

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

ON ARCHIVES, RUINS AND HERITAGE:
PAST FUTURES OF THE FOLKLORE PROJECT OF
THE BAALBECK INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL (1955-1975)

by
AKRAM NAZIH RAYYIS

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ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT OF

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Title: On Archives, Ruins and Heritage: Past Futures of the Folklore Project of the Baalbeck International Festival (1955-1975)

This work studies the practices and legacy of the Lebanese Nights. It seeks to understand the circumstances and driving forces that led to the ending of its folklore project with the abrupt suspension of the Festival at the beginning of the civil war in 1975. In so doing, the research traces the trajectory of discourses of folklore endorsed through the Lebanese Nights from inception, institutionalization and transformation towards promoting national identity and social cohesion among Lebanese citizens and expatriates. These trajectories are examined within the historical context and institutional governance processes and policies of the Festival's Folklore Subcommittee and emerging elite groups of local artists and intellectuals in promoting new local genre and innovative artistic practices adapted from folklore. As such, this research endeavor aspires to position the folklore project of the Lebanese Nights as a "locally" relevant frame for conducting critical heritage and cultural policy research from Lebanon based on archival discursive institutionalism.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Pre-war Baalbeck International Festival, the Lebanese Nights and the City of Baalbeck

Incubated in the landscape of the ruins of the Roman temples of Bacchus and Jupiter at the city of Baalbeck in the Beqaa valley, Baalbeck International Festival is a pioneering cultural institution which has been instrumental in establishing new cultural practices in Lebanon and the region. The festival was held annually during July and August until it was abruptly suspended by the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990). The city of Baalbeck is located 86 km east of Beirut, at an altitude of 1200 and is surrounded by agricultural plains of the Northern Beqaa¹. It has one of the highest annual turnover of visitors in the country and the citadel has been inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List². Additionally, the city has consistently captured international interest in its cultural preservation and urban and touristic development. Despite numerous legislations, master plans in 1955, 1964 and 2003 as well as development initiatives before and after the civil war, local inhabitants have seen "little economic benefit"³. The city's physical infrastructure lacks the constituents necessary for sustainable tourism and agriculture, with an invasive and irregular growth of

¹ Please refer to Annex 1 for illustrative maps.

² UNESCO's World Heritage List; Date of Inscription: 1984; Criteria: (i) (iv); Ref: 294. Source: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/294> (Accessed on 2.2.2021).

³ Charbel Nahas and Maha Yahya, Stakeholder Analysis and Social Assessment for the Proposed Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development Project (Chapter 6: Baalbeck), November 2007: <https://charbelnahas.org/?cat=18> (accessed on 10.4.2020).

residential construction onto archaeological sites and diminishing landscaped public spaces⁴ that are fragmented by socio-cultural spatial symbols⁵.

The pre-war Baalbeck International Festival had a two-fold national mission: promoting socio-economic development through tourism and fostering “Lebanese talents”⁶ through two initiatives: the “Lebanese Nights” and the “Modern Arab Theater”. It also hosted diverse and internationally recognized performers in music, theater and dance. During this period, the festival acquired an “ever-growing number of audiences every year”⁷ from Lebanon, Arab countries and other regions. Concurrently, it gained a “wide reputation in international circles as the most attractive cultural event in the Middle East”⁸. This was in line with the prevailing official vision of the Lebanese government to link arts and culture with tourism and the uniqueness of the “Lebanese mission” in Lebanon, the region and the world as reasserted in the Presidential Statements published in the Baalbeck Festival catalogues⁹. It was also consistent with the international growth in festival activity and its association with an “advancing tourist industry and negotiations of cultural identity”¹⁰ during the second half of the 20th century.

The Lebanese Nights were main the local creative contribution to the annual festival program. They were managed by the festival’s Folklore Subcommittee with a vision to revive Lebanese heritage based on local folklore as it “conveys the ‘true character of the

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Rim Mortada, *The Symbolic Dimension of the Urban and Cultural Landscape in Baalbek (Lebanon): The Challenge of Resistance and/or Instruments of Power*, dearq 24, INVESTIGACIÓN TEMÁTICA, 2019.

⁶ The Baalbeck International Festivals Website: www.baalbeck.org.lb (accessed on 25.11.2019).

⁷ Ali Jihad Racy, *Baalbeck International Festivals*, in: *Fairuz Legend and Legacy*, Official Catalogue of the USA Tour, 1981.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Baalbeck International Festivals Catalogues, especially during the years from 1957 to 1965.

¹⁰ Katherine Borland, *Unmasking class, gender, and sexuality in Nicaraguan festival*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2006.

nation”¹¹. The festival’s Lebanese Nights initiative produced a repertoire of five variety shows and twelve musical plays between 1957 and 1974 which are listed in Annex 2. They have set standards to local performing art practices and served as an engine of a musical renaissance and modernity in Lebanon and the region as well as a driver towards further professionalization of the performing arts. Moreover, the Lebanese Nights promoted a generation of emerging singers, musicians, poets and dancers who eventually became household names. The current research assumes that the “folklore project” of the Lebanese Nights has ended with the abrupt closure of the festival in 1975 due to the civil war. As such, the post-war revival of the Baalbeck International Festival does not constitute a continuity of this project.

B. Research Problem

This work studies the practices and legacy of the Lebanese Nights. It seeks to understand the circumstances and driving forces that led to the ending of its folklore project with the abrupt suspension of the Festival at the beginning of the civil war in 1975. In so doing, my research traces the trajectory of discourses of folklore and local knowledge endorsed through the Lebanese Nights from inception, institutionalization and transformation towards promoting national identity and social cohesion among Lebanese citizens and expatriates. These trajectories will be examined within the historical context and institutional governance processes and policies of the Festival’s Folklore Subcommittee and emerging elite groups of local artists and intellectuals in promoting new local genre and innovative artistic practices adapted from folklore. As

¹¹ Ali Jihad Racy, Baalbeck International Festivals, in: Fairuz Legend and Legacy, Official Catalogue of the USA Tour, 1981.

such, this research endeavor aspires to position the folklore project of the Lebanese Nights as a “locally” relevant frame for conducting critical heritage and cultural policy research from Lebanon.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Critical Policy Studies offer a relevant and adaptive framework for the study of the local policies that integrates an understanding of the specific temporal and spatial contexts along with agencies, institutional structures, governance pathways and discourses. Local experiences also offer a resourceful entry point towards the production of local knowledge. Moreover, they pave the way for a transnational flow of ideas and practices that are attached to their origin narrative, place and channels¹². In both cases, they presuppose for policy researchers from the peripheries of Euro-America a critical adaptation of interdisciplinary approaches that may challenge hegemonic epistemic practices, processes and boundaries¹³ through the “realization of new sources, (actors) and forms of postcolonial agency”¹⁴ and the emergence of more relevant and integrated concepts, methodologies, epistemologies or perspectives¹⁵. Further to local experiences, times of change foster critical embodiments of emerging futures, just as endings embrace past histories and new beginnings. They open windows of reflection on past public projects and local experiences and color the mirrors of

¹² Pasty Healy, The universal and the contingent: Some reflections on the transnational flow of planning ideas and practices, *Planning Theory*, Vol 11, Issue 2, 2012.

