beirut speak French, 11% speak English and 94% speak Arabic. As regards French and English, these percentages are reduced by half in the rural areas.

Television has only lately been introduced into Lebanon. Nevertheless the high standard of living, the maturity of the population, its cultural level and its taste for luxury have all contributed to the rapid development of T.V. which is demonstrated by the number of sets sold since 1959. The following are the official figures given by the Customs authorities for the years 1959, 1960 and 1961:

1959 - 6,030 sets
1960 - 13,752 sets
1961 - 19,463 sets.

At this rate of increase, the figures for 1962 and 1963 should be roughly 25,000 and 30,000 new sets respectively, which would bring the total number of television receivers in Lebanon to 94,254 sets by the end of the year 1963.

Today 32% of Lebanese families (averaging five members to a family) own a television set. In the city of Beirut, by itself, the figure rises to 39%. Considered from the point of view of distribution over different social and professional categories, the highest proportion is to be found among the tradespeople, 59% of whom own a television set, while the lowest figure is for farmers, only 13% of whom have sets.

2. Television and its audience

For this section, we are using the results of a survey conducted by the "Centre de la Diffusion Libanaise" on the subject "Press, Radio, Television and Public Opinion in Lebanon" (May 1963).

It is not possible to understand the relationship between television and the cinema in general - and the Arab cinema in particular - or to estimate the nature and scope of the influence of television on the cinema and on the public's

appreciation of the cinema, unless we can determine the attitude of the public towards T.V., the programmes it prefers and the amount of time spent daily watching them. The influence of television depends to a great extent on the behaviour and assiduity of the spectators themselves.

(a) Is T.V. watched regularly? Seventeen per cent of the Lebanese watch only those programmes which they consider "interesting", though areas of interest may vary considerably from one social group to another. This category of televiewers is most numerous in Beirut (41%). The disparity between the capital and the rest of the country can be explained by the fact that the inhabitants of Beirut have a wider range of entertainment to choose from, so that they only need to watch the small screen when a programme really interests them.

A survey carried out by the "Centre de la Diffusion Libanaise" on young people in Lebanon showed that over 80% of the inhabitants of Beirut under 21 years of age watch T.V. every evening. The percentage is much lower for adults: less than a quarter of the people questioned (23.4%) watch television every night. The conclusion is that the television audience in Lebanon consists largely of young people and more specifically of children of school age. This fact places a responsibility on the television directors with regard to the nature and quality of their programmes.

(b) How much time do televiewers spend watching television? The survey conducted by C.D.L. showed that, on an average, 24% of televiewers watched T.V. for less than an hour, 26% for one hour, 19% for two hours, 11% for three hours, and 18% claimed to watch "every programme". With regard to this last group, it should be noted that, since it is not physically possible to watch all the programmes given at the same time on the three channels, the faculty of choice and personal initiative are operative here solely in the selection of the channel.

(c) What programmes are preferred? Although replies to this question differed greatly, as might be expected, they may nevertheless be grouped together under five or six main headings which reveal the taste and the most pronounced inclinations of the audience. In Beirut the most marked preferences are for films (48%, of which 25% for "serials", which are the television equivalents of the old motion pictures issued in instalments), plays (42%), variety shows (27%) and programmes from the French television (R.T.F.) (21%). From the high preference shown for films, it would seem that, for a large sector of the public, T.V. still means "free cinema at home".

II. TELEVISION'S CONTRIBUTION TO CULTURE

1. Proportion of Lebanese television programmes devoted to cultural matters

The Lebanese television broadcasts a total of 101 1/2 hours per week. This time is divided up as follows:

Lebanese Television Company:	Channel 7 (in Arabic)-38 1/2 hours
	Channel 9 (in French)-28 hours
Télé-Orient	Channel 11 (Arabic, English and French)-38 hours.

Within this total, what proportion is reserved for programmes of a general cultural nature? A report written for the Ministry of National Education by

Mr. Wissam Ezzedine, Director of the Lebanese Television Company, draws attention to the importance of the problem and observes that, for lack of adequate support from the State, it has not so far been possible to take much action in the matter.

"There is an acute shortage of staff", writes Mr. Ezzedine, and he adds: "the problem is going to become even more serious in the future.. Today, television is reaching 100,000 children; in a year or two, the figure will be 200,000. Among the different types of programme broadcasts, some are suitable for young people, while others are not; but there is in any case no continuity, no co-ordination and no effort to educate. Above all, there is no attempt to awaken the curiosity of young minds, no stimulation to self-improvement". As Mr. Ezzedine frankly states, it would be vain to expect from commercial television companies, who primarily concerned as they are to pay their way and survive, any ambitions of an educational nature or any regard for the moulding of public taste. Opinion surveys have shown beyond doubt that the public cares little for educational programmes or even for those which are simply cultural. Channel 11 decided one evening to present an opera to its televiewers, and it was found that only 3% of them watched this programme while the overwhelming majority sought lighter entertainment on the other two channels. In the absence of financial support from the State and of a complete and systematic programme of cultural training through television, which could only be set on foot by the services of the Ministry of National Education, it is thus understandable that efforts have hitherto been confined to the presentation of certain cultural programmes, some of them highly interesting, but without order, progression or continuous plan and without any real intention to educate. The only programmes that are of a continuous nature at all are the monthly programme called "Opération à coeur ouvert" (Open heart operation), on current medical or biological questions, and the weekly programme "Lectures pour tous" (Reading for everyone), in which Max-Pol Fouchet discusses the latest French publications. Apart from these two broadcasts, the only nucleus of an educational programme is formed by the films made for television by the "Centre de la Diffusion Libanaise" (cf. below).

As regards the other cultural programmes, which are nearly always presented at random, these vary widely in quality and it would be useless to try to offer a general assessment of them. Protests - mainly by intellectuals - concerning the small number of cultural programmes broadcast, or the mediocre artistic standard of most of the programmes, often appear in the Lebanese press. It must be admitted that criticism of this kind is usually well founded. But only by reference to a list (at least partial), of the programmes can an accurate idea be gleaned of their quality. We therefore list the programmes broadcast by Lebanese television's three channels over a three-week period, selected at random. Typical or noteworthy programmes included:

(a) Cinematographic feature films. Mention should be made of at least two of these, which are genuine masterpieces: Orson Welles "Othello", and "Monsieur Vincent", as well as of two praiseworthy productions - "The 41st", which was rightly claimed to have infused a new spirit into Soviet cinema, and "The Sun in your Eye", a carefully thought out and engaging production by Jacques Bourdon. It should be noted, however, that these films were shown in the same week, whereas in the other two weeks covered by our inquiry televiewers had to be content with films like "Mordus", "On the bridge of sighs", etc. On an average, eight cinematographic feature films are shown, each week, on Lebanese television's three channels.

