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Contents

The Rise, the Fall, and the Rise of Danish Film*

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EBBE NEERGAARD is the director of the Danish Government Film Office in Copenhagen. He is one of the pioneers of film criticism in Denmark, having begun to write in 1928. Among his books on film are the authoritative book on Carl Dreyer written in cooperation with the director himself and, this year, a volume of so-called "Film Chronicles." The present article represents the point of view of Mr. Neergaard as an individual film critic, rather than the official point of view of the Government Film Office.

THERE IS more than a slight possibility that Danish film, about 1911, encouraged the American film company IMP to initiate production of full-length feature films in the United States. With these films IMP finally defeated the Edison trust, which discounted so radical a reform in production.

In his big book *The Theatre of Science: A Volume of Progress and Achievement in the Motion Picture Industry* (1914), Robert Grau writes the following interesting lines (p. 76): "It was the Great Northern Company that first introduced the multiple-reel subjects in this country, and from this beginning sprang the feature of today with its still-growing possibilities for the future."

The Great Northern Company mentioned here is no other than the old, still flowering, Danish production firm Nordisk Films Compagni, which was started in 1906 by Ole Olsen and by 1908 had its own branch office in New York under the management of Ingvald C. Oes (or, rather, Aaes, as it is spelled in Danish). In 1910 the Nordisk distributed for Fotorama, another Danish producer, a feature film 1,978 feet long entitled *The White Slave Traffic,* which was a great success. In the following two years Nordisk produced two sequences on the same subject. The first, *The Last Victim of the White Slave Traffic* (1911), was 3,050 feet long (3 reels); the second, called both *Nina* and *Dealer in Girls* (1912),

* The editors especially welcome this authoritative article because it serves to clarify and document certain aspects of Danish film production briefly discussed in Judith Podselver's communication "Motion Pictures in Denmark" (*Hollywood Quarterly,* Vol. III, No. 2).

was 2,180 feet long. They were distributed in the United States and eventually led Carl Laemmle to produce, in 1913, his famous *Traffic in Souls,* emphasized by Terry Ramsaye as the first American film on the white slave traffic. Of course we all know the important part that such films as Sarah Bernhardt's *Dame aux camélias* and *Queen Elizabeth* have played in the development of the full-length feature film. But those were theatrical and literary films. The series of films that followed *The White Slave Traffic* were films with broad popular appeal, and the evidence seems to indicate that they were filmic films, with few traces of theatrical tradition. This may have been of some importance.

The years 1911–1914 were the great period of Danish films. The Nordisk is said to have been one of the biggest film firms in the world, second only to Pathé in France. At any rate, it produced several hundred films a year, and not bad ones for that time. The advantages of Danish films seem to have been: carefully prepared manuscripts; realistic settings free from theatrical influence; slow, reserved acting in contrast to the overemphasized performances of many early film actors in southern European countries; and skilled work on the part of the directors, who could develop as specialists in film direction since, so many films being made, it was not necessary for them to seek additional employment in the theater.

Two Danish film actors became world-famous—Asta Nielsen and Valdemar Psilander. Asta Nielsen did not begin in the Nordisk productions but in an independent film *The Abyss,* written and directed in 1910 by Peter Urban Gad, who later became her husband and went with her to Germany, where she did most of her work. Soon after the introduction of the Nazi regime, which she opposed, she returned to Copenhagen, where she lives now. Her kind of acting, which may recall Mosjukin's, has no parallel in modern screen acting. She was more stylized than any actor today would dare to be; not violent or overemphatic, but quite the contrary: her features and her figure fundamentally almost stiff with majesty or inhibition, she suddenly let slight

traces of deep tragedy creep to the surface in a deeply moving, almost shocking way. She was one of the pioneer *film* actresses.

Valdemar Psilander, though partly Greek in origin, was the prototype of a Northern actor: slow, gentle, but oozing pure masculine charm; handsome in so normal a way as not to make the audience feel strange to him, he might be either your brother or your fiancé. He played with Asta Nielsen in two Danish films, *The Ballet Dancer* in 1911 and *The Black Dream* in 1912. His most famous films were his first, *At the Gate of the Prison,* 1911, *Revolution Marriage,* with the great theatrical actress Betty Nansen, 1912, and *The Clown,* 1916. All his films were made for Nordisk. He died quite young in 1917 just after he had formed his own firm. This was taken over by Olaf Fönss, who to a certain degree was to become his successor as the most popular Danish film actor.

Nordisk was not alone in the field during the big boom in Danish film. The Kinografen studio made a big hit with *The Four Devils,* a screen version of a short story by the Danish writer Herman Bang, later to be filmed by Fox Film under the direction of F. W. Murnau. Danmark Studios made "art films" after the French pattern, even films inspired by famous paintings such as Böcklin's *The Island of the Dead,* 1913. For Dansk Biografkompagni, Benjamin Christensen made *The Mysterious X* in 1913, one of the best pictures of the period; about ten years later Christensen went to Hollywood and made a couple of films there.

At the time of World War I, Danish film degenerated or—exactly the same thing—stopped developing. About 1915, Nordisk issued a code or set of rules for screenwriters, emphasizing what was *not* wanted in the scripts prepared for the company. "The story should take place in our time and in the higher classes. Historical films, chivalry films, and national films will not be accepted. It is not allowed to write anything disparaging or disadvantageous about royal persons, public authorities, clergymen, or officers. Nihilism, anarchism, etc., may not be touched on. In each film

there must be some interesting and, before all, original trick that may form the *clou* [i.e., star turn, chief attraction] of the picture."

Even today it may be well to remember that these "rules" meant the ruin of Danish film. A very short time after this code was issued by the leading Danish firm, another Scandinavian film, Sweden's Svensk Filmindustri, issued a series of pictures which totally superseded Danish films in the world market and in the history of the motion picture. They were such films as Mauritz Stiller's *Herr Arne's Treasure,* 1919, which was a "chivalry film" about wickedness and wild passions, or Victor Sjöström's *Terje Viken,* 1916, about the revenge of an old sailor at the beginning of the nineteenth century, or Sjöström's *The Ingmar Sons,* 1918, about the loves of sour, slow peasants. Other Swedish films that did not take place "in the higher circles" were Stiller's *The Song of the Fire Red Flower,* also set among peasants, and *The Driver* (*Körkarlen*) by Sjöström, decidedly taking place in the very lowest circles of society, among drunken ruffians, and even introducing ghosts. These did, perhaps, embody "tricks"; not as "clous," however, but as bold, shocking poetry.

Why mention a series of Swedish films in a survey of the Danish? Because at the same time that these Swedish films were produced, bringing fame and Hollywood contracts to Swedish film makers, the big Nordisk went on moving "in the higher circles,"—so high, in fact, that at last it reached the planet Mars. In 1918, Ole Olsen himself, the former market exhibitor who by the force of his bold illiteracy had been able to see the possibilities of a new art medium, got overliterary and wrote the script of *The Sky Ship* (or *Heaven Ship,* whichever you prefer). It described how a group of young idealists set out in a rocket for Mars and found the inhabitants there very noble, clad in white robes, waving palm leaves in honor of peace. They took the prettiest Mars girl with them back to the earth in order that she might persuade the earthdwellers to stop World War I! One would be driven to the absurdity of claiming that this film, or *Pax aeterna* or *Pro patria* or *Down with the*

Weapons, put a stop to the war in 1918, to find a justification for the ruinous sacrifice of the Danish film industry to producing insincere, unreal, and irrelevant films.

Is this story of the rise and downfall of a film industry very old and very far away? I am afraid that it still contains something of a warning, even in these days and even for the industry of other countries.

In the two decades between the world wars, 1918–1939, comparatively few films were made in Denmark. It should not have been impossible for a small country to have a large film output, at any rate as long as the movie was still silent; Denmark had once had a large output. One reason that the backflow came in Denmark must have been the naïveté of her producers, which led them to uphold snobbish standards while elsewhere film art grew up to feel an independent responsibility. When the Nordisk awakened to what the Swedes had done, it was only to make, naïvely, film versions of Anglo-Saxon classics, including a series of adaptations of Captain Marryat's novels and A. W. Sandberg's four film versions of novels by Charles Dickens, gentle, somewhat sentimental, mildly humorous cultural films, betraying the commonplace notion of Dickens as primarily a children's author! There was no trace in them of Dickens the social reformer, Dickens the antagonist, the fighter unmasking the social evils of his time. There is more than the space of twenty-five years between Sandberg's *Great Expectations* of 1921 and Davis Lean's version in 1948; there is an immeasurable difference between the approach of the naïve Dane and the stern Englishman to the British classic. The Danish films based on Marryat and Dickens roused no interest outside the land of production itself. The speculation in international production was a flop.

It is typical that Danish producers were not able to hold Carl Dreyer, who began making films in 1920. He made two films for Nordisk, one inspired by Griffith's *Intolerance,* called *Pages out of the Book of Satan,* containing very good acting and cutting.

Then he began to wander, to Norway, to Sweden, to Germany, then back to Denmark again for a short visit, where he made among other things a film that awoke interest in France and brought an invitation to work there: *The Fall of the Tyrant,* or *Honour Your Wife* (in French called *Le Maître du logis*), 1925, an intensive miniature portrait of a lower middle-class domestic tyrant. He left his country once again to make *Joan of Arc* in France, released in 1928. In Denmark there was no room for experiments, for seriousness, or for individuality in a director, as there was, for instance, in Germany. Yet the only way the film industry of a small country can compete with the products of the bigger industries is to make strikingly individualistic or strikingly documentary feature films.

The only successful products of the special mentality of the leaders of the Danish industry were the scores of friendly farces featuring "Long" and "Short," or "Pat" and "Patachon" (long, thin, fatherly, and serious Carl Schenström playing "Fyrtaarnet," i.e., the "Lighthouse," and little, stout, impudent and childish Harald Madsen playing "Bivognen," i.e., the "Tram-trailer"). Released by a new company, Palladium, in the 'twenties and part of the 'thirties, these films roused the sympathy of large audiences of children and grown-ups all over the world because they were simply but well made and unshakably amiable. The name of the director of this thick stream of successes is well worth mentioning—Lau Lauritzen (senior), who died in 1938.

In 1928 the old Nordisk was dissolved, only to be reconstructed immediately afterward by a banker, Carl Bauder, who had acquired the rights to a new Danish "noise-free" sound film system invented by the civil engineers Petersen and Poulsen. No doubt Bauder's main interest was exploiting the patent rights, which he did very ably. But films were also made, a few of them good: George Schneevoigt's *Hotel Paradise,* a murder story, and, in 1937, his *Laila,* a romantic story of Lapland. Together with Palladium's *Palo's Wedding,* made in 1934 by the German director Friedrich

Dalsheim in the Danish colony Greenland, I think they comprise all that is worth mentioning from that period. The rest is not silence, but, in fact, rather too much noise: farces and comedies, narrowly Danish, petit-bourgeois, and commonplace.

But during that period the Danish authorities were preparing for the future. In 1922 a license system had been introduced by an act of the Danish parliament, ordering that no one could open a film theater without a special license from the Ministry of Justice. No one can have more than one theater, and no foreign interest is permitted to engage in exhibition. The law was ameliorated in 1933 and 1938, the most important change being that if the cinema licensees have a net profit of more than 12,000 kroner (approximately $2,500) they are to pay from 20 per cent upward to a Film Fund, the income from which is to be used for procuring or producing educational and cultural films and films for other purposes. In recent years the annual income of the fund has been several million kroner (5 kroner equal approximately $1), and the capital is now about 4,000,000 kroner. With this licensing system, and especially with the Film Fund growing steadily since 1939, Denmark was ready to meet special difficulties and tasks during World War II.

In 1938 one of the first results of Denmark's unique legislation appeared: a documentary historical feature film on the liberation of the Danish peasants in 1788, called *On the Order of the King.* Inspired by and subsidized in accordance with the film law of 1933, it was produced in coöperation by Nordisk and Dansk Kulturfilm.

When in 1940 the Nazis occupied Denmark, that country was faced with the problem of fighting the intruders partly by means of an underground resistance movement, which became active from 1942 on, and partly by means of spiritual weapons. The film and the money in the Film Fund came in handy. From 1941 on, official production of documentary films sprang up, led by the leader of Dansk Kulturfilm, Thomas P. Hejle, and by a new man,

Mogens Skot-Hansen, a young official from the Ministry of Education under whose management the newly organized Government Film Committee produced a series of documentaries that were to assume importance in the cultural fight against the Germans. The work and meaning of Danish official institutions, the initiative of Danish industry, agriculture, and handicraft, were made clear and interesting to the common man through these films. They strengthened his belief in the Danish course and counteracted the attempts on the part of the Germans to influence his sense of national independence.

Documentary film was not entirely new to the young generation of Danish film people. Already in 1933 a private firm for the production of documentaries, Minerva Film, had been formed by Ingolf Boisen and Axel Lerche, who before the war produced some very good privately sponsored films, for example, one on the building of railways in Iran by Danish civil engineers. Furthermore, in 1935 the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs had commissioned Poul Henningsen to make a full-length film about Denmark, a work that in many respects was a pioneer achievement. It was fresh; it had a strong sense of everyday life and lots of humor. Two young intellectuals, Theodor Christensen and Karl Roos, wrote books and articles of very clever propaganda for film, especially in the interest of the organization and style of British documentary.

Now these two enthusiasts and a group of other youngsters were fetched out of their studies and asked to produce proof of their theories in practical work. Christensen became one of the leading directors, Roos one of the best script authors, and new people were given a chance. There was Bjarne Henning-Jensen, who made films about paper and sugar and a whole series of beautiful agricultural films; later he entered feature-film production. There was Ole Palsbo, formerly a film critic, who showed his hand in a film fantasy warning against thieves in a lawless time and, in a rapidly cut film, warning against the dangers of mines. He, too,

went into feature-film production with success. There was Hagen Hasselbalch, a young philosopher in films, who treated a difficult theme like time and its measurement in a clever cultural film, and in a film warning against corn weevils changed the little obnoxious animals into an army of invasion! There is Torben Anton Svendsen, who showed a special ability for bringing everyday types to life for us in films like that on the blood-donor institution or that on the old-age pension system, called *Seventh Age.* There is Poul Bang, with his charming picture of life aboard the Danish state school ship *Denmark,* and Sören Melson with his film on the building of fishing boats, made in order to show the Germans that this work was so important that they should not use the shipyards for making "eil-boote" (speedboats).

And among all this youth there is Carl Dreyer, the only man of his generation! After his *Vampire* in 1932 he had had no opportunity to make films. Skot-Hansen asked him to make a documentary on the mother help institution, the aim of which is to help pregnant women—not least, the unmarried ones. This theme dealing with young women who sometimes suffer and are often helpless was chosen with a fine sense for the characteristic subject matter of Dreyer's feature films. He made it into a touching little everyday story, with natural types performing the parts of the unmarried mother and the deceitful young father. It was very discreet, perhaps too discreet, but still it was a pioneer work in the world of documentaries of 1942. One can hardly be wrong in seeing a connection between this little film and the fact that immediately afterward Dreyer was invited by Palladium to make another feature film, after more than ten years of silence. I believe one may say that his *Day of Wrath,* which was released in November, 1943, in the darkest days of the occupation of Denmark, is also a result of Danish documentary film production, even if indirectly.

The direct result of documentary production, however, was a strengthening of the national front against the Nazis. Since the

war there has been some surprise and some pleasure, I believe, among the great documentarists, not least of Great Britain, who have come to Denmark to find that during the war a sideline of the famous British tradition in this field of film art had continued and found its own independent style. To quote the words of one of the young veterans of British documentary, Arthur Elton, on Danish documentary: "I think England has much to learn from Denmark, and it is for this reason that I want to touch on three particular aspects of Danish documentary films—their technical virtuosity, their humanity, and their humour."

No doubt the money from the Film Fund had come in handy. It had given the young film generation freedom in the midst of the occupation and a regime of terror, freedom to make films as they thought they should be made without having to consider commercial points of view. (The films were distributed free of charge to the theaters, and were well accepted, not least because Danish officials made the Germans consent to substitution of Danish documentaries for German newsreels when real-events films were shown in connection with Danish feature films.)

Money may also be said to lie behind the fact that Danish feature films, produced commercially of course, also raised their artistic and ideological standards during the war and the occupation. Soon after April, 1940, when the Germans came, British films were prohibited and the importation of American films was stopped. In 1942 the exhibition of American films was also prohibited. With few exceptions the numerous German films presented were not seen by the Danes, so only Swedish films, which became very popular, were left, along with some French and Italian films. With competition thus abolished, the better Danish producers felt a certain impulse to act on the silent demand for better movies, movies worthy of Danish culture in its fight against the Nazis. Many serious films were made, some based on Danish classics, some dealing with social problems. Most of the serious films were rather naïve, the "seriousness" lying more in choice of

theme than in treatment and direction that could raise the theme into art. A few should be mentioned here.

After manuscripts by Kjeld Abell, one of the most talented playwrights, Svend Methling in 1941 and 1942 directed *The Rain Stopped* and *Thank You for Coming, Nick!* for Palladium. Bodil Ipsen, the actress, directed an elegant serious comedy, *A Gentleman in a Dress Coat* for Nordisk in 1942. In collaboration with Lau Lauritzen (son of the Lauritzen who directed the Long and Short farces), she directed one of the great successes of the period, *Derailment* (1942), for the new company Asa. This film, a psychological drama about a society girl who loses her memory and finds herself among criminal elements in Copenhagen, is well acted and clearly and strongly carried through. Another well-deserved success was Johan Jacobsen's *Eight Chords* (1944), made for Palladium, the story of a gramophone record in the style of Duvivier's *Tales of Manhattan,* with at times excellent acting and some very good painting of milieu.

But, of course, Dreyer's *Day of Wrath,* released in November, 1943, was the great wartime event in the Danish film world. The same thing happened then in Copenhagen as happened later in New York: the film was not favored by the critics, who found the whole much too slow and the acting stiff and devoid of expression. They did not understand that here is a piece of film art the spectator of which has to abandon the usual standards with which he enters a film theater. One has to look for, or rather be receptive to, other effects than the accustomed ones. The tempo seems slower, but really the question here is not so much of tempo as of "fullness," the loaded atmosphere of situations involving two or three persons. When one has at last "got on Dreyer's wave length," one cannot but admire the very expressive cutting of the film, the parallels so clear and so symbolic in all their seeming innocence, and the puritanic and seemingly ascetic sound track of the film so rich in genuine values when one's ear has opened up to it. The adverse criticism brought a number of important people

together to form a film society that would defend artistic and moral tendencies in Danish film production. Nothing much came of it until after the war, when some of the young film activists entered the society and carried through a very good season of some twenty showings of rare films.

Since the war, Danish feature film production has maintained its standards and even improved them. Two features with themes based on the resistance movement during the occupation were shown as early as the autumn of 1945: *The Red Meadows,* made by Lau Lauritzen, Jr., and Bodil Ipsen for Asa, and *The Invisible Army,* made by Johan Jacobsen for Palladium. In their style both were influenced by the documentary film. In 1948 Lau Lauritzen and Bodil Ipsen made a film called *Steady Stands the Danish Sailor* on Danish sailors' service to the Allies during the war. It was more popular in its appeal than their earlier film. Johan Jacobsen continued his work with two important films, *Jenny and the Soldier* in 1947, and *After* in 1948, both independently produced adaptations of plays by the Danish playwright C. E. Soya.

Nordisk developed two new directors who came from the documentary movement. Bjarne Henning-Jensen, with his wife Astrid, made a film version of Martin Andersen Nexö's social novel, *Ditte, Child of Man,* released in December, 1946. In 1947 they made a film about and for children, *Those Dratted Kids,* which, like *Ditte,* was social in its point of view; it was an enormous success. In 1948 they made *Kristinus Bergman,* a study of two criminals, showing how the severe conditions of their childhood brought them to what they are today. A clear line runs through the work of these directors. They started their year's work for 1949 by making a short children's film, *Palle Alone in the World,* a little boy's dream of being all alone and being able to run the tramway and the bus and the airplane, but—as one might expect from the Henning-Jensens—finding out in the end that it is not much fun being alone: we need each other. Their latest film, *North Sea Kids,* will be relased early in 1950. It is another full-length children's film with a touch of social direction in it.