¹³ Manuela Lavinás Picq, Critics at the edge? Decolonizing methodologies in *International Relations*, *International Political Science Review*, Vol. 34, No.4, 2013.

¹⁴ Waleed Hazbun, The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Challenge of Postcolonial Agency: *International Relations, US Policy, and the Arab World*, in: *The Oxford Handbook of Postcolonial Studies*, Edited by Graham Huggan, 2013.

¹⁵ Patricia Leavy, *Essentials of Transdisciplinary Research: using Problem Centered Methodologies*, California: Left Coast Press, 2011.

imagined futures with traces of hidden trajectories to be explored. Endings also offer “alternative narratives and praxis”¹⁶ about questions of values, meanings and imageries of these imagined futures molded by ongoing maneuvers between public agendas, communal and individual biographies and new discursive constructions.

A. Critical Policy Studies

Knowledge about folklore co-evolves with actors and institutions. The ways of constituting and understanding folklore in specific socio-spatial and temporal contexts may lead to particular approaches and levels of its management and governance policies. As such, arising discursive constructions and epistemic promises of folklore are intertwined with power and control to promote specific interests rather than with objective or seemingly neutral societal needs and ideals¹⁷. Over time the dynamic interplay between knowledge and power shape each other. It is reflected in the performance of both actors and institutional structures in addition to processes of governance as much as in knowledge infrastructures of folklore. The performance of powerful actors defines boundaries of exclusion and inclusion and produces practices and policies systems. The trajectory of discourses from inception and institutionalization towards their dominance is maintained by ideologies and fantasies that neutralize relations of domination¹⁸. They may be interrupted once an imbalance occurs in the established power interplay related to conflict or threats. New actors and

¹⁶ Jeffrey Shantz, *Biographical Sociology: Struggles over an Emergent Sociological Practice*, a/b: Auto/Biography Studies 24, no. 1, 2009.

¹⁷ Kristof Van Assche, Raoul Beunen and Martijn Duineveld, *The will to knowledge: natural resource management and power/knowledge dynamics*, *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning*, Vol 19, No. 3, 2017.

¹⁸ David Howarth, *Power, discourse and policy: articulating a hegemony approach to critical policy studies*, *Critical Policy Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3-4, 2009.

in turn governance systems will arise creating legitimizing spaces for the emergence of competing discourses, adaptive transformations of the previously dominant discourses or in other cases their demise.

Critical policy studies offer theoretical frameworks and methods that build on the above discursive and physical landscape mediated by power-knowledge dynamics. They emphasize an interpretive and constructivist understanding of knowledge of policy making based on the convergence of interpretive, critical and poststructuralist theories. Accordingly, policy processes and their implications are studied in terms of values, interests and reflexive social constructs within their “institutional, cultural, historical, political and philosophical contexts” rather than inputs and outputs with quantitative orientations¹⁹. They address communicative processes mediating the formulation and the implementation of policy. Such communicative platforms include discourse analysis, politics of expertise, local and tacit knowledge and participatory governance. Moreover, critical policy studies recognize the critique the centrality of power in policy decision-making and discourses²⁰. It is instead interpreted as a set of directive dynamic interrelations in multiple sites and settings at all levels of governance.

B. Context

Researching the policies and practices of the Lebanese Nights prescribes its own contextualized inter-disciplinarity²¹. It entails a disciplinary collaboration between the

¹⁹ Frank Fischer, Douglas Torgerson, Anna Durnová and Michael Orsini, Introduction to critical policy studies, handbook of Critical Policy Studies, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Pub. Ltd., 2015.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Most literature on inter-disciplinary offers an array of definitions of the overlapping terms related to multi, inter, and trans disciplinarity. Patricia Leavy defines the relationship between disciplines as a stream whereby “Multi-, inter-, and trans-disciplinarity exist on a continuum of increasing interaction and integration between the disciplines”. Accordingly, multi-disciplinary approaches to research involve collaboration between two or more disciplines on a research project; however, each discipline maintains its autonomy during the collaboration through its own assumptions, values and methods. Trans-

humanities and the social sciences with a geographic focus embedded in the historical processes, actors, institutional structures and practices attached to Lebanon since the French Mandate and specifically to the Baalbeck International Festival. Critical Policy Studies provide a resourceful framework that allows a break of disciplinary boundaries to induce a continuum of epistemic interaction amongst them and relevant adaptation to local contexts, namely the Lebanese Nights. They provide a “locally” relevant and critical frame for study of the imported concepts and emerging national practices of folklore and in the second degree festivals as vehicles of folklore reconstructions when theorizing for critical cultural and heritage policies from Lebanon.

For this purpose, I aspire to study Lebanon as an urban-biased nation state²² from the Global South and the Baalbeck International Festival as an urban elite institution. The contextual overview will look into the role of local elites in cultural nation building in Lebanon taking into considering their agency in Beirut’s emergence from a provincial Ottoman capital²³ to a focus of urban-centered development policies of the French Mandate at the expense of rural peripheries to become after the country’s independence its vibrant capital and a regional cosmopolitan hub of modernity until 1975.

disciplinarity is issue- or problem-generated, not discipline driven. Methodologically, transdisciplinary research follows responsive or iterative methodologies and requires innovation, creativity and flexibility and often employs participatory research design strategies. It has the highest rank on the disciplinary continuum. Interdisciplinary approaches to research falls in the middle of the continuum and involve “associative” collaborations between researchers from two or more disciplines with a greater yet varying level of interaction between the disciplines than multi-disciplinary ones. They involve developing a “common framework” which results in the “emergence of new concepts, methodologies or epistemologies (that) are explicitly exchanged and integrated in a mutual enrichment” (Patricia Levy, 2011).

²² Michael Lipton, *Why Poor People Stay Poor: Urban Bias in World Development* (The Urban Bias Theory), Harvard University Press, 1977.