(b) Films specially made for television. These fall into two groups:

films of foreign origin,
films produced by Lebanese television.

The first group includes a large number of "serials". Young people find the interminable episodes and resurgent intrigues in these films highly exciting, but, with very few exceptions, they have no cultural or educational value. Some of the serials broadcast during the three weeks in question were: "The untouchables", which tells the life-story of Al Capone, "San Francisco beat", "Danger man", "Have Gun", "The third man", "Island adventures", "Perry Mason", "Vengeance", "Broken arrow", "Ben Casey", "The betrayal of Leclerc", "William Tell", etc. Of the foregoing serials, most are detective stories, but some are "Westerns", adventures with an "exotic" setting (The Caribbean Islands, Tahiti), or "historical" films such, for example, as "William Tell". "Serials" account for between 17 and 20% of all television programmes.

Foreign television films other than "serials" are mostly documentaries, with a smaller number of narrative films - feature or medium-length films - which are adapted from plays or novels. Some of the documentaries shown in the three weeks covered by the inquiry were interesting enough - for instance, "The art of living in the days of François I", a pleasing and instructive film on the castles in the Loire valley; "The liberation of Paris"; "The triumph of Lester Shapwell", which offered an interesting retrospect of photography; "Window on the world", a film on the town and harbour of Bremen; "Notre-Dame de Paris"; "The story of an instrument"; "Portrait and memento: Chateaubriand", an excellent account of the great writer by Dominique Aury, Julien Gracq, Claude Roy and Henri Guillemin; "Our lungs", in which specialists from the Laennec hospital explain the principal diseases of the lung; "Music for you"; "The piano"; and, lastly, the series "Mademoiselle de Paris", in which the viewer is taken on instructive tours through France, etc.

Lebanese television programmes include very few "narrative" films produced specially for television - apart from "serials", of course. In the three weeks under review, only three were shown - a vaudeville by Feydeau; "The valiant little tailor", based on a Grimm fairy story; and, especially, "Jacques the fatalist", adapted by Pierre Cardinal from Diderot's novel. This last-named film is particularly interesting from the technical and aesthetic points of view, for the producer's declared intention was to show that "cinema is the opposite of television". "Jacques the fatalist" is part of the "Spirit and letter" series by which France was represented at the first television festival in New York. Credit is due to the Lebanese Television Company for enabling the Lebanese public to see this film, which afforded people interested in the question of the relationship between cinema and television an opportunity of making valid comparisons between the two arts - their different means of expression, production methods, and editing and interpretation techniques; this applied particularly to the members of the Beirut film club, who had seen Bresson's "The ladies of the Bois de Boulogne", also based on the novel by Diderot.

The importance of films produced by Lebanese television, in relation to television activities as a whole, is discussed below.

(c) Arab folklore programmes. Many televiewers find these programmes very enjoyable. They are numerous, but of uneven quality. With few exceptions, they

are transmitted directly, being normally intended for only a single showing. In addition to programmes of folk music and dancing, which are often shown on Channels 7 and 11, this folklore group includes weekly sessions of "zajal" - poems in dialectal Arabic - which are given every Thursday. Folklore has so taken the popular fancy that it even figures in advertisements: folk rhythms or dances by performers in folk costume are used in campaigns to promote sales of refrigerators, washing-machines, brands of jam.

(d) Drama evenings, in Arabic ~~and French, and~~ less often in English. These are of varying interest. Some set out solely to amuse the public, and usually succeed in doing so, with little effort or expense and with few artistic scruples. The actors in this artless kind of farce - apparently harmless but possibly in the long run exerting an influence incompatible with the requirements of a sound aesthetic training - have achieved amongst large numbers of people an enormous popularity, quite out of keeping with their real worth. Some of these actors are making use of their popularity as a passport to the film world.

Fortunately, however, there are plenty of evenings when worth-while plays are shown on television; thanks to the efforts of intelligent producers who are trying to develop in Lebanon a dramatic art that is worthy of the name. The most interesting of these evenings are arranged by the C.U.E.D. (Centre Universitaire d'Etudes Dramatiques), which was set up within the Ecole Supérieure des Lettres on the initiative of its energetic director, Mr. Jacques Mettra. This season, the Centre has produced on television notable works such as Goldini's "Harlequin, a valet with two masters" and "The reformatory settlement", an adaptation of a short story by Kafka, made by a young Lebanese, Mr. Yves Turquieh, who produces and directs stage plays. Mention should also be made of "Dante's bark", a play by Mr. Gaby Boustani, a Lebanese university student of 26, which was a resounding success. With the object of promoting dramatic art in Lebanon and interesting people in theatre work, the Lebanese Television Company organized in the past winter a competition, with prizes for the most talented dramatists. The broadcast series entitled "Golden cedars" (because the winner was to receive a golden model of a cedar), which was shown at intervals over several months, aroused enthusiastic interest among audiences, and brought before the public eye a number of young actors and producers who had previously had no opportunity of getting their work noticed. Thirteen plays were given in the series. This provides an example of what television can do to revive dramatic art in Lebanon, especially as most of the plays produced departed resolutely from the conventional theatre, light comedy and bourgeois plays, and represented an endeavour to reach an original conception of the drama and so recapture the essence of real theatre.

Of the plays in Arabic, which were often of an equally high standard, mention should be made of the following: an adaptation of "Hamlet", by Mounir Abou Debs, "Broken wings", by Gebrane Khalil Gebrane, "The Lady with the Camellias", and "Twelve angry men". Between mere farce, on the one hand, and theatre which is of real literary and artistic interest, on the other, there is the weekly half-hour programme entitled "Byefreja Allah", which presents scenes from ordinary family, working or school life, in a style that is realistic, intimate on occasion, and discreetly moralistic. This programme could do a great deal to further the moral education of the people and even their artistic development.

(e) Programmes with a didactic purpose. These programmes, which are not filmed, are of an educational or informative nature, or provide civic training. They include talks, interviews with writers, artists or scholars, the discussion

and criticism of books or films, commentaries on current affairs, televised reports, etc. Lebanese television devotes a large proportion of its programme time to broadcasts of this kind, although, as we have already pointed out, there is not much regard for organization and method in this sector.