The other new Nordisk man is Ole Palsbo. In 1947 he made *Take What You Want,* a very good description of cynics, and in 1949 an effective and quite touching film on Peter Sabroe, an exceptional Danish labor politician, who in the years before World War I gave all his energies to fighting against injustice, especially against bad conditions for children in reform homes and in private families. Nordisk Films Kompagni produced Palsbo's film about Peter Sabroe in coöperation with Dansk Kulturfilm.

And now, what does this dry survey of the more important feature films after the war tell about the position of Danish film today? First, it is evident that directors, writers, and producers too, realize that in this new period after fighting and destruction their films must deal with *social problems,* with the clear aim of helping people to love one another and helping to make the world better. There can be no doubt that the Henning-Jensens introduced this conception, or rather, made it conscious, with their very, very charming *Ditte.* It is a minor wonder that in this film they have succeeded in treating a rather stern theme, the fate of a very poor girl, in a genuinely lyrical way, without even bordering on the sentimental. It has become the story of how it is possible to stay gentle and human even if life is wicked, and doing so without making concessions of any kind, seeing with open eyes what life really is and not escaping from it into religion, for instance. For all its gentleness *Ditte* is a very radical film.

The problem of remaining human in a wicked world is repeated in the other films of the Henning-Jensens. But it is equally evident in Palsbo's films, not only in the one on Sabroe but also in his other one: *Take What You Want* is the title, and the phrase is finished in the film itself—"and pay the price." There is a strong moral in this "cynical" film.

The other directors are not so evidently attracted by social problems. But still, there are rather strong relationships between their work and that of the directors already discussed. Johan Jacobsen has made comedies, some of them very amusing, but in

all his serious films there is the same gentle melancholy, the same compassion for little human existences. The soldier in *Jenny,* played admirably well by Poul Reichhardt, is a fine, compassionate study of a gentle and lonely man with a quite ordinary inferiority complex. The apothecary in *Eight Chords* is a very similar type. *After* is a description of problems three years after the war ended. In Soya's original play the emphasis lay on the fate of the collaborators after their German protectors had been forced to leave. But in the film, Jacobsen follows the fate of a former member of the resistance movement, who in the play was a subsidiary character. What Jacobsen illuminates is primarily the disillusionment of the young man who fought for freedom and ideals. Both in Jacobsen's feature film about the resistance movement, *The Invisible Army,* and in Lauritzen and Ipsen's film with a similar theme, *The Red Meadows,* humanity and humane feelings are strongly stressed in the characterization of the young fighters.

So it seems that it is possible to find common traits in the modern Danish feature film: a strong feeling for the single individual and for his importance to a better future. Artistically this gives most of the films a touch of melancholy, the melancholy of the little man in a difficult world. There is much psychological detail in Danish films, fine nuances of gentle humor and little sorrows, but sometimes a fatal crescendo of too many little sorrows.

Tracing a line from Dreyer's tragedy of lower middle-class surroundings, *Fall of the Tyrant,* through *Day of Wrath,* which lifted the theme of the intense drama in seemingly simple family life to the dignity of the classical Greek tragedies, and on to the productions of the new film generation, one feels that, after all, Dreyer does not stand so much alone as is often supposed. There can be no doubt that he is a Danish director; he too was nourished and disturbed by the secret undercurrents in typical Danish middle-class life.

This sense of the psychological problems of the middle-class man, and this compassion for him, are being widened into social

awareness and activity by the younger generation, reared in the school of documentary film. Today there may be said to exist something of a crisis in Danish documentary film, just as there is said to be in England. Many of the tasks with which the postwar period confronted Danish documentary have been solved in a wholesome way, not least by the series *Social Denmark* (among which are included Dreyer's *Mother Help* and Svendsen's *Seventh Age*) and in films on humanitarian work by Danish organizations in Poland and Holland. But it is difficult to discern a clear line of production for the time being. The answer to the problem ought to be easy. Just as Danish feature film has learned social awareness from the older documentary film, so the documentarists might in turn now learn something from the feature film: psychological interest, interest in the soul of man and in the building up of a race of men and women and children who will be able to cope with the problems of a new world. We have seen a lot about institutions and machines and factories and traffic problems. We need, I think, to learn something about the psychological relations between society and man. The feature film can approach this subject in one way. The documentary will, no doubt, do it in its way, very different and very effective.

Postscript, December, 1949: The semiofficial institution Dansk Kulturfilm (Danish Cultural Film), which has received large sums of money as a subvention from the Danish Government and has up to now concentrated on producing short films, presented late in October, 1949, a full-length film, *For Liberty and Right,* celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of the free Danish constitution. This film was the most ambitious venture ever undertaken within Danish film production. It was not only the most expensive film, costing more than $100,000, but it claimed to be a description of the historical developments in Denmark from 1830 to about 1849 and, at the same time, a description of the basis of the Danish constitution. It became a mixture of documentary, historical reconstruction, and feature film. It shows his-

torical Danish figures conferring and making speeches. It contains a fictitious story about a nonhistorical figure—a love story of disagreeable quality that seemed queerer and queerer as it unfolded.

This film deserves particular mention primarily because it aroused enormous fury within a wide circle of critics, whose attacks were concentrated chiefly on the producer, Mr. Ib Koch-Olsen. They declared straightaway that he was unqualified for his job. There is no doubt that the concerted attacks and the sharp controversy about this film might very easily lead to extremely serious consequences for official Danish short film production, which has always been met—in this country as well as in other countries—with the greatest interest and good-will and has won considerable esteem for Denmark in the special field of documentary films. If the attacks on the film *For Liberty and Right* should have political consequences and lead to a reduction of government support to Danish documentary film production, it will mean another fall of Danish film.

The Postwar French Cinema

GEORGES SADOUL

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THE IMPORTANCE of the current crisis in French cinema should not be exaggerated, although its effect on the quality of production is undeniable. The truth is that the French cinema has been in a state of chronic crisis for the last thirty years.

The industry operates on a very narrow basis in France. In a country where half the population lives in the country or in small villages, there are relatively few motion picture theaters, and attendance is limited. For every Frenchman buying one movie ticket, an Englishman buys five or six, an American eight or ten; moreover, the price of admission is three to five times greater in England and America than it is in France.

Before 1914, in spite of its undeveloped home market, France had a quasi-monopoly of international film trade. In 1908, according to George Eastman, founder of the Kodak enterprises, the Pathé Company alone was selling twice as many films in the United States as all the American producers put together. But the young American industry soon dominated its home market, and then eliminated French competition in nearly all foreign countries. In 1920 the big companies in Paris, playing a losing game, liquidated their agencies and studios abroad, and relied on importing American, German, and Swedish films for part of their French revenue.

French production, which had been foremost in quantity and to a certain extent in quality, collapsed after 1914, systematically discouraged by these big firms. By 1928 France was producing only fifty films a year. The industrial policy of the interests that monopolized the industry discouraged the directors grouped around Louis Delluc who wanted to make French cinema an art.

At the end of the silent-film period most of them renounced their ambitions and resigned themselves to producing commercial films. Aside from the efforts of the avant-garde, reserved to a very limited élite, there was no longer a French School, but only individual creators, the most important of whom were Jacques Feyder and René Clair.

The introduction of sound film and the resulting public demand for French-language films stimulated production. It grew in two years from fifty to two hundred films a year, a certain number of them being products of German and American companies. But, aside from those made by René Clair, they remained for the most part wholly mediocre and very much inferior to German and American productions of the same period.

In 1934, René Clair, discouraged by the difficulties he encountered, settled down in England. Jacques Feyder had been in the United States since 1929. The brightest hope of the younger generation, Jean Vigo, died at twenty-nine, exhausted by the struggle he had led. The two largest French firms, Pathé and Gaumont, closed down, and Paramount interrupted its enormous production program in Paris. The depth of the depression had been reached. One might well have believed that the French cinema was doomed. Happily, this was far from true.

The downfall of the big companies had to a certain extent reestablished free competition. Smaller studios gave opportunities to talents that were still unknown or had been blacklisted by the larger studios. The absence of René Clair was compensated for by the return of Jacques Feyder. The much-criticized efforts of Marcel Pagnol now began to bear fruit. In 1935 a French School was born, grouped around Jacques Feyder, Jean Renoir, Marcel Carné, and Julien Duvivier. In foreign capitals it regained for France the artistic position lost twenty years earlier.

The second World War brutally interrupted the renaissance. Renoir, René Clair, and Duvivier were able to reach Hollywood. Feyder had to take refuge in Switzerland. The *Propaganda Staffel,*

organ of Nazi censorship, kept French cinema under rigid control. As an art it was threatened with eclipse. But a certain number of directors emerged who effectively took the place of those who were missing. Discovered or rediscovered were Jean Grémillon, Jacques Becker, Louis Daquin, Robert Bresson, Jean Delannoy, and H. G. Clouzot. Marcel Carné directed *Les Visiteurs du soir* and *Les Enfants du Paradis*. In all occupied Europe there was no better cinema than that of France, almost all of whose personnel were active in organizations of the Resistance.

Certain encomic factors favored the pursuit of the renaissance of French cinema. Before 1939, 35 to 40 per cent of receipts had gone to American and German firms. Under the occupation, American films were banned and the Germans tried to monopolize the screen, but the mediocrity of their production and its propagandist content provoked a spontaneous popular boycott of Doctor Goebbels' films.

The foreign share in receipts fell below 10 per cent, and French production, sharply favored, in spite of all the difficulties born of the war, was able to release a total of seventy-five films in 1942, as compared with an average annual output of a hundred and twenty in the years preceding the outbreak of the war.

The Liberation, the fighting, and the heavy bombardment that led up to it, brought film making almost to a standstill in 1944. In a country still virtually without communication and electricity, the studios resumed production with the greatest difficulty in 1945. Nevertheless, they soon had to their credit important artistic achievements and were honored at international festivals in Brussels, Cannes, Venice, and elsewhere.

With the reëstablishment of normal international exchange, foreign competition on the economic plane reappeared. In June, 1946, in Washington, Blum and Byrnes signed motion picture agreements between France and the United States. The prewar film import system—that of "contingency"—limiting to one hundred and twenty the number of American films to be imported

each year was replaced by the "quota" system. French theater programs were now to include at least 31 per cent of domestic films, but no limitation was placed on the number of foreign films to be imported. As a result of the agreements the share of the domestic income reserved for French producers, which had been more than 90 per cent during the war, fell below 40 per cent in the first quarter of 1947. Before 1939 it had comprised between 60 and 70 per cent. A wave of panic began to spread. In the winter of 1947–48, eight out of thirteen studios closed their doors. Unemployment mounted to 80 per cent in some branches of the industry. The number of feature films, which had reached ninety-four in 1946, fell back to seventy-four in 1947.

The strong feeling among technicians, artists, and studio workers was shared by a large body of public opinion. Hundreds of thousands of moviegoers joined Committees for the Defense of French Cinema. As early as the first months of 1948, Parliament concerned itself with the problem, and the French government denounced the Washington agreements.

They were replaced in October, 1948, by arrangements more favorable to French cinema. The "quota" was increased from 31 to 40 per cent; the number of dubbed films to be imported was reduced to the level of 1938. Finally, a special assistance act was passed which gave the various branches of the industry a subsidy of 2,000,000,000 francs.

These measures, foreshadowed from the beginning of 1948, stimulated French production: ninety-six films were made in 1948, the highest production figure since 1938. However, although new circumstances had been established, new dangers appeared. Since the beginning of 1949 the country has been in a threatening economic crisis. Unemployment and bankruptcies have multiplied. The standard of living, already very low at the time of the Liberation in comparison with that of 1938, continued to decline rapidly from 1946 on. Although the price of admission has increased much less than the general cost of living, theater

attendance has fallen sharply. In 1948, attendance in industrial areas fell 25 to 30 per cent from the levels of the preceding year. The first figures reported in 1949 showed a further decline of 20 to 25 per cent from the already very unsatisfactory totals of 1948, when attendance was actually poorer than it was in 1944, a year of bombardments, battles, and shortages of electricity.

Under such conditions, French producers—who are almost always independents without large capital resources—hesitate to undertake films that risk not being able to repay production costs on the domestic market. Yet French films cost little. The average budget for a picture was about 40,000,000 francs, or $100,000 in 1948. A superproduction might cost as much as 80,000,000 francs, but a budget greater than 100,000,000 francs, or $250,000, is considered a real extravagance. In 1948 only two films exceeded, by an insignificant margin, the $250,000 limit. The tendency of French producers to plan in terms of low budgets is not always shrewdly calculated. One of the two films budgeted at more than $250,000 in 1948, H. G. Clouzot's *Manon,* will very quickly earn large profits for its producer by virtue of its great success in France and abroad, whereas *Monsieur de Falindor,* a film budgeted at less than $50,000, is likely to lose half the meager capital invested in it.

One of the characteristics of the present situation in the French industry is that the differences in the profitability of films, formerly narrow, are now very considerable, and may vary for films made on identical budgets in a ratio of 1 to 20, and even more. This phenomenon is due to the economic crisis, but also to a change in the audience. More and more French people go to see movies selectively, choosing films in whose quality they have confidence. They are losing the habit of attending the theater closest to their homes without considering the program, and they are becoming increasingly exacting about what is offered to them.

The French producers who pursue a policy of mediocre production at bottom prices will eventually be proved wrong, but their attitude has had a most undesirable effect on quality. Since the

Liberation most of the directors of outstanding talent have made few films, or none, for it was feared that their demands on the budget would be excessive. Jacques Feyder, who returned to France in 1944, had not been assigned one film to direct up to the time of his death in 1948. In five years, Jean Grémillon, author of *Lumière d'été* and *Le Ciel est à vous,* directed only one film. The same was true of Jacques Becker, who made *Goupi Mains Rouges,* Marcel Carné, in spite of the great success of *Les Enfants du Paradis* and *Les Visiteurs du soir,* René Clair, and Claude Autant-Lara.

Nevertheless, the development of French cinema continues and its achievements are far from negligible. In the following survey it will not be possible, unfortunately, to take into account whether a given film is already known to the American public.

The absence of Jean Renoir and the loss of Jacques Feyder are deeply felt. But the prewar masters René Clair, Julien Duvivier, Marcel Carné, and Marcel Pagnol have each produced a film in France since 1945.

René Clair was abroad for more than twelve years. *Air pur,* the film he started in 1939, was interrupted by the declaration of war and will never be finished. *Le Silence est d'or* was an opportunity for him to rediscover, in the atmosphere of Paris, some of the avant-garde traditions with which he grew up and, more especially, the beloved French cinema before 1914 to which his art owes so much. In *Le Silence est d'or,* without losing any of his smiling optimism, he shows a certain melancholy, almost bitterness; but the lightness of his touch and the swift precision of his art swept away, at least outwardly, the seriousness that might have clouded the comedy and transformed into querulousness the grumbling charm of this "journal of a fifty-year-old man." The success of *Le Silence est d'or* was considerable in France and in Europe. But for three years René Clair did not work on another film. In collaboration with the dramatist Armand Salacrou he is now preparing *La Beauté du diable,* a free adaptation of Goethe's *Faust.* It is being shot outside of France, in Rome. . . .

After the triumph of his elaborate *Enfants du Paradis,* Marcel Carné had exceptional means at his disposal for *Portes de la nuit.* The film was to be a fantasy and its hero was a personification of "destiny" as a vagabond. But it was also to be a study of the hard winter that followed the Liberation. The Barbès-Rochechouart metro in Montmartre, the sorry working-class districts on the north side of Paris, the dismal Saint-Martin canal, demolished areas, the main railroad yards, were the locales in which the protagonists, conceived for Carné by his regular screenwriter, Jacques Prevert, moved. Reality, too minutely elaborated, seemed a studio set, especially when the new Italian films were being shown triumphantly on French screens at the same time. In addition, a false poetry, in the manner of the 'twenties and 'thirties, marred the scenes of fantasy. The almost total failure of the film was not its just due, however, for it did contain admirable sections.

Subsequently, Carné began to work on *La Fleur de l'âge,* a film about penitentiaries for children, written by Jacques Prevert. Shooting was far from complete when the film was abandoned. Carné then spent long months in Italy preparing, from a script by dramatist Jean Anouilh, a modern version of *Euridyce,* to be played by Michèle Morgan. The project failed. It seems that Carné, whose *Quai des brumes* and *Le Jour se lève* place him among the world's greatest directors, will not soon have a chance to make another film.

Marcel Pagnol, who is very popular in the United States, is far less so in France, for reasons that are not immediately apparent. But the fact is that Pagnol has always mixed the best with the worst in his films, even at the peak of his fame before the war. In comparison with the works of his best period—*Angèle, Jofroy, La Femme du boulanger*—his *La Fille du puisatier* (1940) represents a definite decline. His film *Naïs,* an adaptation from Zola released after the Liberation, was below average in quality.

His last work, *La Belle Meunière,* is a fictional version of the life of Schubert, interesting only because it experimented with

the new, still imperfect, French color process, *routcolor*. About the film itself the less said the better, for it is totally without merit.

Julien Duvivier reopened his French career with *Panique,* which was well performed by the excellent actors Michel Simon and Viviane Romance. But the script, the story of a man unjustly accused of murder and lynched, is conventional. It would be difficult, indeed, to count such a film among the achievements of the maker of *Pépé le moko, La Belle Equipe,* and *Carnet de bal.*

Among those who proved themselves during the Occupation, Jean Grémillon is certainly one of the most effective and talented. He first appeared in the ranks of the avant-garde soon after 1925, but after one or two commercial failures he was constrained to direct films unworthy of his considerable ability.

On the eve of the war, Jean Grémillon again attracted attention with his *L'Etrange Monsieur Victor,* magnificently played by Raimu, and *Remorques,* a film that was to star Jean Gabin and Michèle Morgan. He was prevented from completing the latter by the opening of hostilities.

After the success he achieved under the Occupation with *Lumière d'été* and *Le Ciel est à vous,* Jean Grémillon undertook a project with a wide social canvas: *Le Massacre des innocents,* a story of France between 1935 and 1945. The plans did not go through. He then prepared, under the sponsorship of the French government, *Le Printemps de la liberté,* in commemoration of the Revolution of 1848. Just as the shooting was about to start, the government withdrew its promised support and the film could not be made. This is to be much regretted, for the script, which has been published, proves that *Le Printemps de la liberté* would certainly have been one of the best postwar French films.

After this setback, Jean Grémillon directed a script by the dramatist Jean Anouilh, *Pattes blanches,* which was released in France in April, 1949. Here, Grémillon demonstrated full mastery of his talents. He was able to give vivid reality to a story set in a small town in Brittany which opposes a ruined young man, a

fishmonger in love, a forlorn girl, a disinherited bastard, and a hunchbacked inn servant. Thanks to Grémillon and his actors, these characters became believable and gripping. But inadequacies in the screenplay are evident, despite the dramatic talent of Jean Anouilh.

Jacques Becker, who became famous with *Goupi Mains Rouges,* was for many years Jean Renoir's assistant. But the disciple has shown great individuality. *Falbalas,* which he directed in the last months of the Occupation, is a brilliant painting of the milieu of Parisian *haute-couture.* But *Falbalas* did not reach the high perfection of *Antoine and Antoinette,* a chronicle of the everyday life of Parisian workmen, whose simplicity of tone and uncompromising rejection of customary dramatic devices cannot but bring to mind the best films of the young Italian school. Jean Grémillon and Jacques Becker are among the best representatives of the realistic French school, along with Georges Rouquier, René Clément, and Louis Daquin.

Georges Rouquier presented in *Farrebique* a picture, at once homely and lyrical, of the daily life of peasants in southern France. This full-length film owes much to *Nanook* and *Moana,* but Georges Rouquier's special merit consists in having portrayed men in their everyday struggle with nature not under exotic skies but in the setting he knows most intimately. The inhabitants of the farm seen in *Farrebique,* acted by themselves, are close relatives of Rouquier.

René Clément, who worked as a technical director on Cocteau's fantasy, *La Belle et la bête,* and on Noël-Noël's comedy, *Le Père tranquille,* worked independently as the director of *Les Maudits,* a story of a group of Nazis and collaborationists who take refuge in a submarine and roam all over the world in search of a safe place to land. In spite of the somewhat awkward, melodramatic plot, the direction and the performances were outstanding. Clément has not directed another film since *Les Maudits,* nor has Georges Rouquier since *Farrebique,* completed in 1946.

Louis Daquin's career began under the Occupation with a picture full of charm and freshness, *Nous les gosses,* but his following films were disappointing. He has recently reaffirmed a real mastery of the medium in *Le Point du jour,* which is a picture of a miner's life in the collieries of northern France. Vladimir Pozner wrote a simple and straightforward script for this striking film, the outstanding French production of the 1948–49 season.