²³ Jens-Peter Hanssen, *The effect of Ottoman rule on fin de siècle Beirut: the province of Beirut, 1888-1914* (Phd Dissertation), University of Oxford, 2001.

C. Agency, Institutions and Governance

In Michael Lipton's urban bias theory, urban elites comprise "mainly businessmen, politicians, bureaucrats, trade union leaders and a supporting staff of professionals, academics and intellectuals"²⁴. They are enforced by the dominant successive national political structures whose governance systems and nation building policies operate through persisting local mechanisms of assimilation, accommodation, and exclusion²⁵ with parallel similar mechanisms in prescribing geo-political alliances and foreign policies. As such, local urban elites are also connected with post-colonial regional and international elite networks and national policy cultures²⁶ through the flow of ideas and interests. Although folklore constitutes ordinary people's cultural expressions, its recognition and modes of production and dissemination are managed by a network of knowledge-power-capital elites connected to international capitalism²⁷ in ways that will fit prevailing post-independence circumstances. Similarly, the country's social history was written mostly from the perspective of its urban elite network through the main schemes that they developed to "control and guide its growth (of lack thereof)"²⁸. As a result, social groups and actors outside the elite network were excluded in different ways and extents in national narratives beyond their appropriated representation in folklore.

For the Lebanese Nights, its committees and collaborators constitute of members are

²⁴ Michael Lipton, *Why Poor People Stay Poor: Urban Bias in World Development*, Harvard University Press, 1977.

²⁵ Mylonas Harris, *The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-nationals, Refugees, and Minorities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013 (p. 21).

²⁶ Pasty Healy, The universal and the contingent: Some reflections on the transnational flow of planning ideas and practices, *Planning Theory*, Vol 11, Issue 2, 2012, p.192.

²⁷ Katherine Borland, *Unmasking class, gender, and sexuality in Nicaraguan festival*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2006.

²⁸ Mona Fawaz, Notes on Beirut's Historiography: Towards a People's History of the City, in *Des Banlieues À La Ville*, Élisabeth Longuenesse and Caecilia Pieri (editors), Beirut: IFPO, 2013.

strongly affiliated with Lebanese banks, influential private sector companies, senior public officials from ministries of tourism, education and finance, and groups of modernist artists and intellectuals. Internationally, these urban elites are in alliance with corresponding groups in Euro-America and Arab countries, trans-national cultural communities such as Agence de la Francophonie and UNESCO as well as a network of emigrants in a constellation of transnational spaces. I have identified three elite groups along with media and the affiliated institutions and governance practices as follows: President of the Republic and State Institutions; The Baalbeck International Festival Institution and the Folklore Subcommittee; Emerging Local Artists and Intellectuals; Media. They will be presented in detail in the archival research findings sections pertaining to practices and discourses.

D. Festivals²⁹ as Mediated Landscapes

If the history of a group is about its past, collective memory is about the “continual presence of that past in the present”³⁰. It is maintained and perpetuated through “rituals, ceremonies, ‘traditions’, commemorations, festivals, sites, (landscapes), memorials and institutions”³¹. Robinson and Carson introduce Landscape Science as a meta-discipline preoccupied with the ‘structures, processes and their states and drivers primarily in

²⁹ Although beyond the scope of our research, it is worth noting that Festival studies has become over the recent years an established academic field. It is concerned with the study of festivals in the “context of place-making and place marketing strategies (Prentice and Andersen 2003) or in terms of geopolitical cultural positioning (see, for example, De Valck 2007)” in addition to their relationship to sustainable urban development (Source: Beth Perry, L. Ager & R. Sitas, Cultural heritage entanglements: festivals as integrative sites for sustainable urban development, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 2019, DOI: 10.1080/13527258.2019.1578987).

³⁰ Susan A. Crane, Writing the Individual Back into Collective Memory, *AHR Forum: ‘History and Memory’*, *American Historical Review*, Vol. 103, No. 5, December 1997.

³¹ Graham Black, Museums, Memory and History, *Cultural and Social History*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2011.

terms of anthropogenic uses of landscapes'³². Festival landscapes are brought by the multilayered social construction of a festival space³³ with an assemblage of meanings driven by the agency of how they are perceived, bounded, contextualized, used and possibly gentrified. They are “integrative sites”³⁴ embracing dynamic interactions of physical structures and spatial parameters that include “distance and scale, centers and boundaries”³⁵ amongst themselves as well as with discursive processes of practices and expressions. They are mediated spaces of nation building spectacles³⁶, representations of an evolving citizenship and a reconstruction of memory and heritage through negotiations with the past. They are also embodiments of cultural policies in practice and the flow of dominant political, economic and cultural discourses and ideologies as prescribed by power-knowledge dynamics. Accordingly, the identity of a festival and its landscape is not static. It is rather transforming while only “gaining the semblance of stability through social contestation within specific socio-historic circumstances”³⁷.

Through the study of the Baalbeck International Festival and the Lebanese Nights landscape, I seek to understand the driving factors endorsed by the identified elite group actors that shaped the selection and appropriation of the Roman temples in Baalbeck and how this was governed to serve the planned functions of the folklore project. For this purpose, it is appealing to explore the relationship between folklore and

³² Guy M. Robinson and Doris A. Carson, Applying landscape science to natural resource management, *Ecology and Society*, Vol. 18, No 1, 2013.

³³ Marline Lisette Wilders & Loes Rusch, Moving the audience: Dutch landscape experienced through the SummerJazzCycle Tour, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 6, 2020.

³⁴ Beth Perry, L. Ager & R. Sitas, Cultural heritage entanglements: festivals as integrative sites for sustainable urban development, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 2019, DOI: 10.1080/13527258.2019.1578987

³⁵ Arjun Appadurai, Introduction: Place and Voice in Anthropological Theory, *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 3, No.1, Feb. 1988.

³⁶ Jelena Gligorijević, Contemporary Music Festivals as Micronational Spaces: Articulations of National Identity in Serbia’s Exit and Guča Trumpet Festivals in the Post-Milošević Era, Finland: University of Turku, 2019.