The most noteworthy of these programmes are:

"Let us learn English" (Channel 11 - 30 minutes - 3 times a week);

A special broadcast for children (Channel 11 - 30 minutes - every day except Sunday);

"Women of today", which, beside the traditional cooking recipes and fashion news, provides useful advice on housekeeping, the education of children, the intellectual interests of the modern woman (Channels 7 and 9 - 30 minutes - once a week);

"Close-up of the cinema" and "Cinema magazine" provide, respectively, commentaries on current cinematographic events throughout the world and on films to be seen in Beirut. The "Cinema magazine" is informative rather than really critical or instructive in character; this is due to commercial reasons, television fearing that unfavourable comment on a film may displease the distributor or the director of the cinema, who pay a certain amount for the televised presentation of the trailer of their film (Channels 9 and 11 - once a week);

"Reading for everyone": the well-known literary broadcast of the R.T.F., produced by Max-Pol Fouchet, is regularly transmitted at Beirut on Channel 9;

"Ara'a al Madinat" (Opinions), a weekly round-table on matters of topical interest;

Lastly, "Questions of the hour", which constitutes, as it were, the editorial of the televised news bulletin. It offers direct comments, within the comprehension of the general public, on current political, economic and social events, on the activities of the State, on questions concerning good citizenship, on studies and surveys carried out for the purpose of ascertaining the opinions and attitudes of citizens. The Lebanese, with their well known democratic outlook, appreciate the objectivity tempered with humour of this daily five-minute broadcast which, while explaining the point of view of the State, is also the spokesman of public opinion vis-à-vis the authorities.

Mention must also be made of Charles Rizk's (objective) editorials on foreign policy.

(f) "Variety" broadcasts. There are large numbers of these, on the three channels. Among a good deal of worthless stuff, are included interesting recitals of classical music or songs by stars or amateurs, ballets, several "quiz" contests for which there are valuable prizes, etc. Special mention should be made of the "variety" broadcasts of the R.T.F., which are remarkably popular with the young people, and of the broadcast "Front-page spread" ("Cinq colonnes à la une").

(g) Political programmes. These are not merely televised news bulletins; they comprise retransmissions of speeches, filmed sequences of topical events and even a certain number of medium-length films on important questions relating to the present political situation; for instance, the Lebanese Television Company recently produced a film on Yemen, entitled "Yemen Inquiry", and a film on Iraq.

2. Tentative summing-up

The foregoing brief analysis of Lebanese television programmes, based on general data and on the results of the more detailed three-week inquiry conducted during the last season, suggests that, while T.V. in Lebanon covers, as a whole, a fairly broad range of subjects, it is not very informative about the specifically sociological problems of the Arab countries; scant space is likewise afforded to Arab art and culture, apart from folklore and tales. As regards broadcasts on social and economic questions (which have an obvious sociological bearing), these are numerous and are mostly organized by the "Centre de la Diffusion Libanaise", Special mention may be made of "How a road is built", "The professional city", "The plan for the development of the Akkar", "Land reform", "The Litani project", "Electricity in the villages", "The people's dwellings at Saida", "The Institute of Training for Development", "The aims of social policy", etc.; in all, more than 50 films dealing with State projects for equipment, development and land reform. Mention should also be made of films of cultural or general interest: "The Beirut Museum", "Memories of Gebrane", "Adonis and Astarte", "Lebanon seen from above", "Paramilitary training"...

Equally numerous and interesting are the films, produced for television, concerned with different aspects of archaeology, history, culture, folklore or the handicrafts in Lebanon; among the most successful are those made by Mr. Farid Moukheiber for the broadcast "Beirut Fair" (including films commissioned by the Centre de la Diffusion Libanaise). There are 60 films in all, including:

The makers of Oriental musical instruments;
The painter Aïda Marini and her works;
Lebanese ballerinas;
Fishing and fish-breeding;
The Roman temples of Niha;
The Lebanese house;
Phoenician art;
Centenary of the Lebanese press;
Byblos;
The life and work of Wadia Sabra;
Saida: city of the people;
The 1962 Spring Salon;
Sailing in Lebanon;
The painter Paul Guiragossian;
A look at painting in Lebanon;
The handicrafts of Chehim;
The village of Mtein;
The village of Barja;
The handicrafts of Jezzine, etc.

(For the full list of films made for television by Mr. Farid Moukheiber, see annex.)

With regard to programmes devoted to cinematographic culture in general, these are mostly confined to an occasional showing of old film classics or the presentation, briefly and without any critical analysis, of the latest cinematographic events in Lebanon and other countries. Television has enabled us to see this winter, among other films, "The battleship Potemkin", "When the cranes pass", "The soldier's ballad", "Margaret of the night", "Casque d'Or", "The Ex-Priest", "Orpheus", and this undoubtedly represents a praiseworthy effort, but it does not suffice to make television a real instrument of cinematographic culture.

Lebanese television is unable to produce locally programmes the high cost of which would not allow it to recover its expenses, especially as it has to cope with a competitive situation and the market is too small. It therefore has to buy abroad a good many programmes, and, though these are often of excellent quality, they are sometimes alien in spirit to the preoccupations and needs of the Lebanese public. This helps us to appreciate the merits of television which has produced, in difficult circumstances, broadcasts of considerable interest; but it also serves to indicate the terms in which the problem of its development and its future will be set.

PART II

NOTE ON TELEVISION AND CINEMA IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES

I. GENERAL REMARKS

Seven of the 13 States belonging to the League of Arab States have television: Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, United Arab Republic, Kuwait, Algeria and Morocco. A transmitter is now being built in Tunisia and should be finished by the beginning of autumn. In addition, the inhabitants of some Arab countries which do not yet have televising facilities can often receive the programmes of neighbouring countries reasonably clearly. For instance, the radius covered by the two Lebanese television stations takes in, besides Lebanon, the western part of Syria, the north of Jordan, and Palestine; the Egyptian television likewise reaches several regions beyond the frontiers of the United Arab Republic. The legal status of the broadcasting organization differs from one country to another. In most cases they are private companies, more or less strictly supervised by the State, which sees that special privileges are reserved for its own broadcasts and that programmes are subjected to censorship (through the National Security Service, Ministry of Information, etc.). In the United Arab Republic, however, television, like all other media of information - except the cinema, which is considered as a private industry - is a nationalized concern, responsibility for the financing and technical management of which, together with the general planning, preparation and production of programmes, is vested in the Ministry of National Guidance.