Because of Becker, Rouquier, Clément, and Daquin, one may speak of a realistic French school. Following the tradition created before the war by Jean Renoir, in particular, it might rival the new Italian school, if its representatives had more frequent opportunities to direct films.

H. G. Clouzot is one of the figures in French cinema upon whom the highest hopes are based. His talent proved itself under the Occupation with *Le Corbeau.* The sharp controversy stimulated by the film was constructive rather than destructive to a director of such great talent as Clouzot. In 1947 he won great success with *Quai des orfèvres,* a trite enough detective story which was invested with unquestionable value by the remarkable performance of Jouvet and the great plastic sense of the director. *Manon,* which Clouzot finished early in 1949, was awaited hopefully. The script of the film, written by Clouzot himself, was a free transposition in modern terms of the well-known eighteenth-century novel by the Abbé Prévost.

Excellent performances were given by Michel Auclair and Cecile Aubry, a young actress whose talent has earned her a contract in Hollywood.

Unhappily, Clouzot demonstrated in *Manon* that he was not able to cope with large-scale social problems as Renoir did before the war and as the new Italian school does today. A certain extreme romanticism, a complacence with abstractions at points where representing reality directly was called for, a misuse of borrowings from the great film classics, numerous improbabilities, and errors in taste disappointed the most faithful of Clouzot's admirers.

Nevertheless the film was well received and has become a popular success.

In the naturalistic and readily pessimistic genre, which Clouzot favors, Yves Allegret, brother of the already well-known Marc Allegret, has directed *Dédée d'Anvers* and *Une si jolie petit plage.* This skillful and talented director makes the mistake of basing his work too faithfully on the themes, the characters, and even the bad habits of the prewar French school. One is still waiting for him to produce a truly original work that will go beyond the average successful film.

The work of Claude Autant-Lara also belongs in the category of naturalistic films. Like Grémillon, he is an old member of the avant-garde of 1925 who was restricted for a long time to directing films unworthy of his talent. He was recognized under the Occupation with the release of *Le Mariage de chiffon* and, especially, *Douce,* a conventional enough novel out of which Pierre Bost and Jean Aurenche developed an excellent script.

In 1947, with the same collaborators, Claude Autant-Lara adapted a novel by Raymond Radiguet, *Le Diable au corps,* which had been popular during the First World War. This was a polished work in which Autant-Lara ably directed his talented young actors, one of whom, Gérard Philippe, became a new European sensation. The superior quality and values of *Le Diable au corps* are beyond question.

During the Occupation, poetic and fantastic films had been almost obligatory for directors who did not want to deal with reality as it existed under German control. This genre now seems to be disappearing. Its last expression was Jean Cocteau's brilliant, glacial *La Belle et la bête.* He tried vainly to repeat its success with *Ruy Blas* and *L'Aigle à deux têtes.* However, by filming his best stage play, *Les Parents terribles,* Cocteau accomplished a remarkable technical feat and produced his best film.

To make our enumeration exhaustive we shall name the often uneven work of talented and prolific directors such as Jean Delan-

noy (*La Symphonie pastorale, Aux yeux du souvenir*) and Christian Jaque (*Boule de suif, D'Homme à hommes*).

The French documentary school, in spite of serious difficulties, continues to produce interesting films, among which have been *Van Gogh* by Alain Resnais, *Goemons* by Anik Bellon, and *Naissance du cinéma* by Roger Leenhardt, who produced the wholly fresh and commendable film, *Les Dernières Vacances.* To the French documentary school may be added the poetic *Noces de sable* made in Morocco by Andrès Zvoboda, and *Paris 1900* by Nicole Vedres, who succeeded in arranging scattered pieces of pre-1914 film into a sly and charming montage.

Talent is not scarce in the French cinema. Perhaps the assessment must be that the school, in spite of its numerous and brilliant successes, has remained on a plateau for several years and no longer has the richness and youth that it had before 1940. Perhaps the judgment will be that the direct and poetic contact with reality that earlier French films always had has been replaced by a complacent self-indulgence in old formulas and a certain academicism.

Nevertheless, we do not believe that the slight hesitation that marks the French school today is due basically to lack of initiative or talent among its film makers. It is, in large measure, the present economic difficulties that limit initiative and narrow the choice of subjects and oblige film makers to return to old subjects rather than seek new and original themes in the life around them.

The vitality of French cinema is incontestable. For fifteen years it has managed to keep alive in spite of the deaths, absences, departures, or exile, of its best practitioners. We believe that, thanks to its rich resources of talent, the French school will continue to be one of the foremost among the various national cinemas for a very long time to come.

Film in Egypt

FARID EL-MAZZAOUI

FARID EL-MAZZAOUI is a new young Egyptian director. He has studied mechanical engineering in London, and law and film direction in Paris.

In 1948 the Egyptian film industry attained its majority. In 1927 one feature picture was produced; the yearly average is now fifty. Since little except an occasional paragraph has been written about our industry, it may come as something of a surprise that we have nine well-equipped studios employing ten thousand persons organized in four syndicates—technicians, actors, musicians, and craftsmen.

Although films were shown as early as 1896 and shorts were made as early as 1915,[1] the history of our production does not properly begin until 1927 with the production of *Laila,* directed by the late Ahmed Galal and produced by the stage actress Aziza Emir. Since there was no studio, the entire film was shot on location. The success of this first venture stimulated Miss Assia Dagher to produce and star in another feature film in 1928. This film was also directed by Ahmed Galal. In the same year, Miss Fatma Rouchdi produced a third film. These three women were the real pioneers of our film industry. Miss Dagher is now head of the Lotus Film Company, and Aziza Emir heads the Isis Film Company.

An attempt was made to introduce sound in 1929 with the film *Moonlight,* directed by Mr. Shoukri Madi. Its sound was recorded in Egypt on phonograph records. This picture was a commercial failure. The first sound recorded on film came in 1931 with two films, *Song of the Heart* directed by M. Volpi and *Sons of Nobility* directed by Mohamed Karim. These pictures were shot and re-

[1] 1915: *The Entrance of the Theater,* showing the owner sitting at the theater door, smoking his narghile and welcoming his patrons. 1917: *Deadly Flowers* and *Bedouin Honor,* shorts directed by Mohamed Karim. 1918: *Madame Loretta,* one-reeler. 1922: *The Enchanted Ring,* one-reeler. 1923: *The American Aunt,* one-reeler.

corded at the Gaumont and Eclair studios in Paris. For the next few years, it was a common practice to shoot films in Egypt and postsynchronize them in Paris.

In 1932, Mohsen Sabu, an electrical engineer, built a recorder that was fairly successful in recording sound on film. Three years later, Studio Misr was built. Its up-to-date equipment made it possible for our technicians to shoot and record their films entirely in Egypt.

With the advent of sound, our film industry developed rapidly. Egyptian cinemagoers did not understand the early American talkies and found them tiresome. They demanded dialogue in Arabic, not English, and content of a kind they did not find in foreign films—Egyptian and Arab tales, Oriental songs, dances, and music. Our love for this kind of entertainment still affects the structure of our films. Producers go to great lengths to introduce songs and dances into comedies and dramatic films. The star may express his reactions to a situation in song. Dances are introduced to entertain the characters in the story and thus, indirectly, the audience of the film. Happily, a great number of our younger directors resist this tradition and are making films of modern conception dealing with our social life and its problems.

Our early films were mostly farces and buffooneries. The charter of "Mr. Bahbah," played by the late Fawzi El-Gazaierly in a series of films directed by his son Fouad, was very popular. Important also among the early films was *The White Rose* (1934), directed by Mohamed Karim and starring Mohamed Abdel Wahab, the most popular singer of the Orient, and *Lashine* (1938), directed by Fritz Kramp, the first attempt to introduce an Arabic tale to the screen. Important directors of the earlier period were Togo Mizrahi, who specialized in light comedies, Ibrahim Lama, whose forte was "westerns," and Ahmed Galal, who directed a dozen social dramas.

El Azima (*The Will*), directed by the late Kamal Selim, marks the beginning of a new era in our films. It deals with a strike among

graduates of the High Institute of Commerce. For the first time, a story was presented as a story, without the usual songs and dances interpolated for the sake of popularity. This film, the first work of Kamal Selim, was a big success. An even greater success was scored by Henry Barakat's *My Father's Sin* in 1945.

Other young directors arose and followed the example of these pioneers in the development of the serious film. Among them may be named the following, with an example of the work of each one: Ahmed Badrakhan, *Youthful Success* (1941); Hussein Fawzi, *I Like Mistakes* (1942); Abdel Fattah Hassan, *Love from Heaven* (1943); Gamal Madkour, *First Love* (1944); Ahmed Salem, *Forgotten Past* (1945); Niazi Moustapha, *Antar and Abla* (1945); Kamel El Telmessani, *The Black Market* (1946); Omar Gomei, *The Mother* (1946); Ahmed K. Moursi, *The Public Prosecutor* (1947); Salah Abou Seif, *The Revenger* (1947); Anwar Wagdi, *Amber* (1948); Hassan El Imam, *The Two Orphans* (1948); Helmi Rafla, *Hoda* (1949).

Furthermore, our older directors kept pace with the improved methods of these innovators and gave us many outstanding features. Mr. Youssef Bey Wahby, playwright, director, and star of the stage, chose the best from among his sixty-three plays and adapted them for the screen, usually playing in them and directing them himself. His biggest successes have been *Diamond* (1943), *Love and Revenge* (1944), *A Candle Burns* (1945), and *Singer of the Valley* (1946). He is now shooting a screen version of his stage success, *Confessional Secret*. The late Ahmed Galal directed *Rabab* in 1943 and *It Was an Angel* in 1947, both thoroughly modern in style. *The Lady of the Camellias* (1942) was directed by Togo Mizrahi.

Early in 1946, Studio Misr created a department under the management of director Saad Nadim for the production of shorts of every kind—entertainment, educational, and industrial. The studio imported a 16-mm. camera and set up a laboratory for processing the film. Among the best of its recent documentary films are

Arabian Horses, Cholera, and *Pyramids of Egypt,* which was presented at the Cannes Festival in 1947. The Egyptian government entered this field in the second half of 1948 with such educational films as *The Farmer, Social Life, The Workman,* and *The Good Citizen.* Recently, many industrial firms have contracted for publicity films. Studio Misr in coöperation with the government issues a monthly news reel, which will become weekly very soon.

It is to be hoped that there will be an increase in the number of shorts produced. Many young technicians have returned from abroad, where they have been studying motion picture technique, and our High Institute of Dramatic Art has graduated a number of talented young players; these young people need the experience to be gained by producing and playing in short films as an apprenticeship for more important work.

Our first films were shot in the open air by sunlight without benefit of a studio. The clear skies and brilliant sun have always been and still are a great help to our industry. We can shoot on location at any season of the year all day long. This is why our studios, new or old, reserve acres of land adjacent to the stages on which to build large sets for day or night shooting.

In 1929 three studios were established at Alexandria. Each consisted of a villa with a great garden; the garden was the stage and the villa housed offices, dressing rooms, make-up department, and other facilities. Later, at Cairo, other studios, including Katsaros and Roxy, were set up in converted shops, garages, or theaters. In 1934 the first true studio was built by Youssef bey Wahby. In 1937 he built a newer studio called the Studio Wahby near the pyramids of Giza, and the director Togo Mizrahi built a studio near by. Although these three initial studios are not in operation at present, they centralized the film industry, so that today Giza-Pyramids bears the same relationship to Cairo that Hollywood bears to Los Angeles.

Eight studios are in operation near Cairo and one in Alexandria at the present time. They provide a total of eighteen soundproof

stages. The stages are relatively small, but each studio has a large "back lot" for outdoor sets. The most important studio is Studio Misr, with three sound stages and a large recording stage. It is equipped with Mitchell cameras and Western Electric sound. It has a mill, workshops for carpenters, plasterers, and painters, and well-furnished grip and property departments. Studio Nahas is the most recently constructed and best equipped of the eight. It has modern equipment imported from the United States, the largest single stage, modern dressing rooms, and suites for stars, as well as the usual workshops.[2]

In addition to the producing companies that use their own studios, we have a number of independent companies such as Isis Films, Lotus Films, Mohamed Fawzi Films, United Films, and Arabic Films, each averaging three productions annually. They rent space in the various studios as it becomes available.

Our films are usually shot on one stage with a schedule of about six weeks and a budget of $100,000, though triple this amount may be spent on outstanding films such as *I Am Not an Angel* or *Fatma,* which starred the outstanding male and female singing stars of Egypt. Budgets are severely limited by the seating capacity of the theaters in the Arabic-speaking world. Egypt has nearly two hundred and fifty theaters, with a total seating capacity of 125,000, an average of one seat to 150 inhabitants. The other Arabic-speaking countries have approximately the same average seating capacity. With the exception of a few theaters in Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said, and other large Middle Eastern cities, our movie houses are devoted wholly to films in Arabic, which draw much larger audiences than foreign films. A picture like *The Lady of the Camellias* had a run of seventeen weeks, whereas the biggest American box-office hit, *Bathing Beauty,* ran only five weeks. All

[2] The other studios in Cairo are Pyramids Studio, Studio Galal, Studio Lama, Studio Choubrah, Studio Nassibian, and Studio Goudsouzian, a very small studio specializing in 16-mm. industrial and educational films. Cairo also has three processing laboratories: Cairo Lab, Diradour Lab, Kodak Lab, and Kerame, 16-mm. laboratory. Another one-stage studio, "Studio Ramy," has recently been erected in Alexandria, two hundred miles from Cairo.

foreign films have superimposed titles in French and Arabic. Dubbing Arabic dialogue to foreign films is limited by the government to three feature films a year as a protection to the native industry.[3] It should be added that it is difficult to match Arabic words to the lip movements of English speech. *The Thief of Bagdad* was not the box-office success that had been hoped for, largely because of the dubbing.

Distribution of films is handled for the most part by the producers themselves. Behna Films distributes the product of more than twenty independents and Al Film Al Masri operates on a somewhat smaller scale. Distribution in Middle Eastern countries is in the hands of local distributors who contract with Egyptian distributors or with the producers directly.

All films, local or foreign, must be submitted before exhibition to the Board of State Censors. This board was set up by the Ministry of Social Affairs, which has published censorship regulations similar to the production code of the United States' M.P.P.A. The board delegates one of its members to view pictures, and in doubtful cases the full board sits in judgment. Films passed by the Board of State Censors are presumed to be suitable for all groups, no distinction being made, unfortunately, between films acceptable for adults only and those acceptable for all age groups.

The future of our film industry seems promising. Many graduate students have been sent abroad to study motion pictures and to gain experience in foreign studios. Our High Institute of Dramatic Art is developing talented young people for the stage and screen, and the government considers establishing an institute for film technicians. As a leading Arab country, Egypt intends to produce films of high technical and artistic standards.

[3] "Two-version" production of feature films was introduced in 1949. Owing to the fact that foreign words cannot be matched in dubbing with Arabic words, it has been found preferable to retake each scene in the course of shooting the film, the actors speaking Arabic in one take, another language in the second. It is very easy, in Egypt, to find actors who speak two languages. Two Italian directors of Egyptian birth, G. Alessandrini and C. Vernucci, have directed two-version films here: the first, the film *Amina* in Arabic and French versions; the second, the film *Woman of Fire* in Arabic and Italian. In addition, Salah Abou Seif is now directing a two-version film in Italy with a cast including Italians and Egyptians.

The British Cinema Audience, 1949

MARK ABRAMS

MARK ABRAMS, Managing Director of Research Services, Ltd., in London, contributed an analysis of an earlier survey of the British cinema audience to Vol. III, No. 2, of the *Hollywood Quarterly*.

THE GOVERNMENT'S annual White Paper on National Income and Expenditure provides each year a reliable figure for the amount spent in the United Kingdom on cinemagoing and the relation between this and other forms of expenditure. In the first full year of peace, 1946, cinema audiences spent the record sum of $484,000,000;[1] in 1947 (a year which saw a winter fuel crisis, a catastrophic experiment with sterling convertibility, and the near-exhaustion of the American and Canadian loans to Britain), the public cut back its cinema expenditure to $432,000,000. And for 1948 the total at $448,000,000 was still well below the earlier peak.

Moreover, during the same three years total personal expenditure on all consumers' goods and services was rising steadily and thus the share going to cinema box offices declined each year.

This absolute and relative decline in cinema prosperity was not shared by what might be considered competitive outlets for relaxation expenditure. Other forms of commercial entertainment at least held their own, and the amounts spent on liquor and tobacco showed considerable expansion. See table 1 (p. 252).

In addition to these official figures we now have the results of the annual surveys of the British cinema audience conducted in the past three years by Hulton Publications. The first of these surveys was carried out in 1947. The interviewing occupied four months, January to April, and a sample of 10,200 men and women representative of the total population aged sixteen and over was interviewed. In 1948 and 1949 the field work occupied the same

[1] The dollar values in this article were worked out at the rate of $\$4 = £1$, not at the rate of $\$2.80 = £1$ established in September, 1949.

period of time but the size of the sample was increased to 13,000.

The results of the 1949 survey show that in an average week the 37,000,000 civilian adults[2] in Great Britain buy 24,000,000 tickets at the box offices of Britain's 4,725 cinema houses. This means that the average cinema is taking $1,820 a week, and selling 5,900 admission tickets at an average price of 30 cents.[3]

Who are the adults who buy these 24,000,000 tickets each week? According to the 1949 survey, the tickets are bought by less than

TABLE 1

Consumer expenditures	1946		1947		1948	
	Millions of dollars	Per cent	Millions of dollars	Per cent	Millions of dollars	Per cent
Total expenditures.....	26,964	100.0	29,860	100.0	32,016	100.0
On cinemas.....	484	1.8	432	1.4	448	1.4
On other entertainments...	248	0.9	264	0.9	272	0.9
On alcoholic drink.....	2,712	10.1	2,712	9.1	3,048	9.5
On cigarettes, tobacco.....	2,412	8.9	2,760	9.2	3,088	9.6

half the adults in the country—by only 18,000,000 out of the total adult population of 37,000,000. In an average week more than half the adults in the country do not go to a movie. On the other hand, one adult in every six goes at least twice a week and these addicts account for just over half of all the tickets sold weekly.

How often do British adults go to the cinema? What the 1949 Hulton Survey has to say is presented in table 2.

Thus, for 40 per cent of the adult population, going to the movies is a regular item in the weekly schedule of relaxation; for another 42 per cent it is very much an exception; and for a final 17 per cent the cinema is still part of an unknown world.

The figures show no appreciable differences in the moviegoing habits of men and of women; the really striking contrasts are those between the rich and the poor, and the old and the young; the

[2] Adults are here defined as persons aged sixteen or over.

[3] These figures for the average week of the average cinema include an allowance for 4,000,000 tickets sold each week to children under sixteen years of age.

working class and the young and unmarried provide far and away the greater part of the money going into the box offices.

The survey divided the population into three main economic groups: upper, middle, and lower.[4] Their moviegoing habits are not identical. The typical member of the higher income group is apparently satisfied if he gets to the movies once every two or three weeks. The appetite of the average worker is more voracious. In the lower income group there is admittedly a small section which,

TABLE 2

Frequency of cinema visits	Per cent of adult population	Per cent of adult males	Per cent of adult females
Twice a week, or more	17	18	16
Once a week	24	22	25
Once or twice a month	16	15	16
Three or four times a year	26	25	28
Never	17	20	15
Total	100	100	100

mainly because of old age or poverty, never goes to the movies; but apart from these stay-at-homes the working classes flock to the movies with such avidity that they account for 75 per cent of the average audience. See table 3 (p. 254).

Even more interesting are the results of the survey dealing with the habits of the various age groups. Among the youngest adults, those less than twenty-five years of age and mainly unmarried boys and girls living at home with their parents, the cinema is a weekly "must." For those adults, however, who have passed their mid-forties the figures are very different. Either they have outgrown the movies or they have never gotten used to them, or they are too busy—whatever the reason, more than half of them go to a movie less often than once a month. See table 4 (p. 254).

[4] Upper—persons living in households where the head of the family earns more than $2,600 per annum; this group forms 13.4 per cent of the population. Middle—persons living in households where the head of the family earns between $1,600 and $2,600; 20.6 per cent of the population. Lower—persons living in households where the head of the family earns less than $1,600; 66.0 per cent of the population.