³⁷ Chris Anderton, (Re)Constructing Music Festival Places (PhD Dissertation), Wales: Swansea University, 2006.

archaeology as in the case of the Roman ruins in Baalbeck and use that relationship to reinforce the production of meaning about past socio-political changes and violence in Lebanon. Also, it is relevant to discursive construction and transformation³⁸ to identify how the Lebanese Nights associated folklore with uniquely curated performances, genre and sounds within a festival format. Such an association was governed such that these festivalized folklore constructions will migrate beyond their original rural boundaries. They will serve as active identity building ingredients for wide audiences within Lebanon and across its national borders. Additionally, they function as a geopolitical platform for cultural diplomacy in nation branding³⁹ and as traveling sounds and imageries embedded in geo-cultural spaces⁴⁰ to influence the nation's positioning in international relations.

E. Discourses and Discursive Institutionalism

Discourse is a composite and an overarching concept. Its meanings, theoretical references and uses range from linguistics to social sciences. David Howarth defines discourse as the construction of intersubjective meaning-making of the social process associated with a particular social field or practice⁴¹. In policy research, discourse is an “essential moment of action”⁴² that goes beyond the representation or embodiment of ideas in many forms, types or levels. It encompasses the interactive processes by and through which ideas and discourses are “generated in the (institutional) policy sphere by

³⁸ This will be further elaborated in the section dedicated to discourses.

³⁹ Milena Dragičević Šešić with Ljiljana Rogač Mijatović and Nina Mihaljinac (editors), *Cultural Diplomacy: Arts, Festivals and Geopolitics*, Belgrade: Creative Europe Desk Serbia, 2017.

⁴⁰ Tim Winter, *Geocultural Power: China's Belt and Road Initiative*, *GEOPOLITICS*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650045.2020.1718656>.

⁴¹ David Howarth, *Power, discourse and policy: articulating a hegemony approach to critical policy studies*, *Critical Policy Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3-4, 2009.

⁴² Frank Moulaert, Bob Jessop & Abid Mehmood, *Agency, structure, institutions, discourse (ASID) in urban and regional development*, *International Journal of Urban Sciences*, Vol. 20, No.2, 2016.

discursive policy communities and entrepreneurs and communicated, deliberated, and/or contested in the political sphere by the (agencies) of political leaders, social movements, and the public”⁴³. These action and communication processes may vary in accordance with the “identities, values, interests, spatial-temporal horizons, strategies, and tactics”⁴⁴ of the involved sentient (thinking, speaking, and acting) agents. This is referred to as discursive institutionalism whereby the term ‘institutionalism’ highlights the significance of formal and informal contexts of ideas and discourses⁴⁵.

Discursive institutionalism provides a dynamic theoretical framework to the trajectory inception, mobilization, hegemony and demise of the constructions of folklore in relation to both their changing representations from the first Lebanese Nights performance in 1957 until the finale in 1974 and the discursive inter-elite interactions through which the main actors (The Baalbeck International Festival, The Folklore Subcommittee and the artists alongside media) generate, contest and communicate folklore and folklore-based musical plays in the pre-war cultural nation building institutional contexts in Lebanon. In this section of the research I will approach the creative products of the Lebanese Nights, namely songs, dances and musical plays in relation to the identified strategies and practices of the Baalbeck International Festival in the preceding section.

⁴³ Vivien A. Schmidt, *Discursive institutionalism: understanding policy in context* in: Frank Fischer, Douglas Torgerson, Anna Durnová and Michael Orsini (editors), *Handbook of Critical Policy Studies*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Pub. Ltd., 2015.

⁴⁴ Frank Moulaert, Bob Jessop & Abid Mehmood, Agency, structure, institutions, discourse (ASID) in urban and regional development, *International Journal of Urban Sciences*, Vol. 20, No.2, 2016.

⁴⁵ Vivien A. Schmidt, *Discursive institutionalism: understanding policy in context* in: Frank Fischer, Douglas Torgerson, Anna Durnová and Michael Orsini (editors), *Handbook of Critical Policy Studies*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Pub. Ltd., 2015.

F. Archives in Public Policy and International Affairs

The National Archives of the United Kingdom define archives as unique “collections of documents or ‘records’ which have been selected for permanent preservation because of their value as evidence (for current use) or as a source for historical or other research”⁴⁶. They embody identity, collective memory and beliefs for communities, regions and nations. Archival collections are managed by specialist public and private institutions who develop archive policies and standards to support their long-term sustainability while optimizing the use of the available resources. Beyond institutional archival networks, a spectrum of meanings and functions have emerged about archives among different disciplines, non-academic communities and individuals. These communities feature a multitude of actors outside central state authorities. They include “organized interest groups, professional groupings, occupations, industries, multinational corporations, families and like-minded individuals”⁴⁷ that may cross current geopolitical and historical imperial boundaries in Euro-American and post-colonial countries.

Technological transformations have offered new potentials for interdisciplinary approaches to archives (and databases) and collaboration among knowledge and memory institutions. Convergence of libraries, archives and museums denoted as LAM institutions prescribe new perspectives of archives, collection practices and epistemic infrastructures⁴⁸ of knowledge-based communities and economies. These

⁴⁶ The National Archives, *Archive Principles and Practice: an introduction to archives for non-archivists*, England, 2016. Further information is available online here: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>.

⁴⁷ Livia Lacovino, *Recordkeeping and juridical governance* (book chapter), Sue McKemmish et al (editors), *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, Topics in Australasian Library and Information Studies, Woodhead Publishing Limited, 2005.

⁴⁸ Margaret Hedstrom and John Leslie King, *On the LAM: Library, Archive, and Museum Collections in the Creation and Maintenance of Knowledge Communities*, OECD: <https://www.oecd.org/education/innovation-education/32126054.pdf>.

technologically driven perspectives carry political dimensions which impact the decision of archivists, librarians, and curators about “acquiring, cataloging, digitizing, preserving, and providing access to collections”⁴⁹. The archive becomes a “system of discursivity that establishes the possibility of what can be said”⁵⁰ in relation between knowledge and power according to Michel Foucault. As such, the Archive Theory is also occupied with investigating the nature of the archive and recognizing the limits of what Jacques Derrida called “archivization” processes⁵¹ that are set by social forces.

Archives are integral constituent of qualitative research in public policy. Primary documents include “meeting minutes, memoranda, white papers, blueprints, drafts for laws, and acts”⁵². In the study of international relations, primary documents include diplomatic archives, maps and online databases such as UN portals⁵³. For both areas of inquiry, archives fall under “Documentary Research” that refers to research in the social sciences based solely or primarily on documentary sources as opposed to data produced by other means. Documents are defined by the following parameters: date/period, author, original purpose, audience, ownership, alteration, administrative and legal procedures for access, and relation to other documents of similar and diverse format categories. The temporal dimension is of essence. It prescribes the “types of documents and indicators needed to identify the decision-making process, along with the goals and the budget performance that will accompany the policy decision”⁵⁴. It also drives a

⁴⁹ Marlene Manoff, *Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines, Libraries and the Academy*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2004.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Grace Jaramillo, *Archives in the Study of Public Policy and Administration*, Oxford Research Encyclopedia: Politics: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1446> .