To what extent do the different television networks in the Arab countries co-operate and assist one another? There are no "relay broadcasts" comparable to those in Western Europe, for instance, so that the only conceivable forms of collaboration are co-production of programmes or television films, or their exchange. Up to now there has been no co-production by several Arab television stations, either of films or of "live" broadcasts. As for the exchange of films, this is still being done only on a limited scale, though it is becoming steadily more widespread. Lebanese films produced for television have been sold, for example, in Kuwait, Egypt, Iraq and North Africa.

As in most of the developing countries, leaders in the Arab countries already possessing television have been concerned to use this powerful medium of communication for mass education and for the intellectual, artistic and civic training of their people. Here we shall mention only the examples of the UAR, which has made the most systematic efforts in this direction, and Kuwait, which very recently attained to independence and has already embarked on a vast campaign of education through television.

In the UAR, educational television injects guiding ideas into the programmes and presents films, some of which are made in the country and others purchased abroad, covering a wide variety of subjects such as physics, chemistry, history, geography, hygiene, civics, etc.

In Kuwait, an hour a day is given over to programmes dealing with hygiene, the popularization of science, or training in civics, through the use of films purchased from international specialized organizations.

A study of the relationship between television and cinema in the UAR is of particular interest since this country has the most highly developed cinema industry in the Arab world - the only one which has really gone beyond the embryonic or experimental stage. It is therefore worth devoting a few paragraphs to the problems of the cinema and television in this country.

II. TELEVISION AND CINEMA IN THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

1. Introduction and extension of television

The idea of introducing television into the UAR goes back to 1954 but, because of various circumstances, including the events of 1956, a definitive plan was only worked out in 1959 and the first broadcast was made on 21 July 1960. The aim of the project was to provide a television network with the widest possible range over the United Arab Republic territory, covering in particular the more densely populated areas and those of a special geographical or natural interest. Two broadcasting stations were therefore built in Cairo, a relay station in Alexandria and another in Mansura. Five more relay stations have been planned to cover Upper Egypt, and a broadcasting station for the Aswan region which is destined to take on a predominant economic and social importance.

2. Television, cinema and culture

Besides building television stations throughout the country, the Government is also anxious to encourage and develop cinema production and to improve the artistic quality of Egyptian films. An "organization for the consolidation of the cinema" has been formed for this purpose, under the sponsorship of the Government. Its aims are as follows:

(a) to spread the cinema throughout Egypt and raise its technical and professional levels;

(b) to expand the market for Egyptian films both within the country and abroad;

(c) to make loans to film producers in accordance with the planned policy of the State;

(d) to improve the standard of cinematographic art by every appropriate means.

Independent cinema units were founded in 1954-1955 by the Ministry of National Culture and Guidance, so that films on cultural, agricultural, industrial and health subjects, as well as propaganda films, might be shown in all parts of the UAR. The Government also granted financial aid to the "Ahram" film studio, for the installation of a laboratory for developing and processing short films in colour on folk subjects; it has, likewise awarded large prizes for the best films, best acting and production. In addition, cinematographic missions have been sent from the UAR to several countries in Latin America and Asia, and this may prove an interesting sociological experience for Egyptian film-makers.

The development of cultural and educational programmes for television thus has its counterpart effort in the cinema, which is producing more and more short films, intended not only for Egypt but for foreign countries as well.

On the other hand, State aid and the increased production of educational films should not be allowed to conceal the fact that the situation of the Egyptian film industry, since it has had to compete with television, is rather serious. The public is giving up going to the cinema, in favour of the television screen. Box office receipts have diminished by 20% in 12 months. The number of productions, which was 59 in 1960-1961, dropped to 48 in 1961-1962, and will be only 35 in the present year. However, this period of trouble may prove beneficial if it is instrumental in lifting the Arab cinema up out of the rut into which it has slipped and makes it realize the need for an aesthetic revival. The Egyptian weekly paper "The Arab Observer" states, in its edition of 22 April 1963: "The Arab Cinema is at the crossroads. It must turn over a new leaf if it wants to retain the public favour. The businessman who recently would invest a small fortune in the production of a melodrama built mainly around a couple of songs and one or two belly-dances, is now looking round for a new opening which will guarantee him a profit or at least save him from a loss." As the Cairo weekly discerningly points out, "the Egyptian public no longer goes to the cinema just to see its favourite stars. It wants a real show; and it is now taking more interest in the director and the script-writer". It would therefore seem that two ways are open to the Egyptian cinema at this critical point: (1) to place greater emphasis on the spectacular elements in a film, and (2) to produce films of a less facile nature. Public and producers, alike, have become aware of this. "Superproductions" in colour for the wide screen are already increasing in number and are a great success with the public; the best one so far - "Saladin" - was released this winter. Films of this kind may, of course, degenerate into inferior productions of the "Maciste" type, but they may also bring to the Arab cinema the new leaven that it needs.

CONCLUSIONS

WHAT CONCLUSIONS MAY BE DRAWN FROM THIS BRIEF STUDY?

1. The situation of the Arab cinema and television vis-à-vis the "Arab audience" is somewhat ambiguous and hard to define. On the one hand, this audience is not homogeneous: tastes, ways of life, intellectual leanings, no less than regional and economic disparities, have introduced into it differences perhaps more pronounced here than in other branches of culture. Even while professing the most intransigeant nationalism, the young intellectuals of the big cities, often trained up in the cultural and aesthetic conceptions of the West, are not much attracted by the productions of the Arab cinema; they go far more often to see American or European films than Arab films. Their attitude towards television is more fluid, since television programmes often contain a good deal of folklore, in which everyone, including the intellectual sector, takes a lively interest. However, the "mass" of the population usually flocks to see Arab films (apart from the recent time of trouble, discussed above, due to the rivalry of T.V.), which it enjoys despite their faults, nearly always preferring them to foreign productions; it is this "mass" that ensures the commercial success of the film industry in the Arab countries, and especially in Egypt.

On the other hand, the very causes of this success are not without being perplexing. They rarely denote a deep coincidence between the film and the audience, due to the latter's finding in the film a reflection of its own mental world or an expression of its own vague aspirations, its obsessions, its daily struggles. The majority of Arab films, even those that aspire to call themselves "social" appear so arbitrary, irresponsible and detached that their artificiality deprives them of any claim to present a picture - however transposed - of society. Accordingly, if the masses have a fondness for Arab films, this is by no means because they recognize themselves in such films, but because they find in them an easy outlet for their emotions, a satisfaction for their leanings towards the romantic. This is a basic factor of which careful account should be taken in any sociology of the cinema (and of television) in the Arab countries. Its cause may perhaps be attributed less to a lack of interest among Arab audiences in social and psychological situations than to the fairly widespread notion that the cinema - a visual art - is a minor art, fit, at the most, for the entertainment of the masses, and that the expression of the fundamental problems of human destiny should be reserved to literature, clothed in the inviolable prestige of the written word.