So far, we have looked at the moviegoing habits of particular age groups and particular income groups. We have seen that the most striking contrast is between the young and the old. What this amounts to, from the point of view of those who make and sell films, is that there is not one adult population; there are three—the 15,000,000 who go to the cinema frequently (once a week or more),

TABLE 3

Frequency of cinema visits	Upper	Middle	Lower
	per cent	*per cent*	*per cent*
Twice a week, or more	8	13	19
Once a week	20	24	24
Once or twice a month	23	18	14
Three or four times a year	34	31	24
Never	15	14	19
Total	100	100	100

TABLE 4

Frequency of cinema visits	Age group			
	16–24	25–34	35–44	45+
	per cent	*per cent*	*per cent*	*per cent*
Twice a week, or more	40	18	14	9
Once a week	32	32	25	17
Once or twice a month	15	19	17	14
Three or four times a year	10	22	30	32
Never	3	9	14	28
Total	100	100	100	100

the 15,500,000 who go occasionally (less than once a week), and the 6,500,000 who never go. The most distinctive mark of these three populations is their age composition. The "frequent patrons" population is outstandingly young; half of them are less than thirty-five years of age. At the other extreme, the nonpatrons, we find that three out of every four are more than forty-four years of age. See table 5.

When the results of the three annual surveys—1947, 1948,

1949—are compared, two main conclusions stand out. The decline in cinemagoing over the past three years has not disturbed the fundamental structure of the cinema audience. Each year, the total weekly sales of tickets are provided, in any one week, by only

TABLE 5

Age group	Frequent patrons	Occasional patrons	Nonpatrons
	per cent	*per cent*	*per cent*
16–24	26	9	2
25–34	24	19	10
35–44	20	23	16
45 and over	30	49	72
Total	100	100	100

half the adults in the country; the fan population (those who go at least once a week) retains its slight preponderance of women, its heavy working-class bias, and its very strong "youth" bias—today, as in 1947, half of the fans are less than thirty-five years of age.

The second main conclusion is that all sections of the community have contributed to the decline. In 1947 an adult population of 36,000,000 bought 26,000,000 tickets weekly; today the number of adults has risen to 37,000,000 and the weekly sales of tickets have fallen to 24,000,000. In every group there has been a slight slipping in cinema attendances: both men and women go a little less frequently, both middle class and working class, both young and old. The cinema seems to have reached its saturation point in 1946.

Television in Relation to Other Media and Recreation in American Life

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ANYONE who is to discuss the relation of television to other media and recreation in American life has a choice of two approaches: he can discuss it in terms of the policy questions which arise as the arts of communication are developed, or he can approach it as a social scientist. I have chosen the second approach for this paper. It is not that I am reluctant to deal with controversial policy issues. I simply believe that in the long run the contribution to be sought from the social sciences is fundamental to a wise solution of the policy problems.

The other media considered include newspapers, magazines, and books as well as motion pictures and radio, and recreation is taken to mean the use of nonworking time for purposes which serve the needs of the individual's personality. Recreation would embrace activities as diverse as whittling, conversing, gambling, or activity on behalf of church, social group, or political party; in fact, simply "setting," as when one sits on the porch and reflects in silence, may fall within the scope of recreation. All structured use of leisure time is thus recreation. Whether the use of leisure time is socially or individually "beneficial" is a separate and ultimately more important question. The hope that the social attitudes of the American people shall mature fast enough to catch up with the maturity of our physical science, with its capacity for production and destruction, may spur our inquiry. For clarity of thought, however, ethical and social evaluation should be distinguished from diagnosis.

We should note at the outset that the effects of television will

be quite different in families with an urban culture and in those with a rural culture. Their interests, their personal and group behavior patterns, as well as their scales of values, are still quite different. Of course, it goes without elaboration that the significance of this factor will be modified to the extent that migration and travel result in greater uniformity in culture patterns throughout the whole population.

I heartily applaud the researchers who have already begun to work in the field of television's effects; but without detracting from the skill and effort they have put forth, I may remark that studies thus far carried out provide little evidence that bears conclusively on the long-run effects of television on leisure-time activities. The television homes today are only about 3 per cent of the potential of some 38,000,000. And the reactions of the remaining 97 per cent may well be different from those of the 3 per cent who are most willing and able to buy television sets. Also to be remembered is the fact that the art of television programming is still young, and it may be expected that television content ten years from now may have effects substantially different from those of present programs. These limitations on the meaning of the results of research now available are less serious, however, than a third limitation.

It is relatively easy and inexpensive to find out how much less families with television will be exposed to advertising in any other medium. But little will be known about the potential effect of television on its viewers until their needs, interests, character, and personality are studied by the intensive—and expensive—techniques used by psychologists. Genuine depth must be penetrated in studies of television's effects. Intensive studies done with the collaboration of psychologists and sociologists are needed if we are to explore the possible effects of passive "addiction" to television on the capacity of the individual to exercise his own whole personality. Such a "task force" approach is also necessary if we are to learn the significance of television for the healthy functioning

of social, political, and religious groups at all levels in our society. For example, television applied to political conventions raises many interesting questions. What becomes of the function of the local unit of political party organization in formulating and expressing the party program? If the national convention takes on the aspect of a television show, with a script, gags, visual values, and personalities, administered from the top to make the program for all local units, what becomes of our traditional conception of democracy? If television should become as potent a medium for mass communication as we are coming to think it may be, it is of prime importance to organize teams of social scientists to examine its effects and its implications.

We should have more information on the use of time. Intensive studies, even of very small numbers of people, are badly needed. E. L. Thorndike reports[1] on one such study, but its data were collected seventeen years ago and even then were fragmentary. How much time is given to recreation, as compared with sleep and work, for example, is a question which needs exploration quantitatively. What personality needs are satisfied by different forms of recreation, and why? How elastic is the amount of leisure time given to specific forms of recreation in families of varying size, income, education, and occupation, in rural and in urban areas?

In the absence of such studies, we must make what we can of data derived from studies that imply something or other about the use of leisure time. Offhand, three such levels of study occur to me. We have some studies which are essentially popularity contests for various ways of spending leisure. These tell us little.

A second level of study of leisure-time activities is quantitative measurement of particular activities in terms of numbers of units of consumption, such as so many movies seen or so many books read. These studies might be oriented more toward understanding the consumer and less toward comparing how a few selected media of communication, or other products, are used.

[1] *Human Nature and the Social Order*, 1940, pp. 121 ff.

A third level of study is the team research to which I have already referred. Without in any way attempting to prejudge the results of team research, I should like to suggest an economist's approach to its problems. On this level we are interested in what we can learn about families' recreational activities and interests from studying the pattern of their expenditures on various goods and services used in living. Since television sets still cost a fairly large sum, their purchase and upkeep directly change consumer expenditure patterns, and their use involves many secondary changes, too.

Consumer expenditure patterns show wide differences as between urban and rural populations. Thus, whereas food expenditures in proportion to total expenditures in 1941 were much higher on farms than in cities, expenditures for recreation, reading, education, liquor, and charities were much lower.[2] If we take the urban consumers alone, interesting results come from studying the proportion of their total disbursements which goes for various types of recreation. Different kinds of recreation follow different patterns in relation to the level of income. We may group under the heading of "participant," or "active," recreation all expenditures on games, sports equipment, musical instruments, photographic equipment, reading, education, travel, telephone, postage, stationery, club dues, contributions to charities, and expenditures on pets, children's toys, and entertainment. The proportion of the total cost of these participant recreations to all disbursements rises steadily and sharply from 6 per cent for the lowest income group to 24 per cent for the highest. The enjoyment of participant recreation is associated with relatively more spendable income, more education, and leisure for wider cultural activities. They are in effect, activities not generally required according to the mores of American life.

In striking contrast to the foregoing is the expenditure pattern

[2] Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Family Spending and Saving in Wartime,* Bulletin 822, 1945. The expenditure analysis in this paper is based on this bulletin.

for what I have called the "passive" recreational pursuits. We might group together expenditures for movies, sports, and other paid-admission events, radios, phonographs, tobacco, alcoholic drinks, and food away from home. Their total fluctuates between 6 per cent and 11 per cent, with no consistent relation to income level except at the very bottom of the range. The contrast is remarkable. Whereas the percentage of disbursements for active recreation in the highest income class was about six times as large as in the lowest income class, the percentage for passive recreation at its peak is less than twice as high as in the lowest income class. This suggests the degree to which the passive (or "spectator") activities are accepted by the mores of the American people as "necessary" irrespective of the income level.

Of course, disbursements for some active recreations vary less than others in relation to income. Thus, reading and education, together, are as inelastic as the passive activities, with the highest proportion of expenditure on them being only twice as high as the lowest. Communications (telephone, postage, etc.) are even less elastic, the highest proportion being only half again as large as the lowest. Travel, although here classed as active recreation, is also inelastic, the highest percentage being a little more than twice the lowest. These three spheres of active recreation—reading, communication, and travel—are obviously akin to the passive uses of leisure in being so imbedded in the American standard of living as to be virtual necessities at any income level. The remaining active recreational pursuits are extremely elastic. Of these, the organizational expenditures (on charities, clubs, etc.) of the high-income families are fourteen times as great as those of the low. Home-relations expenditures (entertaining, pets, etc.) are next in elasticity, followed by skilled activities.

In considering the effects of television on these patterns of expenditure, we must remember many subtle relations if further analysis is to be significant. Thus, promotional efforts on behalf of another recreational activity may actually offset the competitive

inroads of television. To the degree that other commercial forms of recreation compete effectively with television they may hold their own, and pyramid the diversionary effect of television upon nonrecreational spending, that is, expenditures on food, clothing, and shelter. In terms of time, rather than money, the pyramiding effect may diminish the noncommercialized forms of recreation, of which conversation and reflection are the most obvious examples.

Not to be overlooked as we orient ourselves within this problem are the large factors of the level of employment and national income. So long as television develops on the basis of advertising support, it may benefit at the expense of competing forms of recreation because of the economic fiction that it is "free" to the viewer. This competitive advantage increases in importance as unemployment grows and income falls, so far as homes are already equipped with television sets. Under those conditions, with the family's capital already committed to television, its use requires only the added out-of-pocket costs of power and maintenance. Television will benefit from the fact that neither of these kinds of cost is associated with units of consumption in the direct fashion that motion picture or magazine prices are attached to each unit.

Lastly, I should suggest that the increasing mechanization of industry and rising productivity are clearly basic, long-run factors operating to increase the amount of income and time available for recreation. Also important in the long-run evaluation of the effects of television is the fact that, as the century rolls along, the proportion of older persons in the American population will rise. This fact has many subtle implications, one of which is that the recreational tastes of older people traditionally favor the more passive as against the more active forms of recreation.

Theater Television Today (Part II)

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VI. Radio Frequencies for Theater Television

As we have seen in Part I of this paper, radio frequencies may be expected to constitute an integral part of a theater television system under present conditions. Remote pickups of sports and news events are dependent upon microwave frequencies, since only by using radio relay can theater television pickup units get the necessary mobility and flexibility. Multiple addressee systems for simultaneous distribution of programs to numerous theaters could use coaxial cables or even paired telephone wires, but there is no assurance that the telephone company will be in a position to furnish these services, or that the rates for the service would be within reach of potential theater television systems. It is also possible that theater television will consider the establishment of an intercity relay system using radio.

Under the Communications Act, the use of radio frequencies by theater television or by any other nongovernmental service must be preceded, first, by the F.C.C.'s *allocating* a frequency band or bands for the use of theater television; second, by the F.C.C.'s *promulgating* rules and regulations governing the assignment of the allocated frequencies and their use by individuals or organizations within the service; and third, by the F.C.C.'s *assigning* the frequencies within the general band allocated to theater television to licensees, upon proper application.

Theater television has never jumped the first hurdle. It has

never obtained an allocation of frequencies by the F.C.C. for other than experimental use. At present, no frequencies are even available, under the F.C.C. allocation table and rules, for experimental use in developing theater television, except the 475–890 megacycle band (UHF) which is earmarked for television broadcasting, and the frequency bands from 16,000 to 18,000 megacycles and from 26,000 to 30,000 megacycles, for which no equipment is available for the purpose of theater television relays. The five theater television allocations now in existence (four of which are held by Paramount Pictures, Inc., and one by 20th Century–Fox) are special, solely experimental, temporary authorizations (STA$_s$), issued for ninety-day periods, and terminable by the F.C.C. without advance notice. They are frequencies allocated either to the use of television broadcast stations, not to theater television, a distinct and separate service, or to various nonbroadcast services. Theater television cannot expect to use these frequencies for regular service.

The motion picture industry since 1944 has made sporadic efforts to obtain an F.C.C. allocation of relay frequencies to theater television. The first such bid, spearheaded by Paul J. Larsen on behalf of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, was made at the general allocation hearings held in the fall of 1944 and in the spring of 1945 when the end of the war was in sight.

The general allocation hearing (F.C.C. Docket 6651) covering the "Allocation of Frequencies in the Radio Spectrum from 10 Kilocycles to 30,000,000 Kilocycles" was an open invitation to all who desired to obtain new frequencies or the recognition of new radio services to come before the F.C.C. and present their cases. The hearing was the greatest in scope ever held by the F.C.C. or its predecessor the Federal Radio Commission. Two hundred and twenty-three witnesses, aside from F.C.C. staff members, appeared and testified. Claims for frequencies were presented by some thirty services, including many new radio services. One witness, Mr. Larsen, appeared for theater television. It is interesting

to note that twenty-six witnesses appeared for television broadcast, twenty-two for forestry and conservation radio services, seventeen for police radio, and twelve for commercial FM broadcasting.

Mr. Larsen, on behalf of the S.M.P.E., requested an allocation of 1,500 megacycles in 20-megacycle-wide channels in the radio spectrum between 300 and 6,300 megacycles for the "immediately necessary postwar theater television service." This recommendation was keyed to the situation in New York City, where, Mr. Larsen stated, twenty-five independent producing and exhibiting agencies might compete in the theater television service. For the initial period, however, he assumed that fifteen of these agencies should be provided with frequencies, including for each of the fifteen one remote pickup channel, one studio-transmitter channel, one multiple addressee channel, and one intercity-relay channel. He took the position that coaxial cable and wire facilities were not sufficient for the multiple addressee system since channels 20 to 60 megacycles wide would be required and only four megacycles were available on the coaxial cable. He presented the argument that, in view of the relative size and importance of the motion picture industry ($1,600,000,000 gross income compared with $280,000,000 gross income for the broadcast industry), theater television should be treated on a "parity of opportunity" with radio broadcasting. By this phrase he means an "equality of opportunity to develop both arts" giving each "equal opportunity to experiment, to commercialize, to improve, and to expand to its proper and demonstrable limits."

In its final report of May 25, 1945, in the general allocation hearing, the F.C.C. allocated certain frequency bands to theater television on a shared basis with other services for experimental use only. It made no exclusive allocation to theater television. The bands on which experimental theater television were permitted included the 480- to 920-megacycle band (on which experimentation with multiple addressee systems was permitted), subject to the understanding "that the band 480 to 920 megacycles

will be used primarily for television broadcasting to the public, with higher frequencies being more properly utilized by theater television and relay operation." In addition, the following bands, allocated to the Fixed and Mobile service, were made "available for theater television experimental use, including multiple address purposes if the need for such use can be established": 1,325–1,375, 1,750–2,100, 2,450–2,700, 3,900–4,400, 5,650–7,050, 10,500–13,000, 16,000–18,000, and 26,000–30,000 megacycles. The F.C.C.'s final report thus opened the door for theater television experimentation in a large part of the radio spectrum. As a practical matter, however, equipment is available for radio relay only on the frequencies up to the 7,000-megacycle band, and equipment is actively being developed in the 10,000- to 13,000-megacycle band; not yet for use in the 16,000- and 26,000-megacycle bands.

The 1945 allocations in the spectrum between 1,000 and 13,000 megacycles did not remain "final" long. In November, 1945, the 4,000- to 4,200-megacycle band was allocated to Air Navigation Aids. In July, 1946, the F.C.C. proposed an extensive reallocation of frequencies in the 1,000- to 13,000- megacycle band. A hearing was held on this proposal, as amended October 22, 1946, and Mr. Larsen again testified on behalf of theater television and the S.M.P.E. on February 4, 1947. He took the position that theater television should be classified by the F.C.C. as a "common carrier" service, entitled to use the frequencies allocated to "Common Carrier Fixed Circuits." If this classification should not be made by the F.C.C., Mr. Larsen objected to the F.C.C.'s proposal that television pickup and STL stations would be licensed "only to licensees of television broadcast stations and to common carriers." Mr. Larsen also objected to the failure of the F.C.C. to include in its proposal frequencies for intercity television relay, which the F.C.C. stated could not be accommodated in the 1,000- to 13,000-megacycle band since sufficient spectrum space was not available. In addition, Mr. Larsen urged the F.C.C. to classify theater television as a separate nonbroadcast service.

On the important question of whether theater television could use coaxial cable or wire lines for intercity or intracity transmission of programs, Mr. Larsen said that at the present time theater television would not be able to use A.T.&T. coaxial cable or wire facilities because the 2.7-megacycle band provided by A.T.&T. was insufficient for theater television. He estimated that approximately 6- or 7-megacycle bands would be required. He conceded that eventually it would be more economical *in a city* to distribute programs by wire line rather than by radio, and that eventually the common carriers would have wider-band coaxial cable and wire facilities. But he felt that for an indefinite period theater television would have to use radio for program distribution.[1]

The upshot of the 1947 allocation hearing was to make no allocation in the 1,000- to 13,000-megacycle band for theater television, even on an experimental basis, and to indicate that the experimental authorizations to operate in this band on frequencies not allocated to theater television might be "renewed on a strictly temporary basis for a period not to exceed one year from February 20, 1948."[2] These conclusions were contained in the F.C.C.'s report of February 20, 1948 (Docket 6651), in which the Commission stated: *"The requirements for theater television are still not sufficiently clear to indicate the need for a specific allocation for its exclusive use at this time. The Commission is of the opinion, from information now available to it, that a large part, if not all, of the functions required by theater television should be handled by stations authorized to operate on frequencies allocated to the use of communications common carriers."*

The F.C.C. ruling, however, has not completely terminated theater television's experimental use of radio frequencies. Since

[1] Former F.C.C. Commissioner E. K. Jett asked Mr. Larsen if any theater television was on the air. When Mr. Larsen answered that none was on the air, Commissioner Jett, pointing to the other demands for frequencies in the 1,000- to 13,000-megacycle band, said: "Apparently, you would want all the other radio services to stop dead in their tracks and wait for the development of theater television service until they can go ahead."

[2] Apparently, the frequency bands 16,000 to 18,000 and 26,000 to 30,000 megacycles still remain open for theater television experimentation, but the development of these frequencies is in the embryonic stage.

November 18, 1947, Paramount Pictures, Inc., has held special temporary authorizations for theater television relay in the New York area (in the 2,000- and 7,000-megacycle bands), and it was granted two more on May 4, 1948, for use of the 7,000-megacycle band in that area. Likewise, in September, 1948, 20th Century–Fox Film Corporation was granted an experimental STA for theater television relay in New York in the 7,000- and 12,000-megacycle bands.

It is apparent from the foregoing discussion that theater television is at the crossroads. It must determine its own future by deciding four main questions: (1) Will theater television rely on radio, coaxial cable, or wire for intercity and intracity distribution of programs? (2) If radio frequencies are to be used by theater television, is it desirable that the F.C.C. allocate frequencies for the use of theater television, or does theater television expect to use the frequencies allocated to "Common Carrier Fixed Circuits," relying on the existing common carriers to provide service to theater television? (3) If radio frequencies are needed, and theater television is not content to rely on the services of established common carriers, what steps should it take to obtain the use of such frequencies? (4) If theater television is to use common carrier radio coaxial cable and wire lines, what steps should it take to obtain the use of such facilities?

If theater television groups decide to apply to the F.C.C. for allocation of radio frequencies to theater television, or for authorization as a television common carrier, they must sustain the burden of convincing the F.C.C. that granting their requests will serve the public interest, convenience, or necessity. In meeting this burden, theater television must establish, to the satisfaction of the F.C.C.:

1. That the service requires the use of radio frequencies, and that coaxial cable and wire lines will not provide a practical substitute.

2. That the frequencies requested are not more urgently needed

by other radio services, particularly those which are necessary for safety of life and property.

3. That there is a substantial public need for the service, and a strong likelihood that the service will be established on a practical working basis.