⁵³ Check for example: UN Data portal (<http://data.un.org/>);

UN Information Department (www.un.org/press);

UN Member States Portal (www.un.org/en/member-states/index.html).

⁵⁴ Grace Jaramillo, *Archives in the Study of Public Policy and Administration*, Oxford Research Encyclopedia: Politics: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1446> .

process-based research design and contributes to determine the causal process mechanisms within a public policy process⁵⁵. Likewise, diplomatic archives become tools for formulating theories about institutional dynamics and decision-making processes by key actors and confirming their validity to be applicable in different geographic and temporal contexts. This is contrasted with their use in historical research to understand “resultant events and their specific context and produce explanatory narratives”⁵⁶. Moreover, personal archives are tools to record the memories of not only established figures who presumably made history and understand the underlying factors of policy making, but also to engage other less recognized actors and groups possibly not from the ‘center’ of socioeconomic systems. They can contribute to learn the “long view” of a policy issue: they collectivize individual experiences and highlight narratives of a diverse array of actors while taking account of cultural factors, group dynamics and structural forces through a bottom-up approach.

New frameworks and practices of archival research in public policy and international relations analysis evolved using images empowered by the fast paced developments of digital technologies. Visual research methods offers procedures and practices that surround the use of visual media and technologies in the research process in social sciences. Images may include illustrations, photographs, paintings, maps⁵⁷,

⁵⁵ Examples of archival research in public policy extend to several sectors like urban planning and natural resources management. Here is an example pertaining to the latter: Stuart Pearson et al, Increasing the understanding and use of natural archives of ecosystem services, resilience and thresholds to improve policy, science and practice, *The Holocene* Vol. 25(2) 366–378, 2015.

⁵⁶ Guillaume Devin (Editor), *Resources and Applied Methods in International Relations* (Translated by William Snow, 2018), *The Sciences Po Series in International Relations and Political Economy*, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

⁵⁷ Maps are among the most enduring sources that have been extensively used through various historical epochs for a multitude of purposes including designation of sovereignty, trade and war. In the context of public policy and international relations research, maps are recognized as parameters of the designing authority, their purposes, production process, usage and discourse. Currently, they are considered a “continuous process in which each choice—source, base map, statistical and graphic processing—has repercussions for the final image and thus its interpretation”. They are dependent on the nature of data

videos/films and more recently smart phone images⁵⁸. Narratives of visual archives serve to complement or contract those of written documents. Visual narratives are loaded with layers of complex information and codes. Analysis of visual archives is characterized by the nature of the visual materials being analyzed: their content, processes of production, media carrier and the social context surrounding their production.

G. Critical Discourse Analysis

I seek to study the formative years of the Lebanese Nights supported by selected examples from the successive festivals until 1974 to explore the origins and starting points. They will be analyzed in terms of content and their associated practices and social and historical contexts⁵⁹. The criteria of selection will take into consideration the transformation of the perception and use of folklore in the historical context, the innovations in terms of genre and content during the span of 18 years of prewar activity and the extent of congruence or divergence from the festival strategies and dominant discourses. The extent of such variances due to argumentative practices and discursive struggles help to give shape to the transformations of understandings of folklore and the trajectory of formal and informal policy orientations within social change. They also “set the criteria for social classification, establish problem definitions, frame problems,

and databases, time periods, spatial scales (global/regional/national), units of account (values/percentages and chronology), studied subjects (actors and societies, ethnicities, languages...) and synchrony / diachrony.

⁵⁸ The Syrian War may be the most documented war in history due to the use of mobile technologies. The first evidence of the use of chemical weapons in Syria was provided in images from amateurs, influencing investigations by OPCW and decisions by governments as much as researchers. The spread of these new and diverse technologies raise questions about the “image production chain” their verification, circulation (through YouTube or other social media channels) and perception.

⁵⁹ Nic Beech & Stephen Broad, *Ethnomusicology*, In: *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Business and Management Research Methods: Methods and Challenges*, 2018.

define ideas, and create the shared meanings on which people act”⁶⁰.

An integrated archival/documentary analysis approach will be implemented to identify contesting discourses and processes that led eventually to the end of the folklore project of the Lebanese Nights in terms of content, agency, governance and geo-cultural power. It will be applied to administrative archives of the Lebanese Nights to trace decision making processes and trends of practices maintained by the Folklore Subcommittee. This will be supplemented by memoirs of Baalbeck Festival Committee members and participating artists along with other sources from related scholarly work, newspapers and audio visual archives. The converging inflow of multiple data types and sources will support the local adaptation of interdisciplinary methods of critical policy studies while aspiring to challenge the top-down elite mechanisms and central urban knowledge systems⁶¹. The sources of data pertaining to the critical discourse analysis for each of ideas and processes are summarized in the following table. Most of them are in Arabic, apart from selected internal festival documents and press reviews which are as well in French and English.

No.	Source	Types	Location
1	Baalbeck International Festival (Denoted hereafter as BIF Archives)	Meeting minutes, reports, correspondences	Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK)

⁶⁰ Vivien A. Schmidt, Discursive institutionalism: understanding policy in context in: Frank Fischer, Douglas Torgerson, Anna Durnová and Michael Orsini (editors), Handbook of Critical Policy Studies, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Pub. Ltd., 2015.

⁶¹ Robert Chambers, Rural development: Putting the last first, Chapter 4: Whose Knowledge?, Routledge, 2014.

No.	Source	Types	Location
2	Baalbeck Festival Catalogues (1956-1974)	Official annual publication by the festival	AUB Special Collections My archives
3	AUB Folk Dance Festival	Posters, programs, minutes, correspondences	AUB Libraries
4	Government Documents	Decisions Decrees Laws	Official Gazette Ministry of Tourism Finance Institute
5	Zaki Nassif Archives	Personal archives: letters, interviews, texts	AUB Special Collections
6	Walid Gholmieh Archives	Personal archives: texts, press clippings	AUB Special Collections
7	Bert Stimmel Archives	Personal archives: notes and press clippings	Yale University
8	Miscellaneous personal archives	Photographs Texts Recorded interviews Press clippings Audio recordings	Samia Saab Munjed Sabri Sherif Akram Rayess

No.	Source	Types	Location
9	Studio Baalbeck Documents	Bills and invoices Letter from May Arida	UMAM Documentation and Research
10	Newspapers and magazines	Press reviews and commentaries	AUB Libraries The Sakhr Archive for Literary and Cultural Magazines
11	The Exhibition: Baalbek, Archives of an Eternity	Exhibition Catalogue Virtual Exhibition Display (Hyperlink)- accessed on 5.1.2020	Sursock Museum

Table 1 List of Archival Sources, Types and Locations.