2. This "aristocratic" attitude - such as was probably adopted by the Greek and Roman rhetors towards the plebs, whose coarse pleasures they despised - explains, in part at least, the aesthetic failure of the Arab cinema; for the artistic mediocrity of most of the films produced in the Arab countries is generally admitted. This finds confirmation in the fact that no Arab film has ever obtained a prize, or even attracted attention, at any of the international film festivals, and this although goodwill and sympathy are never lacking in the juries at Cannes and Venice, who have awarded prizes to Japanese, Russian, Polish, Czechoslovak, Mexican, Brazilian and other productions, and have shown abundant interest in films far removed in spirit and in their aesthetic standards from the Western conception. It may be assumed that these juries would gladly have given their approval to an Arab film if they had found one in any way worthy of it. Arab films, often cumbersome or heavy in their construction, nearly always err through the absence of any regard for the need for originality of style; it is

difficult to call to mind any film directors who have sought to develop a personal note or have really concerned themselves with the question of form. Above all, the excessive use of music swamps the action, creates endless idle periods and soon manages to exhaust the patience of the audience. Again, the subjects are too often melodramatic; tearful situations are exploited with gusto; the psychology of the characters is scantily drawn, sometimes with a Manichean naïvety - variations on the theme of the "Orphans of the Storm" or the "The Love Child" are clearly unlikely to be masterpieces.

3. This question of subjects brings us to the themes by which the Arab cinema is inspired. Hardly ever does it seek inspiration from the traditional Arab cultural heritage, which offers few spectacular elements and is no longer attuned to the preoccupations of the present-day public; it therefore has to turn either to folklore or to modern literature. From the former, it generally takes only the music, which, as we have seen, has not added to the success of films. Mention should, however, be made of one film inspired by legend; this is "Goha", a Franco-Tunisian co-production directed by Jacques Baratier; it was a great success and might well have served as an example to Arab film-makers. Films are fairly often based on modern Arab literary works; but this partnership has not been as satisfactory as might have been expected and has not so far led to the production of any really important films. The reason for this may be that modern Arab literature has not yet found its proper path, at least as far as those forms which are suitable for cinematographic adaptation - novels, short stories, drama - are concerned. Special reference should be made to films inspired by Arab history. Over the past few years, these films have steadily increased in number and, despite some shortcomings that persist, they are reasonably well made. This is important, in that it indicates a desire to return to the sources of the Arab masses, combined with an awakening of national pride. Among these films which, more or less felicitously, recount episodes from the past history of the Arabs, we would recall "Antar" and "Saladin", both of which were great popular successes. But here, too, much remains to be done, to raise these productions to the status of works of art.

4. In the endeavour for a revival of the Arab cinema, what rôle may be assigned to television? There can be no doubt that, in those countries where it exists, television exerts a considerable influence on film production, affording it a wider range of inspiration and a share in its own technical and stylistic discoveries; many films are indebted to television for their sober production, their realistic tendency, their restrained, direct and vigorous style. This turning towards simplicity and realism is bound to be to the advantage of the Arab cinema, whether in regard to form, through the quest for a firmer style, or in regard to subject, which it may be instrumental in freeing from the deadly sway of melodrama. This influence is due not only to the example which television affords to film-directors and scenario-writers, but also to the fact that it accustoms the public to an art which is closer to truth, to life. From this standpoint, television may be considered as a real school for the education of the Arab public's taste in the matter of films. Moreover, the rivalry into which television has forced the cinema often proves a salutary stimulus to the seventh art, since it incites film-directors to make progress, to improve the production, to avoid easy solutions, so as to be in a better position to compete with television. In this way, a number of Arab films testify to a concern, hitherto inexistent, for photography, scenery, spectacular presentation; an instance of this is offered by "Saladin", referred to above, for which notable material efforts were made: wide screen, colour, thousands of supernumeraries, gorgeous costumes, huge crowd scenes managed by an experienced director. Efforts of this kind must be made, if we do not wish to see television,

once widespread among the masses, ousting the cinema. It whould be added that a line of demarcation is already discernible between the two forms of expression: television is increasingly reserving to itself programmes based on folklore, dancing, singing, and documentary films on cultural or topical subjects, while the cinema is tending towards more action and a more dramatic form. Thus, by clearing the Arab film of all the extra-cinematographic elements by which it is encumbered, television will enable it to attain to real autonomy, thanks to a specifically cinematographic form of expression. It should also be pointed out that among the services which television is in a position to render to the cinema is that of informing televiewers about forthcoming films, giving a brief analysis with critical comments; the unfailing interest with which these announcements are followed in Lebanon points clearly to the influence they may have in educating the cinematographic taste of the public and guiding its choice in regard to films. But the influence of television on the cinema is by no means always beneficial. The films intended for showing on television are often made hurriedly without any regard for "finish", for artistic perfection; the audience, somewhat uncritical, accepts them cheerfully; for the cultivation of the taste of the Arab masses, this represents a danger, all the more serious in that a good many television stars, especially those belonging to the category of "comics", usually distinguish themselves by the tritest vulgarity and a distressing lack of originality. This does not prevent them from becoming the idols of the crowd, whereupon they are tempted to turn their "talent" to account on the cinema. The results, as may be imagined, are nearly always lamentable; shortcomings, already very perceptible on the television screen, become glaring in films. Yet the audience applauds, and the poorest production becomes a huge box-office success. One example will suffice to show the seriousness of this threat to the artistic and cinematographic education of the public: a film recently made in Lebanon, in a few weeks and without the least sense of art and taste, had more than a month's run because the leading member of the cast was one of the most popular stars of Lebanese television; neither the extraordinary commercial success of this film - universally regarded as mediocre - nor the actual making of the film would have been possible without television. At the same time, "The little stranger", a film that, while doubtless imperfect, is interesting, attractive and deserving of encouragement, has still not found a cinema willing to screen it.

5. Short documentary and cultural films have a small place in the cinematographic production of the Arab countries. This is due to the difficulties encountered in the commercial exploitation of this kind of film as well as to the meagre interest taken in it, so far, by the public authorities. It is surely unnecessary, however, to emphasize the very important contribution made by short and medium-length films towards the dissemination of culture among the masses, or the value of the information they are able to provide in the spheres of economic, social and hygienic progress, especially in the developing countries. Here again, fortunately, television blazes the trail for the cinema and to some extent makes good its shortcomings. A number of short films, of documentary or cultural interest, are made for television purposes; since they are nearly always 16 mm films, their screening in cinemas is scarcely feasible. At the present stage, however, the televiewing public is still comparatively small, in any case much smaller than the cinema-going public.