In earlier appearances before the F.C.C., theater television has not met the burden of proof in these matters. It seems clear that another attempt to get F.C.C. authorization of the service and allocation of frequencies should be preceded by active steps to obtain quantitative data on the public acceptance of theater television, and to obtain definite commitments from qualified theater television groups in as many areas as possible, stating that they have positive plans to institute the service at an early date. Data obtained by actual experiments with a multiple addressee theater television system would be advisable. A clear indication of how theater television could serve the public interest is essential. In the latter connection, it is suggested that a multiple addressee system serving not only privately owned theaters, but also local, religious, educational, and governmental groups in the area, could present a strong showing of service to the public. Television broadcast stations are not available in sufficient quantity to make possible their ownership by any substantial number of religious, educational, or civic groups. Theater television is, potentially, one means whereby such organizations might participate directly in the wonders of television.

On June 30, 1949, the F.C.C. addressed letters to Paramount Television Productions, Inc., 20th Century–Fox Film Corporation, and the Society of Motion Picture Engineers, inviting them to submit statements on theater television by September 2, 1949. Without limiting the scope of the statements, the Commission requested that six subjects be covered:

1. What the minimum frequency requirements would be for a nation-wide, competitive theater television service.

2. What specific frequency bands the addressee would propose

to be allocated to a theater television service; and reasons therefor.

3. The exact functions that would be performed in each such frequency band in a theater television service.

4. Whether and to what extent such functions could be performed, in whole or in part, by use of coaxial cable, wire, or other means of transmission not using radio frequencies.

5. Whether and to what extent existing common carriers have or propose to have facilities available capable of performing such functions, in whole or in part by radio relay, coaxial cable, or wire.

6. Plans or proposals looking toward the establishment of a theater television service.

Organization of coöperative groups.—To make theater television economically feasible it may be necessary for numbers of theaters in a city to join in coöperative theater television groups. Since these groups will probably find it necessary to qualify as licensees of radio facilities and possibly as common carriers of television programs, it is important that they be organized to comply with the licensing requirements of the Communications Act and the F.C.C.[3]

VII. Color Television

From the early beginnings of television, the idea of television in color has intrigued the imagination. As the motion picture industry has discovered, the mere fact that a production is offered in color, rather than in black and white, increases the public's interest and assures far greater salability. In the television field, the first proponent of color was the Columbia Broadcasting System, which for many years operated both black-and-white and color stations in New York City. Soon after the end of World War II, CBS felt that its color television system was ready to emerge from the laboratory and the experimental stage, and on September 27, 1946, it petitioned the F.C.C. to promulgate rules and engineer-

[3] Currently, the F.C.C. is studying the effect of the decision of the United States Supreme Court in *United States v. Paramount Pictures, Inc. et als.*, 334 U.C. 331, upon the qualifications of the major motion picture companies to hold broadcast and television licenses. In that case, Paramount Pictures, Inc., Loew's, Inc., and Radio-Keith-Orpheum Corporation were found to have violated federal antitrust statutes.

ing standards authorizing commercial television in color in the ultra-high-frequency band (UHF: 480 to 920 megacycles).[4] On the basis of developmental work conducted by CBS's Dr. Peter Goldmark at a cost of some $2,000,000, CBS proposed the creation of twenty-seven color television channels in the UHF band, each channel being 16 megacycles wide. This proposal would have appropriated 400 megacycles or substantially all the UHF frequencies for color television.

After lengthy hearings, the F.C.C. on March 18, 1947, denied CBS's petition, primarily for the reason "that many of the fundamentals of a color television system have not been adequately field tested and that need exists for further experimentation." The F.C.C. commended CBS and Dr. Goldmark for their great strides in the field, and concluded: "It is hoped that all persons with a true interest in the future of color television will continue their experimentation in this field in the hope that a satisfactory system can be developed and demonstrated at the earliest possible date."[5]

[4] CBS first publicly demonstrated color television in September, 1940. In May, 1941, it inaugurated regularly scheduled color television programs over experimental station W2XAB in New York City, operating in the VHF. In October, 1945, W2XCS resumed color broadcasts from the Chrysler Building in New York City, operating on 490 megacycles. CBS has also networked color transmissions between New York City and Washington, D.C., over the coaxial cable microwave relay.

[5] The F.C.C. report and Order stated: "Before approving proposed standards, the Commission must be satisfied not only that the system proposed will work, but also that the system is as good as can be expected within any reasonable time in the foreseeable future. In addition, the system should be capable of permitting incorporation of better performance characteristics without requiring a change in fundamental standards. Otherwise, the danger exists that the standards will be set before fundamental developments have been made, with the result that the public would be saddled with an inferior service, if the new changes were not adopted, or if they were adopted, receivers already in the hands of the public would be rendered useless. Judged by the foregoing tests, the Commission is of the view that the standards for color television proposed by Columbia Broadcasting System should not be adopted. In the Commission's opinion the evidence does not show that they represent the optimum performance which may be expected of a color television system within a reasonable time. The Commission bases this conclusion on two grounds. In the first place, the Commission believes that there has not been adequate field testing of the system for the Commission to be able to proceed with confidence that the system will work adequately in practice. Secondly, the Commission is of the opinion that there may be other systems of transmitting color which offer the possibility of cheaper receivers and narrower band widths that have not been fully explored." The Report expanded on the F.C.C.'s view of the need of further experimentation as follows: "The evidence before the Commission shows that twenty-seven channels may not ultimately be enough to provide for a truly nation-wide competitive television system. Every effort must, therefore, be made to narrow the band width required for color television. It should be emphasized

The CBS proposal contemplated authorization of the so-called sequential system, in which each picture is scanned through separate color filters, red, green, and blue, in turn. As then proposed, the transmissions in the separate colors followed each other at the rate of forty-eight per second. The three colors were accepted by the receiver by means of a color wheel containing filters of red, green, and blue, which rotated in front of the television screen in synchronization with a similar color wheel at the transmitter. The eye saw the picture in full color. At the same hearing, RCA gave evidence concerning a different system of color television but did not request the F.C.C. to approve its system at that time. In the RCA system, known as the simultaneous system, each picture was scanned simultaneously in three colors—red, green, and blue—and transmissions were sent simultaneously on three different channels and combined at the receiver to produce a color image.

After CBS's color proposal was denied, CBS turned its attentions in the television field mainly to building its monochrome network. But both CBS and RCA continued color experiments. In October, 1948, CBS demonstrated to F.C.C. staff members a sequential color system using only six megacycles of band width. The system could be operated either with a rotating color drum or with stationary color filters. At the same time CBS demonstrated that an ordinary commercial 10-inch table television receiver (monochrome) could be converted so as to receive the color transmissions either in black-and-white or in color.

Interest in color television flared brightly in May, 1949, when the F.C.C. issued a public notice stating that in reopening the pending television allocation proceedings it planned to "afford an opportunity *for the submission of proposals* looking toward utilization of all television channels (both VHF and UHF) to 6-megacycle monochrome or color on an optional basis in such a

that narrowing the band width should not be at the expense of picture brightness, picture detail, color fidelity, or other features of television performance. The objective should be a narrower band width while retaining and even improving the quality of television performance."

way as to permit reception on the ordinary television receiver with relatively minor modifications." Following up this announcement, the F.C.C. on July 11, 1949, issued its notice of further proposed rule-making in the allocation proceedings and stated definitely that it would give consideration to proposals for color television on both the VHF and UHF television channels. It provided that any such proposal must permit operation in a 6-megacycle channel and must be such that existing television receivers would be able to receive color transmissions "simply by making relatively minor modifications in such existing receivers." In a recent speech, one F.C.C. commissioner explained that the F.C.C. would not authorize color (1) until color could be received satisfactorily on today's ordinary television receiver with only relatively minor modifications, and (2) until color television pictures could be received in black-and-white on present-day receivers, with perhaps only relatively minor modifications or none.

Although it is impossible to predict what evidence concerning color television will be presented to the F.C.C. in the now scheduled hearings and what action the F.C.C. will take on color television, the motion picture industry obviously must consider color in connection with its plans for theater television.

Not only must theater television interests be aware that broadcast television in color will be a much stronger competitor than black-and-white television, but they must take into account that theater television in color may well be much more attractive to the public than either monochrome film or monochrome theater television. Theater television in color, therefore, deserves careful investigation. It may reveal that theater television in color holds sufficient promise of becoming a box-office attraction in its own right to justify the conclusion that the motion picture industry should enter the theater television field on a broad scale.

Color would require further technical development of the theater television equipment mentioned in this article, but it is not unreasonable to expect that color could be adapted to theater

television with no greater difficulty than to broadcast television.

Color would also affect the frequency-allocation problems now facing theater television. Since it appears that broadcast color television, if sanctioned by the F.C.C., will be limited to a 6-megacycle band width, the theater television interests will be forced to inquire whether they should limit their interests in color to a system of this band width. The advantages of a wider band width, including greater definition, faster frame rate, brighter pictures, and less flicker, may well make it desirable for theater television to seek a band wider than 6 megacycles. However, before a wider band width is adopted for theater television it will be necessary to consider whether the existing common-carrier facilities for intercity relay of television programs could be adapted to it.

Color television must face many obstacles before it can be expected to take its place beside monochrome television. But the place it holds in the imagination of the public makes it a factor to be considered carefully by the motion picture industry.

VIII. Programming

The foregoing discussion indicates that theater television is technically feasible and is within the pocketbook range of the majority of exhibitors. Our next inquiries are: What kind of programming can be done in a coöperative system of theater television? Will theater television be economically feasible, and can it compete with television broadcasting? What effect will theater television have on motion pictures and on television broadcasting? A word of caution is appropriate at this time. Theater television is just emerging from the laboratory; its testing is just about to begin. We have no statistical data to buttress our conclusions, which are necessarily tentative and may warrant revision in the light of future developments.

Program material for theater television can be derived from (1) television broadcasting or (2) independent sources, that is,

programs secured by and through the coöperative group engaged in theater television.

If the coöperative group seeks program material from the television broadcast station or network, it is beset with certain legal problems. Section 325(a) of the Communications Act of 1934 prohibits a station from rebroadcasting the programs of another broadcasting station without the express authority of the originating station. This tenders the question of whether the pickup and transmission of a television program to a theater is a "rebroadcast" requiring the permission of the originating station. This point has not been adjudicated either by the F.C.C. or by the courts. It is believed that when Section 325(a) was enacted into law, the intention of Congress was that the originating station or system should have the right to "control its program after it has been thrown onto the air." This suggests that the coöperative group of television theaters would be required to obtain the permission of the television broadcast station or network.

In the event that Section 325(a) is construed by the F.C.C. and the courts as not requiring the consent of the originating station, the theater television group would be precluded by common law and statutory copyright from retelevising the programs transmitted by a television broadcasting station. The courts will undoubtedly hold that the production of a television program, involving as it does the expenditure of skills, effort, and monies, results in the establishment of a common-law copyright. Consequently the station and network may prohibit the coöperative group of television theaters from retelecasting such programs. Common-law copyright is illustrated by the litigation arising out of the Louis-Walcott fight, in which a Pennsylvania court enjoined a motion picture exhibitor from picking up and retelecasting the Louis-Walcott fight in his theater because the common-law copyright in the telecast was the property of the sponsor, the network, and the station.

A television station or network can protect its programs by

copyrighting them, thereby prohibiting their reproduction unless a license is obtained from the copyright proprietor. The unauthorized exhibition of a copyrighted program would subject each exhibitor to minimum statutory damages of $250 for each unauthorized telecast.

Thus, the coöperative group of television theaters would be precluded from using the program material of a television broadcast station or network without consent. A television network might find it economically feasible to make its commercial or sustaining program available in theaters for a stipulated fee; on the other hand, as will subsequently be developed, theater television may be a competitive threat to television broadcasting and the television network may refuse to make its program service available to theaters. This means that the theater must obtain its own programs, and raises the next question: What independent programs are available to the theater television group?

An excellent source of programming would be local or national news. Since a news event, such as a political address, a parade, or a fire, is a public event, any organization may transmit its own version of the event to the public by television broadcasting or to theaters by theater television. All that is required to carry a news program is a mobile unit to transmit the program to the central distribution point for redistribution to the theaters. If coöperative theater groups are interconnected on a national scale, outstanding national events such as a presidential inauguration could be made available to all theaters.

A second source of programming is sports events, the telecasting of which in theaters tenders certain economic and legal issues that warrant discussion. Not only are the television-broadcast rights to a sports event available for sale to a sponsor, but the promoter may likewise sell the theater-television rights to a coöperative group. The question is whether it is economically feasible for the television-broadcast sponsor and the theater-television group to carry the same program. If a boxing bout can be viewed on home

television receivers, there would be no need of attending a motion picture house carrying the same program. On the other hand, the motion picture exhibitor could integrate the boxing bout into his scheduled evening show and thus offer an added attraction to his patrons. Whether the television broadcast of an athletic event would curtail the box-office returns of the theater-television group carrying the same program cannot be answered at this time. We have neither data nor experience to buttress our conclusions.

But suppose 10,000 exhibitors were to band together and purchase exclusive television rights to the World Series. The cost could be defrayed by a special admission charge to view the World Series. In this connection, note that there are more than 19,000 theaters in the United States; their total seating capacity is close to 12,000,000 seats; their monthly revenues exceed $100,000,000; their minimum yearly revenues are $1,500,000,000. Compare these figures with yearly gross broadcast revenues of approximately $500,000,000. It is apparent that the theater-television group could outbid the television-broadcast industry for the right to exhibit the World Series. Whether there will be competitive bidding between theater and broadcast television cannot be determined at this time. Theater television does not exist on a local, let alone national, level. We do know that television broadcasting, particularly in the East, is one of the factors which has diminished the box-office returns of motion picture houses. It may well be that theater and broadcast television do not compete with each other. But certainly the theaters must do something to offset their diminishing box-office returns. Theater television may be the answer.

A third source of programming for theater television is "live" programs. This term has reference to variety or vaudeville shows, concerts, plays, and the like. Theater television would enable all members of a coöperative group or theater chain in a city to offer vaudeville. Thus, a variety show could be presented in a local neighborhood theater as well as in a "downtown showcase." The fact that programs for theater television can be distributed on

film gives flexibility to the program schedule of a motion picture house engaged in theater television.

The financial resources of a theater-television group on a national scale suggest that it could sponsor a repertory company which would produce different plays each week. An exhibitor could charge an increased admission fee when exhibiting such a play. The recording of such plays on film would enable a theater to exhibit them at times convenient to its patrons.

Theater television can serve, also, to enlarge the concert audience. A concert by a distinguished pianist, for example, could be made available in motion picture houses. Undoubtedly, appropriate financial arrangements could be made among the promoter, the concert artist, and the exhibitor.

Theater television may be employed further as a new means for the distribution of film. Thus, a feature-length attraction could be distributed on a national, regional, or local basis to exhibitors. The electronic method of distributing motion pictures could give the producer an efficient method of "trade-showing" film; it could reduce the number of positive prints, and thus reduce costs. Theater television may conceivably result in far-reaching changes in the trade practices of the motion picture industry and effectuate substantial economies in the distribution of film.

Theater television is not limited to entertainment; it can render a public service to the community. In the forenoon, the theater television system in its entirety could be made available to the school system. The schools could install receivers and the theaters could be used as classrooms. Televised material could be made available to the entire student body of a community. It has been suggested that theater television might be the means by which schools can use television without undertaking the costly job of constructing and operating a television broadcast station.

This discussion has indicated that theater television is technically and economically feasible and that there are adequate sources of program material which can and will be made available

to the theater television group. Theater television will stimulate the box office returns of the motion picture exhibitor. If theater television is organized on a local, regional, and national basis, it may become a challenge to television broadcasting.

Whether theater television will ever achieve its potentialities as a medium of entertainment and public service depends on the willingness and determination of the motion picture industry to develop it. Failure to accept this opportunity may well spell the doom of theater television. The motion picture industry has the resources and can adapt its technical knowledge to this new art. The time to act is now.

Problems of Film History

JAMES CARD

JAMES CARD was a writer and director for Eastman Kodak's Informational Films Division before becoming Assistant to the Curator at George Eastman House, where he is in charge of motion picture collections.

NEW VOLUMES dealing with the history of motion pictures have been rushing from the presses of France, England, Switzerland, and Italy. Domestic writers are in the race, too, with their histories and with uncorrected new editions of older works. Critical histories and even psychological histories seem to put to scorn the old-fashioned sort that simply tried to relate facts.

Most of these recent works make some mention of their intended reader, the film student. It would appear to be for his benefit that detailed accounts of the travails of Muybridge and Edison, Friese-Greene and Birt Acres, the Lumières and Demeny, Paul, Méliès, Porter, and Uchatius are now being so generously published.

Are there, then, really many students in a field that covers so small a segment in the history of human activity? The line is very thin between the student for whom these books are supposedly written and the writers themselves, for the metamorphosis of student into scholar into historian has rarely been complete. The student turns to the film histories and there finds confusion, gossip, and the wildest sort of speculation. He quickly sees that scholarship is no prerequisite to the writing of motion picture history. Adding his own speculations to the general muddle, he often becomes himself an author of film history. His work may bear a new adjective—critical, phychological, or encyclopedic—but rarely does it present a new historical fact.

Film historiography has taken a pattern somewhat akin to that of the film's own historic development. The film moved from the factual, simple pieces of Lumière and Edison to the "made-up"

film and the trick production. Then came narrative pictures, and at last the documentary, dealing with factual material in an interpretative manner.

Film historians, too, started out with an attempt to convey facts as they were found to be in the nineteenth century. Henry Hopwood's *Living Pictures*[1] of 1899 is a straightforward account from which future writers might have taken a warning, for Hopwood pointed out the impossibility of assigning priority to any individual inventor of moving pictures without adding such a vast series of qualifications that the honor would become utterly ridiculous.

Hopwood's logic was ignored. Film history entered its next phase in repeated attempts to name a father and a nationality for motion pictures. There was an era of trick histories and made-up facts championing the priorities of Edison or Friese-Greene, Muybridge, Lumière, or Jenkins (who usually championed himself).

There have been the narrative popularizations, too. Now we find ourselves in a period of psychological and critical histories of motion pictures. They correspond to the documentary films in that facts may be neatly twisted to prove a point.

Meanwhile, what happens to the film student who does not yield to the lure of becoming an amateur historian? He finds himself in a whimsical Never-Never Land where surmise and speculation, carelessly blended with fact, pass from writer to writer, from country to country. The real madness of the situation can be appreciated by imagining critical evaluations of music based only on the titles printed in record catalogues. Or the serious discussion of a whole school of painting by a writer who predicates his conclusions on some museum's catalogue descriptions without having troubled to look at the artists' work.

Yet film writers have not thought it Gilbertian to classify a film on the basis of its title alone. They have coolly compared the

[1] Henry V. Hopwood, *Living Pictures* (London: Opticians and Photographic Trades Review, 1899).

merits of various pioneers' contributions with nothing more to go on than catalogue synopses of their unexamined work. Authors have been known to describe the content of an unseen film in their published work, without giving the reader the slightest hint that the information is utter supposition.

On the basis of catalogue accounts of Edwin S. Porter's *Life of an American Fireman* (1902), Georges Sadoul, although one of the most earnest and capable writers of motion picture history, arrived at the unfortunate hypothesis that Porter had been directly inspired by James Williamson's British film *Fire!*[2] Perhaps the French author's difficulty can be traced to the reprinting of the Edison catalogue material on *Life of an American Fireman* in the often-quoted *Rise of the American Film*[3] and Lewis Jacobs' loose reference to it there as the scenario for the film. Nor did he hesitate to call it Porter's script!

Thanks to the recent efforts of Theodore Huff and Howard Walls in restoring to view Library of Congress copyright prints of *Life of an American Fireman,* it is apparent that the catalogue description was quite different from Porter's actual work. Comparison of the film itself with Williamson's *Fire!,* prints of which exist in the British Film Institute and the Eastman Historical Collection, shows *Fire!* to be edited in a way so superior to Porter's production that no one can reasonably imagine Porter's having seen the Williamson production beforehand. It is unthinkable that, had he seen it, Porter could have failed to realize the advantage of cutting the overlapping action in his own film. The Williamson film is an early example of a clear understanding of the editing principle; the Porter film is editorially primitive.

Unfortunately, Sadoul is not alone in having been misled by the carefree character of film scholarship. It is hard to understand why no attempt has been made to correct at least the most trouble-

[2] Georges Sadoul, "Early English Influences in the Work of Edwin S. Porter." *Hollywood Quarterly,* Vol. III, No. 1.