CHAPTER III

ON FOLKLORE AND HERITAGE

Folklore opens up to public policy research an array of multi-scalar and sectorial streams and contexts of interdisciplinary inquiry that include nation building, elite networks, power, conflict, social change, knowledge production, modernity, migration, historical entanglements, rural development and nature. It is a traveling conceptual vehicle loaded with social, ecological and aesthetic constructions across changing epistemic boundaries and historically grounded social theories⁶². This section overviews the history of folklore since its European inception during the second half of the 19th century and its transformations until the present time across different geographies and institutional frameworks. It then zooms into the Levant and Lebanon to trace folklore trajectories since the Ottoman Tanzimat period.

The term Folk-Lore was established and institutionalized by the English collector and author William John Thoms⁶³ (1803 - 1885) to designate popular

⁶² Dewight Reynolds and Arzu Ozturkman among other scholars inform how theories in Euro-American humanities and social sciences approached folklore during the 20th century quoted in broad terms as follows:

Functionalism: Focus is on the functions of folklore (rather than its forms). Accordingly, folklore is always re-created because folks, society and individuals need it socially, culturally and psychologically for their livelihood and identity. It contributes to preserving and sustaining the cohesiveness of communities. As such, Folklore is a symbolic communal autobiography.

Structuralism: Interest shifts towards “underlying structures of folklore forms”, genres and the investigation of the causal relations amongst them in capturing meaning. Structural analysis and cross-genre comparisons of folklore contribute to identifying cultural determination of content and the prediction of culture change.

Social constructivism: Folklore is framed as socially constructed concepts that vary in time and place based on the experiences, practices and representations. They are directly related to the social, economic and political processes of distinct historical epochs. Dialogism, a currently active concept, is the construction of meaning from multiple voices.

Performativity: This approach prioritizes historical processes through which cultural forms emerge. It marks a transition from products and relics to processes.

⁶³ William John Thoms is a central figure in the history of folklore and literature in England. He was the Deputy Librarian at the House of Lords Library, a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, Secretary of the

antiquities and popular literature in England as a “good Saxon compound, Folk-Lore, the Lore of the People”⁶⁴. He actively promoted awareness and public engagement for the timely rescue of the remaining traditions and scattered “manners, customs, observances, superstitions, ballads, proverbs”⁶⁵ along with “out-of-the-ordinary and curious in literature”⁶⁶ and other materials “of the olden time”⁶⁷ of the forefathers. This call to rescue arose in response to the mounting threats of what he called the “iron horse”⁶⁸ and the “railroad mania trampling under foot all our ancient landmarks”⁶⁹ in the different regions and rural areas of England. Thomas framed folklore as a “literary enquiry”⁷⁰ in 1878 although he made an earlier attempt to place it as a branch of archeology in one of his articles in the magazine “News and Queries” he established in 1862. The contributions of Thoms in institutionalizing folklore and the works of folklorists continued through his key participation in the founding The Folklore Society⁷¹ in 1878. He proposed a nationalist vision for the society in prioritizing “the gathering together the relics of our own folk-lore, and eventually the analogous folk-lore of other countries”⁷². Andrew Lang and other founding members influenced by the

literary Camden Society and one of the key founders of The Folklore Society. He published extensive edited book collections of old English literature (Jonathan Roper, Oxford Reference: <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803104006497>; accessed on 15.3.2020)

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p.359

⁶⁷ Ibid, p.361. Previous collections of folk tales and ballad include Thomas Percy’s “Relics of Ancient English Poetry” (1765) and Francis James Child’s “The English and Scottish Popular Ballads” (1857). The English music publisher John Playford edited and published more than 900 rural dances in “The English Dancing Master” (1651).

⁶⁸ Ibid, p.370.

⁶⁹ William John Thoms, Notes and Queries (July 15, 1876), p. 42 in: Duncan Emrich, "Folk-Lore": William John Thoms, California Folklore Quarterly, Vol. 5, No. 4, October 1946, p. 360.

⁷⁰ William J. Thoms, The Preface, The Folk-Lore Record, Vol. 1, No, xiii, 1878.

⁷¹ The Folklore Society remains active until date. Its website is: <https://folklore-society.com>

Other societies were soon established across Europe: Folkemindesamfundet (Denmark, 1883), Société des traditions populaires, France, 1885) and Der Schweizerischen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde (Switzerland, 1896).

⁷² William J. Thoms, "Folk-Lore Society," Notes & Queries, Fifth Series, No. 8, 1877 in: Chris Wingfield and Chris Gosden, An Imperialist Folklore? Establishing the Folk-lore Society in London, In 'Folklore

founder of cultural anthropology Sir Edward Burnet Tylor (1832 -1917) advocated to reach out beyond national soils and borders to eastern and western civilizations for a world vision encompassing customs and beliefs of modern and ancient cultures that are the “oldest, and most permanent, and most widely distributed, in human institutions”⁷³.

A. Two Early Trends

The dialectics between these two trends at that early stage contributed to drive changing perceptions and meanings of folks and their traditional knowledge constructed by third party actors from the middle classes throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. They are collectors, editors, publishers and intellectuals from the middle classes alongside an increasing number of academic scholars. According to the former trend led by Thoms, folks are “common people” whose lore is a literary subject⁷⁴ that eventually became an inquiry of religion, psychology, history, archeology, social sciences and other fields. It constitutes of rural populations and emerging class societies in towns and cities. The new social classes are associated with evolving technologies, industrial urbanization⁷⁵ and social changes influenced by economic and political modernization following the French Revolution⁷⁶ (1789) in divergent frameworks of nationalisms ranging from Romanticism to totalitarianism. On the other

and Nationalism in Europe During the Long Nineteenth Century' edited by Timothy Baycroft and David Hopkin, University of Sheffield, University of Oxford, 2012.

⁷³ Andrew Lang, Preface, *The Folk-Lore Record*, Vol 2, No. i-ii, 1879, in: *Folklore and Nationalism in Europe During the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by Timothy Baycroft and David Hopkin, University of Sheffield, University of Oxford, 2012.