This brief sketch of the Arab cinema and television, in their relations with one another and with the traditional Arab culture, is of course rough and incomplete, but it nevertheless allows us to put forward tentatively a few practical suggestions which may contribute towards the improvement of these two media of expression in the Arab countries:

(1) The establishment, in connexion with the Inter-Arab Cinematographic Centre, of a committee to be responsible for study of the problems involved in the relations of cinema and television with the traditional Arab culture. This committee would consist of film-makers, writers, sociologists, teachers and a representative of Unesco; its activities should include the preparation of monthly reports on new Arab films considered from the standpoint of their cultural level, the organization of annual meetings between cinema specialists and representatives of the literary world, and the elaboration of practical proposals aimed at introducing Arab culture into cinematographic productions; these proposals might even take the form of draft scenarios for submission to film directors and producers.

(2) Approaches to cinema specialists (scenario writers, directors, producers) with the object of securing the making each year of two or three Arab films that would be more ambitious from the artistic standpoint than the general run of productions and fit to compete at the great international festivals; these films, the scenario and shooting script of which would be examined by the Inter-Arab Cinematographic Centre and subject to the Centre's approval, would receive special assistance from the public authorities and, if possible, technical aid from Unesco.

(3) The award of prizes, by the Arab Governments, for the best film, the best scenario, the best direction, the best photography and the best performance. Similar prizes might be awarded for the best television programmes.

(4) Approaches, by the Inter-Arab Cinematographic Centre and the Ministries of Education and Culture, to the television organizations of the Arab countries, for the purpose of ascertaining the most practical and effective methods of collaboration between cinema and television calculated to make television an efficient instrument of cinematographic culture. This collaboration might be planned on the following broad lines:

(a) The organization of weekly debates for purposes of the analysis and critical discussion of a film selected either from among cinema "classics" (such, for instance, as films screened by local cine-clubs) or from among new films currently showing at commercial cinemas. To ensure that they are of a satisfactory cultural standard, these debates should be directed by authentic film critics in co-operation with members of university and school teaching staffs, cinema specialists, etc.

(b) Television screenings (as often and as regularly as possible) of films selected from among the best productions of the leading film directors. These films would be borrowed, either directly, or through the Inter-Arab Cinematographic Centre, the cine-clubs or Unesco, from the principal film libraries of Europe and America. If these screenings are really to meet the purpose in view - to offer the public a genuine cinematographic education - it is essential that they be preceded by a brief account covering the essential points concerning the film, its director and the place it occupies in the history of the cinema. It is also desirable that the screening be followed by a short commentary drawing attention to the most important aspects of the film, from both the technical and the aesthetic points of view.

(c) A weekly analysis of the chief films screened in commercial cinemas; this analysis should be made with complete impartiality by a film critic assisted, if possible, by an educator. In Lebanon, commentaries on new

films are given on television in a half-hour broadcast each week, but there is room for considerable improvement in the intellectual quality of this item.

(d) Improvement of television programmes for schools, by means of an increase in the number of short films on subjects coming within the main fields of learning, and the organization of school competitions, with prizes, carefully graduated to suit the age and academic level of pupils.

(5) The establishment of a "committee on cultural and documentary films" attached to the Inter-Arab Cinematographic Centre. This committee would consist mainly of specialists: sociologists, educators, teachers, archaeologists, historians and art critics. Its principal tasks would be:

(a) To make, every year, a dozen or so short and medium-length films of cultural and documentary interest; the annual programme of films to be made would be submitted to the approval of Unesco; which might suggest changes or prescribe an order of priority for the making of the films in question. This programme should cover the greatest possible number of fields: archaeology, art, literature, folklore; social, economic, health, civic and other matters. For some of these films, assistance might be needed from foreign specialists and from Unesco.

(b) To arrange for the distribution of these films to cinemas, schools, universities, youth centres and rural areas. For this purpose, a permanent and regular cine-bus service would be an absolute necessity.

(c) To build up a cultural film library, containing not only short films made in the Arab countries but also those made by Unesco and by foreign countries. Steps should be taken through governmental channels for the obtainment of at least one copy of the principal documentary films currently available.

(d) To prepare and keep up to date a catalogue of its own cultural films and of those housed in the film libraries of other bodies, both private and public. This catalogue should not consist solely in a list of titles; it should also give brief comments on each film (subject, running time, a short appreciation).

(e) To have translated into Arabic the commentaries accompanying documentary films intended for the general public; in other cases, sub-titles would suffice.

A prerequisite for the above measures is the establishment in the near future of the Inter-Arab Cinematographic Centre, and the operation of that Centre on a regular basis. The advantages of such an organization, the creation of which was recommended by the Beirut Round-Table on the Cinema, held in October 1962, are beyond all question. Receiving technical aid from Unesco, and encouragement and material help from the Arab Governments, it would represent for the entire Arab world a source of cinematographic culture and an admirable instrument for the promotion of contacts and co-ordination between the cinema - an essentially modern art - and the wondrous intellectual heritage of the Arabs.

ANNEX

LIST OF FILMS MADE BY FARID MOUKHEIBER

and presented on "Beirut Fair" from December 1961 to July 1962.

(1) THE MAKERS OF ORIENTAL MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. Theme: an artisan in his shop on Basta Street making a lute ("al-ud") ..... 2 mins.

(2) The painter AIDA MARINI and her works ..... 5 mins.

(3) PIGEON-SHOOTING. Theme: how is pigeon-shooting done? Is it a sport or a butchery?..... 5 mins.

(4) LEBANESE BALLERINAS IN TRAINING (Ballet schools in Beirut). Theme: ballerinas, fully-fledged and fledgelings, filmed spontaneously in class with their teacher. The commentary refers to the development of artistic life in Lebanon ..... 4 mins.

(5) THE LAKE DWELLERS OF BEIRUT. Theme: cafés built on piles along the seashore were once the delight of the inhabitants of Beirut. Shots of customers playing cards and backgammon, and fishermen with their tackle in front of the piles. These cafés are doomed to disappear because of urban development..... 4 mins.

(6) EXHIBITION OF THE TEN. Theme: ten Lebanese painters and sculptors giving a joint exhibition. Shots of the painters and their works. 5 mins.