[3] Lewis Jacobs, *The Rise of the American Film* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1939), chap. iii: "Art: Edwin S. Porter and the Editing Principle."

some errors in the second edition of *The Rise of the American Film*. Since the work enjoys immense prestige thanks to its engaging style and articulate reasoning, the perpetuated errors become all the more deplorable. For example, one still finds a hopeless tangle concerning Griffith's films *The Battle* and *The Battle at Elderbush Gulch*.[4] The book reproduces Griffith's advertisement of December 3, 1913, as it appeared in the New York *Dramatic Mirror*. That document clearly states that *The Battle of Elderbush Gulch* is a multiple-reel feature which had not yet been released, and it lists *The Battle* as a separate production. Yet only a few pages earlier in the book the reader is informed that *The Battle* is the shortened title under which *The Battle of Elderberry Gulch* was released!

Actually, *The Battle* was a film made in 1911 with Charles West. The two-reel *Battle at Elderbush Gulch* was copyrighted in 1913 and released in 1914. Mae Marsh, Lillian Gish, Bobby Harron, and Henry B. Walthall were all in it. And it is important Griffith.

The Battle at Elderbush Gulch forms part of the crescendo of Griffith's talent, leading along with *Judith of Bethulia* to *The Birth of a Nation* (1915). But contrary to the totally misleading statement published in *Sight and Sound Index Series No. 2*,[5] the film has nothing to do with the Civil War.

Perhaps it seems quixotic to engage each error that veils this particular film. But it serves as an illustration of the vicissitudes of a single mistake. The author of the Griffith index tried to correct the title itself, but he made a bad guess at the film's content. Thus the film reappears in *Sight and Sound Index Series No. 14* on the Negro in films[6] only because it had been erroneously described as having to do with the Civil War. Instead, the film is

[4] Lewis Jacobs, *op. cit.*, chap. vii: "D. W. Griffith: New Discoveries."

[5] Seymour Stern, *An Index to the Creative Work of David Wark Griffith*, Part I (*Sight and Sound Index Series No. 2;* London: British Film Institute, 1944).

[6] Peter Noble, *The Cinema and the Negro, 1905–1948* (*Sight and Sound Index Series No. 14;* London: British Film Institute, 1948). One finds in this index no less than four indefensible claims of "firsts."

a story of the annihilation of a community of settlers by Indians. It intimately develops a series of apparently trivial incidents of frontier life which culminate in almost epic tragedy.

Here, three different writers are discussing and classifying an important film which apparently none of them had seen. It appears that they had not even checked a catalogue description of the film which does exist,[7] as does at least one reel of the picture itself.

Another weakness of many of the currently standard film histories is research which stops at an arbitrary point when it seems sufficient to prove a given theory. The reputation of Muybridge has suffered particularly through such treatment. It was the author of *A Million and One Nights*[8] who unearthed a sensational scandal involving Muybridge. Terry Ramsaye brought into play the full force of his undeniable talent as raconteur in a chapter which he called "Muybridge in Myth and Murder." The title was appropriate.

Of course Mr. Ramsaye graciously disclaimed any intention to disparage and stated that his purpose was rather one of evaluating Muybridge's work. But somehow that evaluation included a half dozen pages wholly concerned with the photographer's personal tragedy. And one cannot deny that Muybridge emerged from the whole chapter in a most dubious light. One gets the impression that he was absent-minded, rather inept, and even untidy about the beard. The author insisted that Muybridge had no idea of moving pictures before he met Meissonier in Paris. And Meissonier was named as the one who really thought of reconstituting the motion which Muybridge had stopped with his horse photographs.

Such a thesis is continued in the recent *Magic Shadows,*[9] but there Marey replaces Meissonier as Muybridge's brains. The

[7] Catalogue, United Projector and Film Company (Buffalo, N.Y.: no date).

[8] Terry Ramsaye, *A Million and One Nights* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1926).

[9] Martin Quigley, Jr., *Magic Shadows* (Georgetown University Press, 1948), chap. xiv: "Marey and Movement."

younger writer makes the claim that it was Marey who showed Muybridge how to use a kind of zoetrope to make his horse pictures move. And that it was Reynaud's Praxinoscope which furnished the name for Muybridge's projector: the Zoopraxiscope.

Both logic and facts refute such evaluations of Muybridge. He was scarcely the adventurer that those writers make him appear. He came to Stanford's attention by reason of his international reputation as an excellent photographer. No one aware of the maddeningly exacting nature of wet collodion photography would imply that a successful practitioner of that art might be in any way mechanically inept or careless. It is most unlikely that he would be untidy. The photographer had to coat his plates on the spot, a manual operation that required extreme dexterity. The plates were sensitized and exposed while still wet; they had to be developed at once, and the slightest accident, the action of dust or the use of any but the most meticulously cleaned equipment, would result not merely in a poor negative, but in a useless one.

Muybridge's negatives, some of which still exist, are excellent pictures. Moreover, working as a photographer with assignments from the U. S. government, he had to perform the trying tasks of wet collodion photography in most inaccessible regions. Glass plates, chemicals, and a dark tent had to be packed along with the large camera and tripod. Yet many Muybridge pictures of the rugged crags and forbidding chasms of Yosemite were made on glass plates measuring 17 by 22 inches.

No, Muybridge was certainly not an inept eccentric. Neither was he Trilby to either Meissonier or Marey. In both *A Million and One Nights* and *Magic Shadows,* Muybridge was held to have been made movie-conscious only upon his trip to France in 1881. Yet one would suppose that any attempt to evaluate truly the contribution of a pioneer, would not ignore his own claims. And in the preface to his book *Animals in Motion*[10] Muybridge described his projector and stated that it was "the first apparatus ever used,

[10] (London: Chapman & Hall, 1899.)

or constructed, for synthetically demonstrating movements analytically photographed from life, and in its resulting effects is the prototype of all the various instruments which, under a variety of names, are used for a similar purpose at the present day." He further indicates that his projector was in operation at a lecture he delivered to the San Francisco Art Association.

The reference to his screening in San Francisco could have been followed up by any scholar wishing to learn about Muybridge and motion pictures rather than about Muybridge and his domestic sorrow. The fact is that on May 4, 1880—a year before he met Marey or Meissonier,—Muybridge projected moving pictures before an audience. No mention of this presentation is to be found in most of the published chronologies of the important steps in motion picture history even though the event is a matter of more than adequate record.

And the record refutes completely the contention that Muybridge was unaware of the means of reconstituting his motion-analysis pictures into a synthesis of motion, before he went to France. It shows, too, that at so early a date he had solved the difficult mechanical problem of projecting his animated images on a screen before a group of spectators.

On the day following his presentation, the San Francisco papers carried accounts of the lecture and the showing of moving pictures. The San Francisco *Alta* of May 5, 1880, reported:

> Mr. Muybridge gave an interesting private exhibition last evening, to a few critics and artists, showing the results of his recent experiments and studies in taking instantaneous photographs of animals in motion. . . . The most interesting new feature of the exhibition was the application of the series of instantaneous photographic pictures of animals in motion to the magic-lantern zoetrope. Horses of life size were represented running, trotting and jumping; men, deer, bulls and dogs ran with all the motions of life; horses were shown running past each other in different directions, and other wonderful and ludicrous movements were exhibited. Mr. Muybridge has laid the foundation of a new method of entertaining the people, and we predict that his in-

stantaneous photographic magic-lantern zoetrope will make the round of the civilized world.

On this Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, Mr. Muybridge will publicly repeat his lecture and give an exhibition of illustrated photographs, illustrating the attitudes of animals in motions.[11]

There had been a tendency to dismiss Muybridge's work on the dogmatic premise that, since he used no motion picture camera and employed circular glass plates rather than celluloid film, his contributions fall outside the direct path of the developing cinema. If twenty years from now we find all motion pictures being projected from strips of flexible metal, might one suppose a similar dismissal of the entire history of images on a celluloid base? Or is our definition of motion pictures already too narrow to admit the delightful work of Len Lye because it is achieved without a camera?

The medium is still too uncharted to permit its accurate definition. Perhaps Arnheim and Nilsen[12] have come closest to specifics in analyzing the nature of the art. But Vachel Lindsay Blair (like his uncle, an ardent lover of the film) has suggested that we need a kind of atomic chart of the motion picture. It would have to be prepared by some coldly nonpartisan investigator not overly given to enthusiasm.

Beginning with a stationary camera and a single subject in one setting (as with Heyl and Edison), the primitive progressions could be charted: multiple subjects (Lumière films): multiple scenes (Zecca); close-ups and interpolated close-ups (Williamson and Porter); and camera movement (Porter).[13]

Of course Mr. Blair's intriguing chart would become compli-

[11] Lengthier reviews were carried in the May 5, 1880, San Francisco *Call*, the San Francisco *Bulletin*, and the California *Spirit of the Times* of May 8, 1880.

[12] Rudolf Arnheim, *Film als Kunst* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1932); Vladimir Nilsen, *The Cinema as a Graphic Art* (London: Newnes, 1936).

[13] Ferdinand Zecca's *The Victims of Alcohol* (1901) is an example of the early use of multiple scenes in a narrative film. Williamson's *A Big Swallow* (1901–1902) contains an extreme close-up, which finally fills the entire frame. Porter used an interpolated close-up to further narrative action in his *Life of an American Fireman* (1902), and his *Rube and Mandy at Coney Island* (1904–1905) shows that the camera was panned without following any particular action.

cated with such mature considerations as multiple exposures, editing, color, and synchronization even before it had done with the film of the nineteenth century. And his chart would show that the films of the twentieth century made respectable advances in the field of intricate transitions from scene to scene, and really in little else.

But the great value of dispassionate and scientific classification of the anatomy of motion pictures would be that, for the first time, the avant-garde would know where it might actually pioneer. As it is now, the first-person movie is periodically rediscovered. Instead of reading a multitude of loose claims about the innovations of Griffith and Porter, the scholar would know precisely what might be considered an unusual development at any given period.

Then, as long-missing films are again brought to view, their significance could be methodically and sensibly appraised. Priorities would be properly considered only incidental and for the most part tentative.

The condition of film history can become reasonably healthy when it is recognized how unimportant a "first" is in itself. The vital question is the degree to which any departure from routine film making affected the medium. An unnoticed accident of technique may establish a priority, but it is only of the most esoteric interest.

Usefully integrated film history can be compiled only on the basis of a vast amount of pictures available for careful study. It is unfortunate that even now such study is extremely difficult. Old prints have been preserved by archives of fairly recent establishment and by individual collectors often uncoöperatively jealous of their hoard, and, of course, negatives are kept by producing companies but are only rarely available for examination.

When the Museum of Modern Art's Film Library was begun and its film collecting started, it looked as though a vast amount of important material had been forever lost. But as interest grows in preserving the documents of motion pictures, it seems that

eventually every film earnestly hunted comes out of hiding, albeit from most amazing places. With no language barrier, the silent film traveled far in its day. In Italy, Switzerland, and Spain the long missing *The Kid, Quo Vadis?* and *The Student of Prague* were discovered. An Ohio attic yielded one of Emile Cohl's early cartoons, and Pola Negri's *Carmen* was found in the forgotten vault of a Rochester theater.

Good as it is to know that these films have been preserved, it is still far too difficult for the student to see them. A potentially helpful factor is that public libraries are beginning to collect and lend motion pictures. Admittedly only a few now offer such service and those few seem rather sadly unconcerned with any historical perspective. Usually they offer a wide choice of films dealing with World War II but ignore the availability of such antiquities as a 1912 production seriously concerned with child labor.[14] Still, the day may come when one may be able to borrow the standard classics of the cinema from one's community library.

Until then, we need the kind of serviceable writing on the film which has begun to appear in the field of photography. Once the endless squabbles over the priorities of Daguerre, Niepce, Wedgwood, and Talbot were put aside, useful work was accomplished. Film writers might similarly call an armistice.

Useful writing in film history will begin when the raconteurs give way to writers who choose the painful route of relentless research. And when the critical historian, equipped with a background of fact, is able to see the films he analyzes, evaluations may appear which are at least based on something sounder than today's quagmire of gossip and guess.

[14] Thanhouser's *Cry of the Children* (1912). Two reels, with James Cruze.

Film Music of the Quarter

LAWRENCE MORTON

LAWRENCE MORTON'S series on film music for the *Hollywood Quarterly* continues after its interruption by the special television number (Vol. 4, No. 2).

IT HAS been said many times, in these columns and elsewhere, that what film music needs more than anything else is informed and responsible criticism. Only rarely have serious music critics given their attention to films as a legitimate field of musical creativity. But their colleagues of the press, the film critics, have not been at all reticent in passing snap judgments on music just as if the purposes of an orchestral *tutti* and the appropriateness of a leading lady's hair-do were measurable with the same yardstick. For the most part such commentary is a harmless poultice of adjectives or a bare statement for the record that a score exists. "The music of So-and-so," these gentlemen write, "is effective." Another score might be said to "enhance the dramatic values" or be a "plus for the production." But when a film critic presumes to announce that the score for *Germany, Year Zero* is one of the greatest that he has ever heard, and when such an irresponsible judgment is quoted upper-case in the advertisements for the film, one realizes that the invasion of unfamiliar territory by unqualified critics is a grave disservice both to the film industry and to the art of music.

None of Rossellini's films has been distinguished by a score of any merit whatsoever. His talent, great as it is, does not include a sensitivity to music. Apparently he is no more capable of resenting what is bad than he is able to procure what is good. In *Germany, Year Zero* his intentions as a recorder of contemporary history are consistently contraverted by his brother's score. For example: The boy Edmund is walking aimlessly through the ruins of Berlin. He is hungry, he has poisoned his sick father, he has been rejected by friends and playmates, he has been defeated in the struggle to maintain with his family a semblance of decency in an environ-

ment where decency is almost impossible. The urgency of his flight from home has passed. He pauses to kick a pile of stones. What does the music tell us? Something like this: That Edmund is a spy, that he is concocting a plot to overthrow the Allied military government, that the ruins are full of counterspies watching his every move, and that beneath the pile of stones he has just kicked lie the bodies of Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun. Will Edmund uncover them? I mean by this that the tragedy of the film is interpreted musically in terms of a whodunit. Intermittently there are mysterious murmurs in the orchestra, tiny *sforzato* outbursts, some ominous drumbeats, a tapped cymbal. Almost none of them have any dramatic or psychological motivation; they are attempts to create tensions and suggest approaching climaxes that never arrive. It is as though the composer were crying wolf at the audience. But there is no wolf, and the audience echoes, Why? The musical sounds themselves come from a grab bag of clichés: augmented triads and other by-products of the whole-tone system, woodwind arpeggios vestigial from Ravel, chromatic sequences and trills and tremolandos, all of them employed without taste or conscience. In short, there is no music. Fortunately, the whole score has been dubbed in at the lowest possible dynamic level. Perhaps this is what pleased the misguided film critic, who undoubtedly believes (so many of them do) that the unheard film score is sweeter than the heard.

The irresponsible judgment of a single film critic makes no mark at all in musical circles. But when it is repeated often enough it begins to earn in the outer world the credence given to valid criticism. Long after the sound of the score has been forgotten someone remembers that it got rave notices. A shining castle has been built on sand, a reputation has been founded on a careless word. And reputations count in certain circles, including those frequented by film producers and their wives. In these circles musical judgments are amateurish, highly susceptible to nonprofessional influence, and vacillating because they have no real roots

in musical culture. It is a dangerous atmosphere for judgments on the arts, and its effects are shown in the inability of some of our otherwise fine producers to make up their minds about music. They might hire a genuinely creative composer for one film and, after another gathering of the circle, a hack for the next.

One cannot presume to guess at the reasons for William Wyler's unhappy manipulation of Aaron Copland's score for *The Heiress*. When the film opened in New York, Copland wrote a letter to the press disclaiming responsibility for the title music; his own had been deleted and replaced by the work of another composer. Now Wyler doubtless had his reasons for making the change; but whatever those reasons were, they must be judged invalid. I have heard privately a recording of the title music that Copland composed. It is not as pretty, perhaps, as its substitute, but it is certainly much more relevant to the film that Wyler produced. One is almost amazed that the mind which repudiated Copland's music did not at the same time find it necessary to devise a happy ending for the picture.

I do not propose that producers should abdicate their positions of authority in respect to music, for I know of too many times when their suggestions have pulled composers out of holes. But it is their plain duty to acquire those listening skills which will enable them to exercise their authority justly and wisely and, most important, in the direction of their own dramatic intentions. These skills cannot be acquired, however, merely by learning how to whistle the theme of *The Moldau* or by adding a few technical musical terms to their vocabularies. Nor can it be done by sitting at home of an evening playing the latest record releases. This can lead only to one of those unhappy conferences that a producer opens with the remark, "I was listening to the Third Symphony last night . . ."

It is unfortunate that a large body of film-music criticism does not yet exist to establish a kind of hierarchy of authority to which a producer might refer when he is beset by doubt. And it cannot exist until the pronunciamentos of semiliterates ("one of the

greatest scores I have ever heard") are replaced by serious discussions of film-music aesthetics and of individual performances—by first-rate critics. There is ample material for such discussion, for events come thick and fast in the field. A proper enumeration of styles and idioms has not yet been made, nor have the identities of the leading composers been established. If one were in a position to assign topics for brief critical essays by competent critics, he might start with statements such as these, to be argued pro or con: William Alwyn's music for *Fallen Idol,* though skillfully composed, erred in translating the emotions of a child, who has been caught up in the complications of a domestic tragedy, into musical terms more relevant to the emotional conflicts of, say, an adult middle-European psychopath. The absence of a musical score deprived *Intruder in the Dust* of the atmosphere of its locale and the power of its drama. George Antheil's music for *Tokyo Joe,* though sometimes open to objection on purely musical grounds, has functional values not attainable by a more disciplined musical craft. Alfred Newman's repetition and development of thematic material (as opposed to the introduction of new themes for new situations) is a procedure less logical for an opulent romantic drama like *The Prince of Foxes* than for a drama based on conflicts of character. The music for *Devil and the Flesh* made merely sentimental what should have been tragic. A brassy, dissonant modern musical style would have been more appropriate for *The King's Men* than Louis Gruenberg's postromantic symphonism.

These are not judgments, but problems suggested by recent film scores. Their solutions are not easy and they involve technical materials. That is why it is a presumption for the unqualified observer to utter pseudo-authoritative judgments. He can tell us only what he likes. What we need to know is what qualities have been observed and evaluated. For it is not so much the business of criticism to pass judgments as to make distinctions.

What Is a Cursed Film?

HENRI AGEL

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AT THE beginning of August there opened in Biarritz the Festival of the Cursed Film, a festival very different from all others, which consisted in presenting to the public films that either have never been released, as a result of the timidity of distributors, or have never been appreciated by the general public. As indicated, the curse which attaches to certain films may issue from two distinct sources. And it seems that the public, in spite of its relative lack of culture, often shows itself to be a better judge than the captains of the motion picture industry. In the August 15 number of *L'Écran Français,* André Bazin wrote: "The distributors put a curse upon *La Bataille du rail, La Dernière Chance, Quatre pas dans les nuages,* and recently *Jour de fête* [he could have added *Zéro de conduite* and *Farrebique*] before they were welcomed triumphantly by the public."

The opinion that it is the conservatism and the pusillanimity of the distributors that most often compromises the career of original works is echoed by Claude Roy, who accuses the commercial directors of the cinema of stifling the very creation of films that are out of the common run: "The true festival of the cursed film," he wrote in the same number of *L'Écran Français,* "ought to be held in limbo where sleep the still-born films that the rules of the commercial game (or the stupidity of the leaders of the industry) have condemned. The true cursed film does not exist at all, and it is only in a necropolis of manuscripts that one may celebrate its sabbath."

In this respect Jean Grémillon's *Le Printemps et la liberté,* which exists solely as a scenario, recently published with a preface by Pierre Kast, may be considered the very archetype of a cursed

film. Probably every great producer has, in some sad corner of his memory, the image of a film that he was once obliged to abandon. Of how many projects of this kind have we read in the newspapers, projects whose very titles we have forgotten? Sometimes, however, at the end of some ten years, a tenacious and courageous director manages to assert himself. But even then his work is either cut to meet the demands of the producer or else misunderstood by the public.