⁷⁴ William J. Thoms, The Preface, *The Folk-Lore Record*, Vol.1, No, xiii, 1878.

⁷⁵ John Storey, *Inventing Popular Culture: From Folklore to Globalization*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003 (p. 2).

⁷⁶ David Hopkin, *Folklore Beyond Nationalism*, in: *Folklore and Nationalism in Europe During the Long Nineteenth Century* edited by Timothy Baycroft and David Hopkin, University of Sheffield, University of Oxford, 2012.

hand, folklore is constructed by the latter trend led by Lang as an anthropological⁷⁷ commonality between different social classes that encompasses the surviving traditions of bygone eras and “earlier savage cultures”⁷⁸. The common roots go back to ancient mythology, in both the nation and peripheries of imperial worlds. Folklore based on consequent comparative approaches across time and place becomes a compound for manufacturing otherness assigned to distinct “folks” within their national peripheries and across borders while transcending the dynamics between social classes.

Within emerging modern nation-states in Europe, the drive towards the identification of “distinctive characteristics that would demonstrate national character”⁷⁹ prescribes ideological tools for competing traditional and emerging political and economic elites and systems rather than the protection of the interest of “folks”. These elites promote folklore as a unifying cause with urban working classes and rural peasantry. Their objective is to emphasize “vertical connections that (bind) the social order, leaving room for hierarchies of property and power, (while projecting) the past as an ideal into the present”⁸⁰ instead of being a vehicle for change. In this sense, the study of folklore can inform about common people as much as it can be a rich resource on conflict, elites and nationalism⁸¹. It is also a platform of the transmission of cultural

⁷⁷ Chris Wingfield and Chris Gosden, *An Imperialist Folklore? Establishing the Folk-lore Society in London*, In 'Folklore and Nationalism in Europe During the Long Nineteenth Century' edited by Timothy Baycroft and David Hopkin, University of Sheffield, University of Oxford, 2012.

⁷⁸ Sir Edward Burnet Tylor, *Primitive Culture* (1871), in John Storey, *Inventing Popular Culture: From Folklore to Globalization*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003 (p. 6).

⁷⁹ Dwight F. Reynolds, *Arab Folklore: A Handbook*, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2007 (p. 210-211). The comparative method was made feasible through a classification system with tools and terminologies that allow researchers to make comparisons across social and geographic variants pertaining to different epochs. It is referred to as the “Historical-Geographic Method”.

⁸⁰ David Hopkin, *Folklore Beyond Nationalism*, in: *Folklore and Nationalism in Europe During the Long Nineteenth Century*, edited by Timothy Baycroft and David Hopkin, University of Sheffield, University of Oxford, 2012.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* References proposed by Hopkins include: Richard Dorson, ‘The Question of Folklore in a New Nation’, *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 3 (1966), pp. 277-298; Michael Herzfeld, *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology, and the Making of Modern Greece*, New York: Pella, 1986, Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore: Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, Cork: Cork University Press, 2000; William

practices of post-colonial nationalisms across local, national and transnational contexts through ‘entangled histories’, migrations, missionaries, international networks and changing borders. This has been exemplified in the migration of folklore studies to North America where its scope widened to include various migrant groups. It further expanded to encompass a diversity of communities from different classes who share “context, identity and (popular) aesthetic preferences whether rural or urban, oral or written, anonymous or known”⁸² replacing the European pre-occupation in peasants and working classes. Thus the term ‘folk-life’ was proposed to replace ‘folk-lore’ to reflect the inclusion of written and recorded besides oral knowledge.

B. Reflexive Investigations

North American scholarship marked a change of paradigm in folklore studies induced by reflexive investigations into historical research practices based on Marxist, feminist, post-colonial and other critiques. Folklore was presented as a “selective, interpretive construction symbolically constituted in the present”⁸³ and current spheres of social agencies and institutions rather than a neutral and objective inquiry. Its focus shifted to the study of a performance-centered approach constituting of a dynamic communicative process, a meta-discursive expressive interaction associated with emerging cultural forms and technologies rather than a text-centered, static representations of ideal types and “celebratory symbol of the national past”⁸⁴. It also

Wilson, *Folklore and Nationalism in Modern Finland*, Bloomington ID: Indiana University Press, 1976.

⁸² Jeff Tod Titon, Folklore, in: John Shepherd, David Horn, Dave Laing, Paul Oliver and Peter Wicke (editors) *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World*, Vol. 1, London and New York: Continuum 2003.

⁸³ Kristin Kuutma, *From Folklore to Intangible Heritage*, in: William Logan, Mairead Nic Craith and Ullrich Kockel, *A Companion to Heritage Studies*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2016.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

maintained continuing knowledge exchanges with European perspectives emphasizing historically rooted and regionally bounded practices⁸⁵ as well as collaborative “multi-genealogical practices”⁸⁶ of folklorists with post-colonial positionalities who investigate alternative meanings and multiple roots of established concepts and practices beyond “narrowly defined disciplinary histories”⁸⁷ and forms.

Reflexive folklore studies in North America also brought forward the scholarly engagement in cultural and heritage cultural politics and policy-making processes that regulate “mediation, intervention, representation and community cultural self-determination”⁸⁸. Public Folklore replaced Applied Folklore with a focus on reducing power asymmetries and reinforcing cultural pluralism, civic empathy and social justice through community engagement, development of collaborative programs and participation in policy development with the involvement of stakeholders such as activists, scholars, producers and government officials. Local and indigenous knowledge across the nature-human spectrum of interaction and engaged citizenship constitute the basis of this bottom-up approach that recognizes sustainability, adaptive management and resilience in the community’s continuity and recovery from shocks on the longer term⁸⁹. The institutional vehicles for sharing representational and interpretive authority between governments and communities referred to as “dialogism” include

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Charles L. Briggs and Sadhana Naithani, *The Coloniality of Folklore: Towards a Multi-Genealogical Practice of Folklorists*, *Studies in History*, Vol 28, No.2, 2012.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Robert Baron, *Public folklore dialogism and critical heritage studies*, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 8, 2016.

⁸⁹ Jeff Todd Titon, *Sustainability, Resilience and Adaptive Management for Applied Ethnomusicology*, *Oxford Handbook*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

primarily the archive, the museum and the festival⁹⁰ among other public programs while keeping an eye on the threats posed by its commodification.