(7) FISHING AND FISH-BREEDING. Theme: the problems of fishing and fish-breeding in Lebanon. Shots of fishermen casting their nets at Beirut and at Maameltein, and then repairing nets after they have taken their catch. These are followed by scenes depicting pisciculture: the breeding of carp at Beirut and trout at Jezzine. 2 1/2 mins.

(8) THE PAINTER AREF RAYESS working in his studio: his works..... 5 mins.

(9) THE ROMAN TEMPLES OF NIHA. Theme: the discovery of the temples in the Bekaa valley which have been partly restored by the Antiquities Service. Penitent girls used to go there to make amends..... 3 mins.

(10) OPENING OF THE BATHING SEASON. Every year, from 1 May, the inhabitants of Beirut rush to the beaches. Panoramic views of the beaches and scenes showing divers and water-skiers..... 5 mins.

(11) A SURREALISTIC POEM. Theme: at dusk reality blends with the dream-world. Scenes showing people photographed from strange angles, streets, unusual faces, foot prints in the sand, the sky spangled with stars, a ship gliding along in the night - all accompanied by electronic music..... 3 mins.

(12) WHAT IS FORTUNE-TELLING? Theme: a beautiful "nourieh" (gipsy) comes to a house where she is welcomed by two women. She tells their fortune first with sheep knucklebones and then in coffee grounds..... 5 mins.

(13) THE PAINTER JEAN KHALIFE in his studio. Shots of his new pictures: cosmic painting..... 5 mins.

(14) THE LEGEND OF JONAH. Theme: a mausoleum built at Jiyeh commemorates the legend of Jonah who was thrown up by a whale on this Lebanese beach. Jiyeh moreover is the ancient city of Porphyreon, famous in the time of the Phoenicians and Greeks because it was here that the murex was fished to make purple dyes. 5 mins.

(15) THE MASSACRE OF BIRDS IN LEBANON. Theme: a stop must be put to the massacre of birds because they destroy the insects which ruin crops. Shots of hunters snaring birds with bird-lime ..... 3 mins.

(16) THE LEBANESE HOUSE. Theme: two house styles are competing in Lebanon: the Nordic-style house with a flat roof, and the hybrid house seeking to combine traditional styles in a jumble of arcades, a pool and a conical red roof. Shots of villas in the mountains and the suburbs, with contrasting effects..... 3 mins.

(17) A REHEARSAL IN A CABARET. Theme: cabaret dancers rehearsing for a show. Acrobatics, rhythm dancing, stage play. The girls are shown as workers in the theatrical business..... 3 mins.

(18) "OUR LADY'S FOOL". Theme: in the "valley of ghosts", near Mazraa, an eccentric individual had his tomb carved in the rock 65 feet above the ground and had this epitaph inscribed on it: "Here lies Our Lady's Fool". He then went off to Brazil. An enormous rosary is also hung on the rock, and busts and inscriptions adorn the monument..... 2 mins.

(19) AN EVERY-DAY CONTRAST IN LEBANON (Skiing at Laklouk). Theme: scenes showing skiers gliding down the side of a snowy mountain while other people are sledding or frolicking in the snow. View of the Laklouk Ski Centre and then, by way of contrast, a shot of two bathers diving 60 feet into the sea while other people are canoeing or knitting in deck chairs along the beach. This is one of the every-day contrasts in Lebanon..... 3 mins.

(20) HOROSCOPE (first version). The twelve signs of the zodiac, accompanied by maxims..... 10 mins.

(21) THE GROTTO OF SARBA. Theme: legend has it that St. George took refuge one night in the grotto of Sarba, near Jounieh, before going to confront the dragon. The grotto has become a place of pilgrimage for barren women and sick children. This grotto was also a place of pilgrimage over 2,000 years ago..... 6 mins.

(22) A NIGHTMARE BY ADEL SAGHIR. Theme: the painter Adel Saghir is interested in spiritualism and the film shows his strange paintings and impressive portraits of ghosts..... 3 mins.

(23) LAURENCIOS AOUN, A "NAIVE" SCULPTOR. Theme: he is the only "naive" sculptures in Lebanon. He makes "jorns" (stone vessels for the national dish called "kebbé") and in his spare time he sculptores busts of his neighbours which he displays along the road to Batroun, along with his "jorns"..... 3 mins.

(24) PHOENICIAN ART. Theme: a study of Phoenician art, based on drawings: pottery, figurines, bas-reliefs and temples..... 3 mins.

(25) CENTENARY OF THE LEBANESE PRESS. Theme: Linotype operators, make-up men and printers making up a newspaper. Subject: the Union of Journalists had intended to organize a celebration of the centenary of the Lebanese press; unfortunately, however, it abandoned its plans..... 1 1/2 mins.

(26) BYBLOS. Theme: the temples, sarcophagi and fortified castle of Byblos. An average of 117 tourists come here every day and there is no rest-house to receive them..... 6 mins.

(27) HOROSCOPE (second version). Theme: the twelve signs of the zodiac illustrated by designs and symbols..... 5 mins.

(28) THE LEISURE OF 40-YEAR OLDS. Theme: couples in a cabaret are drinking and dancing. They are bored. Everything is done to occupy the leisure time of younger people but nothing for the 40-year olds..... 5 mins.

(29) A VISIT TO MIKHAEL NAIME AT BASKINTA. Theme: this is how the mystic writer and close companion of Khalil Gibran lives and thinks..... 9 mins.

(30) THE LIFE AND WORK OF WADIA SABRA. Theme: Wadia Sabra invented the universal scale, founded the Conservatory, wrote the first Arab opera and composed the Lebanese national anthem. Today he is unknown. Shots of Sabra, from photographs; the organ of the church where Sabra used to play; his familiar possessions; his grave, adorned by his wife with flowers..... 12 mins.

(31) THE PALACE OF DONA MARIA SURSOCK. Theme: an authentic Lebanese house, with its garden, its drawing rooms, wooden panelling and furniture..... 7 mins.

(32) THE PAINTER AMINE SFEIR. Theme: the painter in his studio. His seascapes are shown by an assistant. Painted plates. Several portraits..... 9 mins.

(33) ROMAN RUINS AT DEIR EL-KALAA. Theme: after a panoramic view of Beit-Méry, the camera comes upon the ruins of Deir El-Kalaa, which include the only complete Roman baths discovered in Lebanon, as well as a Byzantine church richly decorated with mosaics..... 13 mins.

(34) SAIDA: CITY OF THE PEOPLE. Theme: at a place called Aïn-el-Roummanê, one of the outlying districts of Saida, the Government, through the Reconstruction Office, has built a planned town for 20,000 workers. They become owners of their apartments after paying rent for ten years. Shots of finished buildings and of contractors on the building sites..... 3 mins.