It must be stressed that the incomprehension of the majority of spectators is still, in spite of the development of film clubs and popular weeklies, a redoubtable factor. The films shown at the Biarritz festival had in their day been more or less unfavorably received by audiences. This is understandable for a work as difficult and as elliptical as *Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne;* it is less understandable for *Lumière d'été,* whose symbolism is more comprehensible and whose human and plastic qualities are brilliant. And the popular reception was shamefully cool for the wonderful *Flame of New Orleans,* René Clair's first American film, which fortunately was rousingly reëvaluated at Biarritz.

Notably, one of the most outstanding works of the French cinema has been the victim both of the distributors and of the public: namely, Jean Vigo's admirable *Atalante,* which the audiences at Biarritz hailed as one of the prime monuments of the cinema. The strange lyricism of this film certainly bewilders and troubles the mind; but for this very reason it should have at least aroused intense curiosity at the time of its release.

The distributors refused certain films solicited for showing at the festival, including the inexhaustible *Règle du jeu,* which, as the years go by, stands out as one of the summits of the cinematographic language. But had the festival lasted as long as a month, its organizers might well have demanded such films as *Les Portes de la nuit, Le Voyageur de la Toussaint* and *Le Ciel est à vous.* The first of these films was shown and discussed by the film group Objectif 49, but to the two others spectators are singularly indifferent.

The phenomenon is assuredly not peculiar to the seventh art. Is it not from painting and literature, in fact, that the epithet "cursed" has been taken? The nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth knew too many "cursed" poets and painters. And although today the risk of malediction is tempered by the snob value which attaches to unappreciated works, there is no reason to believe that the future state of affairs will be improved. Snobs are far from being invariably intuitive. Although they have, under the aegis of certain cinema clubs, reëstablished the reputation of French films such as *Espoir* and *Les Dernières Vacances,* American films such as *The Enchanted Cottage* and *Gilda,* and English films such as *The Robber Symphony,* their admiration runs the risk of going astray and placing the extravagant on the same level as the authentic. The example of the old films that are being shown at the film library in the Avenue de Messine in Paris is quite conclusive. Audiences are as numerous and enthusiastic for rich and powerful surrealist works like *L'Age d'or* as for modernistic extravagances which, in the opinion of authorities such as André Bazin and Georges Sadoul, are today singularly outmoded. Moreover, the exceptional quality of certain silent films such as *Nosferatu le vampire,* which is much more than a mere horror film, seems to escape the snobs.

In a word, snobbery, eccentricity, and cinema are so often mingled that they are almost inextricable. We find the living incarnation of this truth in Jean Cocteau, one of the most zealous organizers of the Biarritz festival. Assuredly the seventh art has restored to the author of *Les Parents terribles* a sort of aesthetic virginity and, as it were, a new authenticity. But his taste for the baroque, his jugglery, his skill as illusionist mimicking the magician, sometimes impair the quality of his undertakings. And one is obliged to ask whether the aesthetes and the enthusiasts of the darkened auditoriums are pursuing the best in Cocteau. His first film, *Le Sang d'un poète,* a work which is both fascinating and debatable, is a very sensitive touchstone. Boundless admira-

tion for this cursed film would, in my opinion, be as inopportune as undiscerning disapproval.

Indeed, many of the real or sham zealots of the cursed cinema are animated by a sort of anticonformity which is often so blind that it can be as dangerous as the conservatism and the routine it denounces. The taste for what is new, the love of singularity, and the desire to redeem misappreciated films such as *The Magnificent Ambersons,* must not sweep their adherents toward a byzantinism that would widen the gap already too strongly marked between what the public seeks in the cinema and the cinema conceived as an autonomous art. At the present time, the notion of the cursed film is not sufficiently clear to be effective. Essentially it is not a question of redeeming films "on the fringe," intensely exciting exceptional works such as *La Nuit porte conseil* or *Le Deuil sied à Électre,* for which time itself will work; it is rather a question of redeeming those films of universal import that are frowned upon by producers or the public because of their conciseness, their severity, and (need we say it?) their classic balance. It is unthinkable that *Le Ciel est à vous* should be disdained even by specialized audiences, or that *La Règle du jeu* should have still aroused protests in a theater on the Champs Élysées that risked showing it again.

Before tickling the palate of a minority of spectators eager for aesthetic experiences, the work of the critics is to mold the taste of the public and even of those "cultured" persons who, too often moved by a literary atavism, judge the cinema according to a standard inspired by the novel and the stage. A good "western" is better than an insipid adaptation of a stage success; an intelligent burlesque is better than the witticisms of a celebrated comedy reproduced on the screen.

Indeed, not only are there cursed films, but a strange malediction seems to weigh on the cinema as a whole, judging by the alarming aberrations in taste that provoke joint misjudgments by the public, the producers, and, often, the press. It is the inde-

pendence of the cinema that must be preserved. To favor exceptional films without taking any interest in the rest is rather like putting the cart before the horse.

It is also a form of complaisance, a taking delight in a brilliant game reserved for an élite instead of giving attention to the mass of spectators, who too often are crammed with indigestible food. The intellectuals of all countries, following the example of André Bazin, a veritable apostle of the cinema, should face this task, which is doubtless more difficult than the others but is also more worth while and more rewarding.

Projecting America Through Films

ROBERT KATZ

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FROM its inception, the documentary film has been intimately linked with propaganda. During the war, production and distribution of such film reached an unprecedented peak. From the point of view of the film propagandist, the war simplified issues. It supplied documentarians with two important prerequisites, a definite point of view and a clear-cut purpose, a unity which the documentary as a whole achieves only in the face of major events. With the end of the war as a source of dramatic topics and techniques, and the drastic curtailment of government support in many countries, the producers of propaganda films were suddenly faced with the necessity of reëxamining their aims. What were to be their new objectives?

No derogatory implications should be attached to the term "propaganda" in this context. To deny that documentary films designed for foreign information programs have the purpose of influencing their audiences would be patently naïve. The aim of exerting such an influence is a perfectly legitimate one. Propaganda in itself is neither good nor bad. Its ethical and political nature is determined by the propagandist's aims and the means he uses to achieve them. The documentary sent to foreign countries is usually meant to illustrate aspects of the national scene which the producing country wants to have understood abroad, and understood in a favorable way. No country can be expected to disseminate information highlighting its own shortcomings. The "facts of life" confronting the average propagandist were once expressed with characteristic candor by no less an authority on the subject than Winston Churchill: "I must . . . pick my way among

heated ploughshares, and in this ordeal my only guides are singleness of purpose and a good or, at any rate, well trained conscience."

While a genuine understanding of films for foreign information makes it essential to keep their propagandistic purpose in mind, we must remember that misleading or blatant propaganda that tries to hide shortcomings will eventually backfire. In the long run, truthful information, establishing a common bond of confidence, will always be the most rewarding form of propaganda.

Our own foreign documentary film program faces a more formidable handicap than that of any other country because it has to reach audiences whose visual concept of the United States has been firmly established by Hollywood feature productions, most of which, according to Walter White, are often referred to as "American kiss-kiss, bang-bang pictures." This handicap needn't be discouraging. On the contrary, it constitutes a healthy challenge. The minds of foreign peoples are in no way closed. To paraphrase Wendell Willkie's famous statement, we can draw upon a tremendous reservoir of curiosity about the United States. Valid documentaries, illustrating the many unknown or misunderstood facets of American life, are bound to carry particular weight, owing to the impact of a real surprise.

In analyzing the State Department's documentary program, it is essential to consider its history.

During the war, the OWI's Overseas Branch built up a production unit to which we owe a considerable number of documentary classics. In 1946, the Division of International Motion Pictures (IMP) was created within the State Department. Unlike the OWI, IMP has not been a *production* unit. Producing functions were limited to the assignment of original productions to private producers, with planning and supervision by IMP. In addition, IMP's Adaptation Section was authorized to utilize stock material or films that could be acquired from the outside. Another function of considerable scope was the dubbing of foreign-language versions. In the spring of 1947, drastic budget cuts reduced the num-

bers of regular personnel considerably, but in 1948 a substantial budget of $2,000,000 was restored. According to official figures, the program calls for an average yearly production of fifty subjects (100 reels)—forty reels constituting original productions, plus sixty reels of acquired films. Each fim is dubbed in an average of fourteen languages, though the number of languages is sometimes as high as twenty-four. In addition, IMP fills requests from abroad for single prints of specialized technical films.

The changeover, in 1946, from the OWI's operation producing its own films to an essentially supervisory one had an immediate effect on government films. The OWI's years of experience in producing films for foreign information had achieved a unity of concept and techniques which was now lost, since most outside producers were not familiar with the psychological needs of foreign audiences. A new, heterogeneous staff had to be integrated into a going concern. Nevertheless, after a short period of reorganization, films began to flow again. Realizing that foreign audiences are more familiar with skyscrapers, technical achievements, and certain eccentricities than with what IMP Chief Herbert T. Edwards recently summarized as "the vast panorama of American life that this nation seeks to have understood abroad," topics were selected to include a good portion of rural America, cultural aspects, and subjects dealing with international coöperation.

Quite a few of the original pictures, made under contract by private producers, were hampered by a self-conscious, "preachy" attitude, among them *Good Neighbors* (on the work of women's organizations such as the League of Women Voters), *Rural Nurse,* and *Country Store.* As the program progressed, some of these early shortcomings were overcome, mostly by producers with experience in the field of foreign information. Julien Bryan's *Blue Ribbon* (directed by Francis Thompson) gave a vivid picture of 4-H activities and county fairs. Willard Van Dyke and Irving Jacoby's *Journey into Medicine* was a mature picture on the training of a

young doctor at Columbia's Presbyterian Hospital and Johns Hopkins University. Utilizing Cartier-Bresson footage[1] and other material, Peter Elgar produced the deeply moving *Reunion,* a film on the participation of the United States in the repatriation of displaced persons.

The IMP Adaptation Section, using stock material accumulated over the years, produced such pictures as *Lean Years* (on American postwar relief for needy countries) and a charming short subject entitled *City Pastorale.* Although topically an item of minor importance, *City Pastorale* is a fine example of an "unpropagandistic" propaganda film. Realizing that for many foreign people New York has become a symbol of relentless, mechanized, dehumanized "American" city life, Frank Beckwith and his collaborators set out to show New Yorkers relaxing on a pleasant Sunday, wandering down a quiet street, playing baseball, boccia ball, or chess in Central Park, and going to the Zoo. The merit of this film does not lie in its contents, but in its leisurely pace, its unpretentious, human approach, and a refreshing absence of any "sales talk."

During the first phase of IMP operations, acquired pictures outnumbered original productions three to one. They were contributed by industrial sponsors, scientific and professional associations, and other government agencies. Since these films had originally been made for domestic audiences and presupposed a certain knowledge of the American scene, it was often necessary to make revisions. In these commercially sponsored films, outright promotion was carefully eliminated in agreement with the films' sponsors. Acquired films touched upon a great variety of subjects: agricultural topics,[2] scientific films,[3] technical and industrial pic-

[1] Cartier-Bresson's version was originally released in France under the title *Le Retour.*

[2] E.g., *Irrigation* (Dept. of Agriculture), *The Science of Milk Production* (an exceptionally good picture sponsored by Purina-Ralston), *Rural Electrification* (Dept. of Agriculture), *Under Western Skies* (International Harvester), *The Story of Phenothiazine* (Du Pont).

[3] E.g., the outstanding *Gift of Green* (New York Botanical Gardens) and *Spreading Wings* (a beautiful color picture on the metamorphosis of the monarch butterfly, by Simmel-Meservie).

tures,[4] and special subjects often selected upon specific requests from abroad.[5] In addition to the acquired films, about twenty issues of the weekly *United Newsreel* were produced by drawing upon a pool of five major newsreel companies.

The budget cuts of 1947 left IMP with a skeleton staff. Fortunately, a considerable portion of the available funds had already been earmarked for a number of pictures, some of which were well along in production. Although money for the maintenance of a regular staff was severely curtailed, there still remained a sizable sum for hiring new personnel on a contract basis. The year that followed was mainly used for work on pictures that had been approved or begun before the budget cuts occurred. In addition, hopes for a new budget in the future made it advisable to lay the groundwork for better times.

This hope was not disappointed. In the summer of 1948, IMP began to operate again on a generous budget of $2,000,000 a year. This article will confine itself to IMP achievements through the last fiscal year (to June 30, 1949) because in this way we can deal with long-range trends which lend themselves best to a constructive analysis.

During the two years following the budget cuts of 1947, IMP's purpose remained substantially the same. It was, as Herbert Edwards put it, "to visualize the American, his land, and his way of life, that the people of the world may see for themselves." The administrative pattern, however, was somewhat modified through the assigning of additional sections of the work to outside contractors. The policy of making substantial changes in acquired pictures was abandoned. Foreign-language dubbings were shifted to contractors. The defunct *United Newsreel* was eventually replaced by a monthly *Screen Magazine,* produced by RKO-Pathé.

[4] E.g., *Steel, Man's Servant* (U. S. Steel), *Magnesium, Metal from the Sea* (Dept. of the Interior), *Conquest of the Hudson* (on the Lincoln Tunnel), *Clean Waters* (General Electric).

[5] E.g., *Forest Fire Fighting in the South* (Dept. of Agriculture), *Keep 'Em Out* (on rat control), *Diary of a Sergeant* (an Army picture on the rehabilitation of war casualties), *Colonial Williamsburg* (Eastman Kodak).

The films that have been completed and distributed during these two years form a strange mosaic.

In the technical field, a limited number of single prints from outside sources, among them the high-caliber pictures of the American College of Surgeons, were used to fill special requests. These films have done much for the standing of American science and industry abroad.

The list of pictures dealing with special events includes short subjects on distinguished visitors to the United States and on the signing of the North Atlantic Pact, and a colorful though somewhat lengthy three-reeler, *The Truman Inaugural.*

Among the acquired pictures we find such competent films as *Starting Line* (Southern Educational Film Production Service), dealing with the treatment of premature birth, such industrial pictures as *The House of Squibb,* and such travelogues as Esso's *Pennsylvania* and *New Jersey,* and Standard Oil's *California* and *Oregon.*

Of the original pictures, *The Photographer, Edward Weston,* by Willard Van Dyke and Irving Jacoby, deserves to be mentioned first and foremost. The beauty and validity of this picture about a great American figure will do much to dispel foolish notions abroad concerning the absence of American art and culture. At the same time, it will familiarize other nations with the breathtaking beauty of that part of America with which Weston so closely identifies himself in his work. *The Bridgeport Plan,* produced by Julien Bryan, tells an enlightening story about a civic project undertaken by the Community Advisory Center for the benefit of returning veterans and the city's working people who need expert guidance. *International Ice Patrol* (Affiliated Film Producers) is a competent picture dealing with an effective example of international coöperation.

Unfortunately, these pictures do not seem to represent the prevailing trend. A considerable percentage of IMP films suffer from superficiality and sugarcoating. *Trailer 201,* for example, purports

to tell the story of highway transport in the United States. What a magnificent opportunity to give foreign audiences a real feeling of the sweep of the country, the "texture" of her towns and cities, to create an equivalent of the English classic *Night Mail!* Instead, we have a rather tedious, overlong four-reeler whose self-congratulatory narration dampens whatever pleasure can be gained from some beautiful photography. It strongly implies the naïve belief that motor transport is an exclusively American phenomenon. There seems to be no end of wonderment about the miracle of it all, for even the changing of gears becomes a major accomplishment ("he can *feel* when it is time to shift"). A five-reeler on the University of California at Los Angeles, *UCLA,* hardly does justice to this great place of learning. It deals predominantly with extracurricular activities. Some of these aspects of campus life, with its informality, its self-governing student body, and the time-honored institution of working one's way through college, will undoubtedly interest foreign audiences, but all too often the treatment is so syrupy that even real situations look phony. The prevailing tenor of the narration is set by such clichés as Susan's impression of her fellow students: " 'Gee,' she thinks, 'gee, they're swell.' " Nowhere do we experience the true feeling of a place of learning (as we do, for instance, in the excellent Julien Bryan film *Princeton,* or the more pedantic English picture *Cambridge*). The one student at U.C.L.A. who gives the impression of studying seriously soon collapses and recovers only after he works up a healthy interest in sports. One of IMP's most ambitious and costly projects, *The Holtville Story,* cannot be fully analyzed here. Although it had been widely previewed early in 1949, it was withdrawn again for further adaptation. The original version, which dealt with a school project affecting the whole community of Holtville, Alabama, virtually excluded the colored population. When asked to comment on this exclusion, IMP Chief Herbert Edwards said: "There are no Negroes in Holtville—except, of course, in shanty town."

In considering a program as broad as that of IMP, it would be foolish to ask for masterpieces only. More important than any single film is the trend that emerges. In this respect, the example of *The Holtville Story* gains particular significance. The output of recent years shows clearly that controversial issues are carefully avoided. Foreign audiences are well aware that the United States, like any other country, faces many serious problems, but insistent requests for concrete information on minority questions, housing problems, and similar controversial topics are consistently ignored in the IMP program. Many participants in the recent world-wide tour of *Town Meeting of the Air* noted the repeated questions from all foreign audiences about our minority problems. It would be unfair to expect a wholly satisfactory answer from our foreign documentary program, but to ignore the problem altogether in a major production about a southern town can only result in the suspicion that we are trying to hide something. An information program that wants to be effective must be prepared to demonstrate its honesty by including the bad with the good.[6]

Hand in hand with the desire to hide shortcomings that are well known abroad is a tendency to "talk down" to the audience. In its report to Congress of March, 1949, the U. S. Advisory Commission on Information listed as the main criticism of American documentaries in Europe that "the propaganda they carry is a little too obvious." The Commission illustrated this point by the example of the French, who "complain that we have spoiled many of our good documentary films by using them as an excuse to bring democracy to a people who think they know as much or more about it than we do." This trend is dangerous in two respects. It antagonizes audiences, and at the same time tends to lull the producer into thinking he has achieved his goal.[7]

[6] The desire to hide unpleasant aspects has long plagued the IMP program. An original production, *New York,* which acknowledged the existence of slums, was withheld in spite of the fact that it included powerful sequences illustrating large-scale slum clearance.

[7] Professor Leonard Doob of Yale University once summarized the danger of this type of government propaganda: "The propagandist is quite inclined to become his own propagandee."

While the quality of IMP films reflects some hopeful aspects, as well as objectionable trends, the volume and pace of production are uniformly disappointing. From the inception of IMP in January, 1946, until the budget cuts of April, 1947, more original productions were completed than in the two years that followed (in spite of the fact that many of the 1947–1949 pictures were already in work in the spring of 1947). As for the number of acquired pictures, at least three times as many were included in the program during the first one and a quarter years of operations as in the following two years. There seems also to be an inordinate amount of waste. A number of major productions remained on the shelves for some time after completion, "pending further changes"; among them were such films as *Agricultural College* (on Rutgers), *A Glass of Milk, The Hedgerow Story* (a film on a repertory theater), and *New York*. The lag between assignment, completion, and distribution of pictures is often excessive. *The New York School of Home Economics* (at Cornell) and *The Holtville Story,* for instance, were in process for more than two years. Even such a vital film as the one on ERP was not ready for release when the British *Inside U. S. Aid* was already being distributed all over the world. Compared with the steady flow of films from Canada's National Film Board, which also operates on a budget of $2,000,000, IMP production amounts to hardly more than a trickle. As a result, the United States information offices abroad still rely heavily on old OWI films or early IMP productions, and distribution is quite spotty. There is a lack of film officers abroad, and too little attention is paid to a uniformly good promotion job.[8] Reports from Mexico and Egypt indicate, however, that in a few countries IMP distribution has achieved encouraging results.

In evaluating IMP achievements as a whole, it would be unrealistic to compare them only with operations that have enjoyed

[8] Anyone who has utilized the excellent documentary catalogue *Films from Britain,* published yearly by the British Information Service in New York, or has dealt with their highly competent staff, will regret that U. S. information services have not built up similarly effective film sections.

a far greater degree of stability, such as Canada's National Film Board or the British Information Service. What matters in the last analysis is the degree to which existing needs have been fulfilled, and whether all was done that was possible under the circumstances.

There is no doubt that an efficient, straightforward, and imaginative visual information program can be invaluable to the United States abroad. From the point of view of motion picture quality and informational value the number of satisfactory films has been discouragingly small. The high quality achieved during the war by government units like OWI and the Army Signal Corps have disappeared to a regrettable degree. From the production standpoint, results are far below the volume that could be expected in view of available funds.