(35) THE WITCHES' NIGHT. Theme: in the setting of a house in ruins, two witches try to cast a spell over an innocent maiden asleep. The spirit of goodness saves her. Ballet interpreted by the Annie Dabbat troupe of Beirut, including Georgette Gebara, Leyla Saïkali, Nouhad Bischouty and a figurante..... 11 mins.

(36) THE 1962 SPRING SALON: painting and sculpture. Theme: the annual exhibition of works by Lebanese painters and sculptors - over 200 works this year - organized by the Fine Arts Department of the Ministry of National Education. It was held at the Hotel Carlton..... 10 mins.

(37) THE FORTRESS OF FAKHREDDINE. Theme: first there is a panoramic shot of a painting by César Gemayel depicting Fakhreddine winning the battle of Damascus; then the extremely dangerous and difficult climb begins. The fortress, high up like an eyrie, is carved out of the rock..... 13 mins.

(38) SAILING IN LEBANON. Theme: exploration of the Yacht Club and a trip out with the sailing-boats at regatta time. Beautiful scenes of sailing-boats heeling under the wind..... 16 mins.

(39) THE CAVES OF RAOUCHE. Theme: a group of bathers come upon the caves of Raouché, and explore the smugglers' cave, the seals' cave, the lovers' cave, the twin caves and the cave of bats. An actual attempt at suicide was photographed as this film was being made..... 13 mins.

(40) THE PAINTER PAUL GUIRAGOSSIAN: his works and his daily life in the Bourj-Hammoud district. Guiragossian has been called the painter of poverty..... 10 mins.

(41) AIRCRAFT TECHNICIANS. Theme: students in the School of Arts and Crafts are learning the trade of aircraft technicians. Views of workshops; an aeroplane being repaired; theoretical instruction, for which a model is used..... 2 mins.

(42) A LOOK AT PAINTING IN LEBANON IN 1962. Theme: close-ups of the faces of some twenty painters, each one followed by one of his works. The rapid pace of the film and the abundance of its content give a general idea of the intense enthusiasm for the pictorial arts in Lebanon..... 7 mins.

(43) MEDITATIONS ON AN ASH TRAY. Theme: six scenes depicting the six types of smokers, whether men or women: the addict who smokes in bed, the narcissist before her mirror, the society woman for whom smoking is part of the art of seduction, the nervous person who has trouble lighting her cigarette, the calm individual who never smokes "one" before noon over coffee, and the woman in love who uses a cigarette as though it were a fetish while she is talking on the telephone. The actress is Sandy Garnet..... 6 mins.

(44) APPRENTICESHIP CENTRE. Theme: adults can now take a specialized training, thanks to the Apprenticeship Centre recently set up at Dékouané by the Government and the International Labour Organisation. The Federation of Industries sends apprentices here and directs the School. After three months' training, apprentices receive a rise in wages varying from 30 to 50 per cent. Mr. Jean Aziz, Minister of Social Affairs, is shown visiting the workshops..... 3 mins.

(45) POEM: "HAIR". Theme: a woman, seen from different angles, shows off the beauty of her hair as she braids it, lets the wind blow through it, etc. The poem in the background expresses warm sentiments around the subject of hair: "If all the hair of the women who have died...auburn hair...saffron-coloured hair... were spread out over the sea...".....

(46) THE HANDICRAFTS OF CHEHIM. Theme: the handicrafts of Chehim brought prosperity to the district, Artisans wove goats' hair and made tents of it, which they sold in Syria, Iraq and Jordan..... 1 min.

(47) HOROSCOPE (third version). Theme: the twelve signs of the Zodiac accompanied by the symbols, dominant features and affinities..... 9 mins.

(48) THE KHALIL GIBRAN MUSEUM. Theme: the death-bed of Khalil Gibran, his paintings and a view of his native village..... 4 mins.

(49) THE VILLAGE OF MTEIN. Theme: the life and customs of the villagers of Mtein..... 6 mins.

(50) MONUMENTS ON THE MUSEUM SQUARE. Theme: the square in front of the museum in Beirut is adorned by Roman columns and has beautiful mosiacs from a Byzantine church discovered in Zahrani. A view is also shown of the tomb of the unknown soldier on Fouad I Street..... 12 mins.

(51) KALAAT FAKRA. Theme: three temples on a hill in Mazraa and a fortified castle from Roman times, almost unknown to the Lebanese. There are indications that a Greek city may be unearthed here one day..... 3 1/2 mins.

(52) BATROUN AND THE FORTRESS OF MOUSSEYLAHA. Theme: reduced by competition from Tripoli and Gbeil, Batroun now lives on its memories. Narrow streets lead down to the sea. The port dates from Phoenician times. A party of tourists sets out to visit the Arab fortress of Mousseylaha..... 8 1/2 mins.

(53) SNOW AT FARAYA. Theme: skiers and tourists playing in the snow at Faraya..... 8 mins.

(54) THE RACES. Theme: 10,000 of Beirut's inhabitants at the race-course. Close-ups of the horses in the paddock, the start and finish of a race, the excited spectators, and the monuments at the race-course..... 5 mins.

(55) THE ORIGIN OF BREAD. Theme: a peasant woman is making "markouk" bread. We see the whole process from the time she mixes the flour with water, lights up the fire for the "saje", spreads out the dough and rolls it with her arms until the pancake is about a yard in diameter..... 5 mins.

(56) NABATIE AND TOBACCO GROWING IN LEBANON. Theme: a view of Nabatié, the tobacco fields in flower, and then the leaves being sorted at the farm and set out to dry..... 6 mins.

(57) ALONG THE ROAD. Theme: a donkey trotting along; a group of workmen who look like Martians because they are mixing asphalt; an explosion blows up the rocks and hurls them into the sea; a pair of lovers, etc..... 4 mins.

(58) THE PAINTER JULIANA SAROUPHIM. Theme: Sarouphim only works after midnight. Her paintings are mysteries. Sarouphim at home... 3 mins.

(59) THE VILLAGE OF BARJA. Theme: this is a curious village, organized on the pattern of a suburb of Beirut though it is a good 20 miles away. One of the main handicrafts of the village is the weaving of silk tablecloths and shirts on looms made entirely by the craftsmen themselves. Historic ruins that go back to Neolithic and Phoenician times..... 8 1/2 mins.

(60) THE HANDICRAFTS OF JEZZINE. Theme: the craftsmen making cutlery so perfect in detail that it is a real work of art.....