It is not easy for one formerly associated with an operation to offer solutions for its shortcomings. There may, however, be merit in contributing a few constructive ideas about this important topic, which can only gain by a candid discussion.

An expansion of those IMP activities which have proved their usefulness is highly desirable, but just as important is a realistic study of past shortcomings.

The experience of these last years should indicate that it may well be necessary to resume production of original pictures *within* IMP, in addition to "farming out" some assignments. A stable, well-integrated production unit, staffed with proved documentarians and personnel with first-hand knowledge of foreign audiences, is essential for a satisfactory program.

The program itself is in need of careful planning and should be squarely based on a thorough analysis of foreign needs. Most of all, documentaries should reflect a genuine belief in the democratic principles that they serve by allowing facts to speak for themselves. There should be fewer generalities and more concrete information. By frankly dealing with the problems facing the United States today, our film program could only gain in credi-

bility. Occasional evidence of a sense of humor would do no harm.

In its 1949 report to Congress, the U. S. Advisory Commission on Information stressed the importance of documentaries as "among the most effective media of communicating information concretely and impressively." No effort can be too great to make the most of our documentary program, which draws upon an inexhaustible reservoir of interest in the American way of life.

The Plight of the Educational Film

NED L. REGLEIN

NED L. REGLEIN, Visual Aids Director of John Wiley and Sons, publishers, was in charge of various aspects of the Army's wartime training film programs from 1941 to 1945, as Chief, Motion Picture Section, A.A.F. Training Aids Division, in 1944, and as Liaison Officer, First Motion Picture Unit, Culver City, in 1945. He has directed educational film production for American Airlines and for Teaching Films Inc.

A STRANGE paradox exists today in the field of the educational film. On the one hand is the wide public interest in the inclusion of motion pictures and other visual aids in children's curricula. The production techniques available to educational film makers have improved considerably in the last ten or fifteen years; there are more projectors in schools than ever before; scores of universities and colleges are offering courses in audiovisual instruction; and every year sees more conferences held and more workshops established. On the other hand is the plain fact that the educational film producer is reaching an impasse commercially. This will be denied, I am sure, because a denial would be "good business," but the fact remains that not a single educational film producer has shown a consistent substantial profit over a period of years. This has been privately admitted by educational film producers in traditionally smoke-filled hotel rooms at the conventions. Let us hope with them, more publicly, that the situation will change, recognizing that even under the best circumstances it will take a long time to make ends more than meet.

First of all, the large school appropriations that had been expected in view of the success of training films during the war have failed to materialize. A large number of projectors have indeed been sold, but the anticipated magnitude of film sales has not even been approximated. Since the expensive projectors had to be bought first by school systems and colleges, they may be considered to represent a direct inroad on appropriations for films; and so may the long overdue postwar increases in salaries for teachers.

A more general factor in the plight of educational films is that their market is occasional as well as limited. A film that has been sold to a school is used for five or ten years, normally, since the educational audience changes every year in every school grade. This means that the school library or the rental library amortizes a film's cost over a long period of time. The situation is further complicated by the number of films made available without charge by commercial and industrial concerns. Often these are thinly veiled advertising shorts which nevertheless contain enough informational material to be selected by the audiovisual librarian in preference to renting or purchasing films produced solely for educational purposes.

Moreover, the market has been flooded with hundreds of pictures merely purporting to be educational. Writing, producing, and distributing techniques are as much specialized for the educational film as they are for the "western" or the animated cartoon. An adequate teaching film cannot be cut together from the sweepings of a cutting-room floor, nor can one be made by a well-meaning amateur (or professional) who takes an Eyemo out on week ends proposing to turn out a travel film "in glorious XXX-color" to be used in geography classes for the edification of fifth- or sixth- or seventh-graders. I talked a few years ago with a man who had made a picture about the desert. He thought that it would serve admirably for classroom use. I wondered for which grade level the film had been planned. He wasn't sure about that. Who wrote the script? It was shot off the cuff. Who was the technical adviser? Well, he himself had lived on and near the desert for years. Such films, however well intentioned, tend to discredit the educational value of films in the schools and to make supervisors of visual aids understandably wary purchasers.

Under the limiting circumstances outlined, a sale of 300 prints of a film to secondary and elementary schools is today considered very good indeed. (Certainly, many more prints of some films are sold, but barely salable films, "dogs" to the trade, come along too,

and pull down the average.) The potential market is much smaller in the colleges and universities. First, their number is smaller, and, secondly, many among the faculties are reluctant to incorporate films into their teaching.

Finally, there is the problem of production costs. This is of major importance. The average film intended for classroom use runs one 400-foot reel in length—ten minutes running time for a 16-mm. release print. The average retail price of black-and-white films is about $45 or $50 a reel. Color release prints retail at approximately $100 for each 400-foot reel.

Now, how much does it cost, in round figures, to produce a bona fide educational film, using every known means of economizing, but still employing union production crews and recognized writers? Here is an example from my own experience:

$ 7,000	Camera crew, editing, titling, recording and re-recording, negative laboratory costs, talent, and narrator
2,100	General office overhead, distribution costs, promotion, research, script
$ 9,100	Cost "in the can"; the first print
2,700	300 release prints, reels, cans, labels, boxes
300	Instructors' manuals, miscellaneous
$12,100	Total production cost

So much for the costs. Now for the income from sales. Out of the 300 prints, about 25 were reserved for distribution as complimentary copies, for dealers, and for previews. (Note that most educators want to *see* the film before they buy!) Dealers receive a 20 per cent discount, so we have a gross of $11,000, the income from 275 prints sold at $40 net. Yet the film cost $12,100 to produce. It should be borne in mind, too, that the $11,000 is not returned immediately, since the average educational film has not reached its full market until a period of about five years has elapsed. Possibly in the next three years the film will have sold

400 or 500 prints, giving its particular story a different ending. But even so, five years is a long time in which to recover an original investment or, at best, to make a modest profit. More than a score of the educational film companies that were organized in New York and Hollywood after the end of the war have failed. Production costs were just too high.

How can the production costs be cut down? In producing the picture cited here as an illustration of costs, a union camera crew was used; a guild writer wrote the script and the film was cut by a union editor. The cast was small, consisting of only five members. The shooting time was two days. Titling and effects were adequate but minimum. Hollywood "quickie" producers could have learned a trick or two; not a crossword puzzle was solved during those two days! The cost for research, general overhead, script, and distribution was certainly a modest one. (And educational films do need research.) The cost of release prints is standard, no matter how good or bad the film is.

Two ways to cut costs suggest themselves. One is to overthrow standard production techniques, to shoot in 16-mm. using non-union crews and cheaper writers. I have yet to see a film so produced, however, that looked as good as one shot to standard quality on 35-mm. film, with use of special effects and excellent laboratory facilities, and then optically reduced to 16-mm. for release. But some educational film producers are trying the sub-standard method. One, for the record, actually edited his film in the camera! Occasionally a really good educational film is turned out very cheaply, but examples are rare, as rare as the example of *The Quiet One* among feature films. Although educational film producers may argue the point, it is difficult to see how good pictures can consistently be made at very low figures under present conditions.

Secondly, there is the possibility of having a lower union wage schedule adopted for the production of bona fide educational films. I do not mean advertising and public relations films, but

films specifically intended to serve the instructional needs of schools. George H. Elvin, in his letter published in the *Hollywood Quarterly,* Volume III, Number 4, indicates that differential union scales for the production of educational films are being adopted in England. Could not some comparable arrangement be made in the United States so that professional motion picture personnel—writers, directors, technicians, and actors—can be utilized, when available, in making educational films? It is absolutely impossible for the educational film producer who wants to produce quality films to pay his production staff on the same scale as a New York or Hollywood studio or a huge industrial concern, if he is to survive.

In summation, since the educational film market has not met the expectations, two possible readjustments are proposed in order to allow a producer to make at least a production-sustaining profit. One is to use advanced amateurs, 16-mm. production units such as colleges and universities have, or other marginal film makers, thereby, however, probably producing films of less than desirable quality. The other requires that the unions and guilds make allowances in the pay scales for work on strictly educational films.

Quality or economy; economy or failure to survive: that is the dilemma of educational films. A final complicating factor is that school children recognize production quality on the screen. They have been educated to it by Hollywood. They know!

A Bibliography for the Quarter

Book Editor, FRANKLIN FEARING

BOOKS

THAT POETRY is primarily intended to be *heard* rather than read and that radio is the medium uniquely adapted to this purpose is a major thesis of *Radio and Poetry,* by Milton Allen Kaplan (Columbia University Press, 1949). There are chapters on the dramatic, poetic, and documentary techniques of the radio verse play, adapting poetry for radio presentation, and the reading of poetry on the air. An appendix lists approximately 220 original poetic radio scripts, with the date and station of original broadcast. Implicit in these discussions is the notion that, with all its manifest limitations, radio could be responsible for a restoration of poetry to its place as a popular art.

In *Stage to Screen* (Harvard University Press, 1949) Nicholas Vardac approaches the history of films in terms of their emergence from the theater. He finds the origins of specific cinematic techniques in what he calls the "realistic-romantic" theater of the mid-nineteenth century, specifically in the popular melodramas and spectacle plays of this period. The staging methods of Irving, Belasco, and MacKaye are analyzed in terms of their special contribution to the realism which shaped the work of Griffith and Porter. In like manner the pantomime-spectacle of the nineteenth-century theater is regarded as a forerunner of the fantasy films of Méliès. The work is illustrated and amply documented. Nicholas Vardac is Associate Professor of Drama at Stanford University.

Youth, Communication and Libraries (American Library Association, Chicago, 1949) is a collection of papers presented before the Library Institute at the University of Chicago in August, 1947. It is edited by Frances Henne, Alice Brooks, and Ruth Ersted. The contributors include educational psychologists, sociologists,

librarians, a school superintendent, an editor of children's books, and an anthropologist. Representative titles are "Print and the Communication of Intergroup Understanding," "Therapeutic Value of Books," "The Library in Today's School," "Publishing Books for Youth," and "Evaluating the Effectiveness of Public Libraries as Agencies of Communication for Youth." Especially noteworthy are papers by Paul Lazarsfeld ("Motion Pictures, Radio Programs, and Youth") and Bernard Berelson ("Communication and Youth").

Luigi Chiarini, author of *Il film nei problemi dell'arte* (Edizioni dell'Ateneo, Rome, 1949), is a film director and head of the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Rome, which publishes the monthly film journal *Bianco e nero*. The present work is based on the author's experience as a director and on discussions with students at the Center. Part One deals with esthetic and moral problems and film theory, Part Two with technical problems in film production, acting, photography, music, and montage. The book closes with an essay on Charles Chaplin ("Parabola di Charlot e di Chaplin") with special reference to *Monsieur Verdoux*. There is a bibliography of sixty-eight titles.

Communications Research 1948–1949, edited by Paul Lazarsfeld and Frank Stanton (Harper and Brothers, 1949), contains reports of experimental investigations on a variety of problems in the communications field. These include a study of the impact of comics on children (Katherine M. Wolf and Marjorie Fiske), an analysis of radio programming (Kenneth Baker), a study of the listening patterns of the morning radio audience (Paul Lazarsfeld and Helen Dinerman), a study of the function of the newspaper by investigating what happens when people fail to get one (Bernard Berelson), a study of magazine reading (Babette Kass), a study of deviant responses ("misunderstandings") to communications content (Patricia L. Kendall and Katherine M. Wolf), a study of patterns of influence and communications behavior in a local community (Robert K. Merton), and a comprehensive an-

alysis of domestic broadcasting in the U.S.S.R. (Alex Inkeles). These studies give a picture of the methods, problems, and results of contemporary research in the field. They are authorative, and, it is worth noting, they are so written that the layman as well as the professional will find them interesting reading.

Actors on Acting, edited by Toby Cole and Helen Krich Chinoy (Crown Publishers, New York, 1949), is a collection of actors' thoughts and writings about their own craft. The selections quoted range from those of Plato and Aristotle—who were not themselves actors but merely wrote about acting—to Walter Huston and Raymond Massey. In addition to Greece, Rome, and the Middle Ages, the countries Italy, Spain, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Russia, and America are represented. Some of the names are (to this reviewer) unknown. Who, for example, was Joseph Isidore Samson (1793–1871)? Or John Hill (1716–1775)? There are also the "greats"—Colley Cibber, David Garrick, Mrs. Siddons, Coquelin, Sarah Bernhardt, Edmund Kean, Gordon Craig, Eleonora Duse, Edwin Forrest, Edwin Booth, and Joseph Jefferson. Among the contemporaries are John Gielgud, Michael Redgrave, Chaplin, Paul Muni, Judith Anderson, G. B. Shaw, and Stella Adler. We are pleased to note that the *Quarterly* is represented by an ample quotation from Alexander Knox's penetrating article, "Acting and Behaving," which appeared in Volume I, Number 3. There are introductory essays for each of the fourteen sections, and a concise biographical statement for each contributor. There is a classified bibliography of 1,100 titles, a listing of periodicals dealing with acting, and an "art of acting" index. The last gives the major references in the volume, classified according to the fifty fundamentals of acting.

It is perhaps only in Hollywood that one could find the adjectives to characterize anything as huge as George C. D. Odell's *Annals of the New York Stage* (Columbia University Press, 1949). Volume XV covers the period 1891–1894. In its thousand or more pages the author apparently chronicles every theatrical event great

or small that occurred, and to an extraordinary degree manages to make it sound interesting. There is, fortunately, a comprehensive index.

Books continue to appear on the legal aspects of the mass media of communication. Matthew Bender and Company, of Albany, New York, have brought out *Motion Picture Agreements,* annotated by Alexander Lindey. Among the topics covered are employment contracts, contracts for purchase and sale of rights, production contracts, patent licenses and royalty contracts, basic contracts with the craft guilds, and distribution contracts. Mr. Lindey is a lawyer, and co-author with Morris Ernst of *The Censor Marches On* and *Hold Your Tongue. Radio and the Law,* by J. G. Moser and Richard A. Lavine (Parker and Company, Los Angeles, California), presents the legal aspects of radio with respect to the FCC and the Communications Act. Chapters cover such topics as program control, transmission to foreign stations, control of program content, advertising, fortunetelling, defamation by radio, right of privacy, rights of candidates and the presentation of public issues, artistic property rights, and television and FM. There is a comprehensive index to the Communications Act, a table of cases cited, and a general index.

The Human Nature of Playwriting, by Samson Raphaelson (Macmillan, New York, 1949), is described as a verbatim account of what happened when thrity young people and the author in a college course on creative writing at the University of Illinois dug into their own lives for material, and molded it into dramatic form. A stenographic record of everything said in the class was made. This was edited and the result is a session-by-session chronicle in dialogue form in which we see how ideas emerging from everyday experience get transmuted into vital creative forms. The author notes that much of his own and the class's living is recorded "over and beyond the call of technique." This is a fascinating book. The author is a screenwriter (*Suspicion, Trouble in Paradise*) and playwright (*Accent on Youth, The Jazz Singer*).

Playwriting for Elizabethans, 1600–1605, by Mary Crapo Hyde (Columbia University Press, 1949), is a scholarly examination of the dramaturgy of the period based on a study of the extant plays. The themes, characters, and the devices commonly used at the opening, middle, and end of Elizabethan plays are analyzed in detail. There is an especially interesting section on the inadequate psychological theory of the Elizabethan playwright, especially with respect to his faulty conception of human motivation. The bibliography includes both primary and secondary sources.

REPORTS, CATALOGUES, BULLETINS

Press, Film, Radio: Report on the Commission on Technical Needs (Columbia University Press, 1949) is the third in the series of UNESCO publications in which the results of the surveys of the communication facilities in various countries are reported. The first of these reports was published in 1947 and covered the results of surveys in twelve war-devastated countries. In 1948 the Secretariat undertook to survey the communications resources in seventeen countries in which these resources were not fully developed. The present report covers the situation in fourteen additional countries and territories, bringing the number up to forty-three. The countries represented in this latest report are Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Turkey, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Paraguay. As in the previous studies, the field workers obtained data on the three media—press, radio and film. Technical equipment, staff, raw materials, distribution facilities, outlets, size of audience, and type of governmental or other controls are among the topics on which data were systematically gathered. The material is presented by country and there are exhaustive summary tables. These reports contain basic source material on world communication facilities. They are indispensable for any serious study of world communication problems.

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issued *Freedom of Information: A Selective Report on Recent Writing.* This report, which was prepared under the supervision of Harry J. Crould, Chief of the European Affairs Division, by Helen F. Conover, consists of a carefully annotated bibliography of the books, pamphlets, and articles which have been written on this theme. There are four parts: those discussions which take up the international aspects of the problem, those which are concerned with the problems peculiar to the Americas, those which are concerned with the problems in other countries, and those concerned with the so-called totalitarian countries. The items included cover all aspects of freedom and control in all the mass media of communication. The *Quarterly* is pleased to note that it is represented by several articles, and that it is on a list of the "most significant American journals in the fields of press, radio, and film."

The Institute of Communications Research at the University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, has issued *An Inventory of (Noncommercial) Educational Radio Programming,* by Dallas W. Smythe and his assistants Jennie N. Smythe and Howard H. Hyle. The study is in mimeographed form and analyzes the broadcast programs originated by members of the National Association of Educational Broadcasters for the week May 1–7, 1949. The authors quite properly note that "four years after 'the bomb' . . . and four years after educational institutions generally (and a little frantically) assumed the educational responsibilities implied by our present science and technology," it is time to find out what they are doing about it over the radio. The broadcast time and programs are analyzed for both the station-operator members of NAEB and for program-producing-but-not-station-operator members. Some persons may be startled to learn that educational broadcasting in terms of the coverage of this study, generously estimated, amounts to about 1 per cent of the amount of commercial broadcast time on the air. This study tells what is done with this tiny fraction of broadcast time.

The educational department of the Mutual Broadcasting System has issued two mimeographed bulletins, *Programs for Young People* and *Programs of General Public Interest.* The listings include brief characterizations of the programs, the time of broadcast, and the sponsor. The National Broadcasting Company reviews its activities for the year in the recently released *Annual Review, 1948–1949.* This twenty-page booklet covers such subjects as *Program Policies, Political Campaigns, Public Affairs Programs,* and *Weekly Religious Programs.*

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The current issue of the *Revue Internationale de Filmologie* (No. 5, Volume II, Presses Universitaires de France, 108, Bd. Saint-Germain, Paris 6e) contains reports of the conference of filmology held at Knokke-le-Zoute in June, 1949. This conference, which was attended by a number of psychologists and educators, had two objectives: to undertake a survey at the international level of research in progress in the field of filmology, and to make an inventory of the problems for research in this field. The inventory of problems which is published in the *Revue* contains eleven major categories. These are (1) problems of perception (including form and size constancy and the relation between the space of the audience and the space in the film), (2) identification of things and places in time and space (including figure-ground problems and perception of movement), (3) impression of reality, (4) memory problems, (5) perception of time in films, (6) relationship between individual sequences and the unity of the whole film, (7) identification, projection, and interpretation problems, (8) attitudes of spectator after the film, (9) the production of emotional effects, (10) psychophysiological problems (distribution of light on screen, fatigue discomfort caused by projection, physical reactions of spectator), (11) psychosocial problems (motivations for film attendance, effects of film attendance). This appears to be one of the few attempts in screen literature to codify systematically the re-

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search problems of the film which may be investigated by existing experimental techniques of social science. The titles of some of the papers read at the conference and published in this issue of the *Revue* are "L'Enfant et le film" (Henri Wallon), "Niveau mental et compréhension du cinéma" (René Zazzo), and "Psychoanalyse et cinéma" (S. Bebovici). Of special interest is the reprinting of what may be the first experimental study of responses to film, a paper entitled "Des réactions respiratoires au cours de projections cinématographiques," by E. Toulouse and R. Mourgue, originally published by the French Association for the Advancement of Science in 1920.

A new film journal has appeared, the *European Film Review,* edited by Michael Arthur, 16 Austrasse, Basle, Switzerland, distribution offices, Precinct Publications, 50 Old Brompton Road, London S.W. 7. So far as can be judged from the first two issues before us, it is the intention of its editors to combine the serious with the popular approaches to motion pictures. There is a place for a publication which can achieve an effective combination of the "fan" magazine with the critical approaches to the mass media.

The first issue of the *Educational Theatre Journal,* published by the Educational Theatre Association, edited by Barnard Hewitt, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, has just reached us. This issue is largely devoted to reports of the Work-Project Committees of ETA.