C. Critical Heritage Studies

Scholarly recognition of social agency, folklore's performativity and their involvement in policy making resulted also in a reflexive deconstruction of the discipline and its object of study simultaneously in different direction than that of Public Folklore. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett proposed that folklore studies "should be converted into the critical study of heritage"⁹¹ which later introduced the concept of discourse as a tool of critical analysis⁹² within specific historical, political and social contexts. It is also concerned with the relationship of the cultural politics of inclusion and exclusion, power, hegemony and heritage. In this framework, critical heritage studies recognize folklore as a contingent discursive category and an "actualized interweaving of rhetorical expressions"⁹³ linked to the production, maintenance and reproduction of power structures while excluding other categories that constitute alternative "realities, collectivities and paths for identity construction"⁹⁴. The repositioning of folklore within Heritage Studies was eventually endorsed internationally through UNESCO and WIPO conventions and programs⁹⁵. Recent

⁹⁰ Betsy Taylor, Public Folklore, Nation-Building and Regional Others: Comparing Appalachian USA and North-East India, *Indian Folklore Research Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2002.

⁹¹ Kristin Kuutma, From Folklore to Intangible Heritage, in: William Logan, Mairead NicCraith and Ullrich Kockel, *A Companion to Heritage Studies*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2016.

⁹² Rodney Harrison and Audrey Linkman, Critical approaches to heritage, in: Rodney Harrison (ed), *Understanding the politics of heritage*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010.

⁹³ Stephen Olbrys Gencarella, *Constituting Folklore: A Case for Critical Folklore Studies*, Vol. 122, 2009.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ For further information about the engagement of UNESCO and WIPO in folklore, please consult the following links to their official websites:

WIPO: <https://www.wipo.int/tk/en/folklore/> (accessed on 30.8.2020)

UNESCO: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/protecting-our-heritage-and-fostering-creativity> (accessed on 30.8.2020)

research in critical heritage studies has been calling to the transcendence of previously established boundaries between cultural and natural heritage through a “collaborative, dialogical and interactive, a material-discursive process in which past and (common) futures (equally)”⁹⁶.

D. Into the Levant

Interest in folklore of Arab countries and the Levant was driven by a bundle of geopolitical, social and economic changes triggered by local and international actors. Starting from the Ottoman Tanzimat efforts (1876-1839) to sustain the empire, successive waves of reform initiatives inspired by the principles of the French Revolution opened new channels for the participatory representation of different ethnic groups and minorities in local councils. Accompanied by tolerance towards freedom of experience in varying extents, Ottoman rulers introduced new practices in public governance that fostered modernization in infrastructures including road and train networks as well adoption of liberal educational systems⁹⁷.

Encounters with European missionaries and merchants gradually developed into emerging social and economic networks of merchants and professionals. The dominance of trade and new imported products from Europe led to the gradual withering of local traditional industries⁹⁸. Agriculture was similarly dominated by Mulberry Trees at the expense of practices that catered for local needs to primarily serve the needs of European silk industries. These economic changes marked a rupture

⁹⁶ Rodney Harrison, *Beyond Natural and Cultural Heritage: Toward an Ontological Politics of Heritage in the Age of the Anthropocene*, *Heritage and Society*, Vol. 8, Mo.1, 2015.

⁹⁷ خالد زيادة، النهضة والمدنية، عصر النهضة: مقدمات ليبرالية للحدثة، بيروت: مؤسسة رينه معوض-المركز العربي الثقافي- مؤسسة 2000 فريديش ناومان، 2000

⁹⁸ Ibid.

point with customs and manners related to the disappearing industries, which will become the seeds of forthcoming folkloric investigations. They resonate with William John Thoms's standpoint to recognize the threats facing the remaining traditions of his society at the time of the railroad boom. On the other hand, the trend towards local representation promoted inquiries about communities outside urban centers and courtly circles. Still, this was hampered by illiteracy and lack of documentation of folk forms. This is why "written accounts documenting provincial life held in small towns or villages" remained scarce not only in the Levant but in throughout the Ottoman Empire⁹⁹.

Two of the main books addressing traditions were "Lebanon: Scientific and Social Inquiries" commissioned by Ismael Haqqi Bey and "Wilayat Beirut" commissioned by Azmi Beik Afandi and were published respectively in 1918 and 1916¹⁰⁰. They survey prevailing social, religious, cultural, geographic and economic situations throughout the different regions of Mount Lebanon and the Wilaya. A look into the bibliography of "Wilayat Beirut" provides a comprehensive list of Turkish, Arabic, French, English and German references. A parallel trend took place within Ottoman Turkey and other regions of the empire. It was championed by intellectuals who wrote in favour of folklore since the last quarter of the 19th century¹⁰¹.

⁹⁹ Arzu Öztürkmen, Performance in the Ottoman World: Thoughts on Folklore and History, in: Suraiya Faroqhi and Arzu Öztürkmen (editors), Celebration, entertainment and theatre in the Ottoman world, London: Seagull Books, 2014.

¹⁰⁰ رفيق التميمي و محمد بهجت، ولاية بيروت (1916)، بيروت: دار لحد خاطر، 1979
لبنان: مباحث علمية واجتماعية، نشرته لجنة من الادباء بهمة اسماعيل حقي بك، متصرف جبل لبنان سنة 1918، بيروت: منشورات لحد خاطر، 1993

¹⁰¹ Zrya Gkalp (1876-1924) wrote a preface to folk civilization; Fuad Kopruu (1890-1966) a scholar from Istanbul published "A new science- folklore" in 1914; Riza Teufik (1869-1949) was interested in the Balkan, Agean and Black Sea regions and published "Dance and its various forms in Ottoman countries" in 1900. Further information can be found in: Arzu Öztürkmen, Folklore in the Time of Young Turks: Situating a New Discipline in Nineteenth Century Ottoman Thought, Western Folklore, Vol. 79, No.2-3, Spring/Summer 2020.

Another entry point to the beginnings of the folklore movement points to European research going back to the 18th century. It was motivated by interest in Ancient Egypt and the Holy Land and expanded further with colonial economic and geopolitical ambitions. Scholars and travelers documented details of Palestinian and Bedouin culture as a reflection of a “living museum of the Bible”¹⁰². The 167 scholars and scientists who accompanied Napoleon Bonaparte's campaign in the territories of Egypt and Syria (1798-1801) produced a vast ethnographic description of Egypt including folklore and music. The initial output was the 4-volume “Mémoires sur l'Égypte” published throughout the period of the conquest followed by a more comprehensive publication entitled “Description de l'Égypte” (1809- 821)¹⁰³. Other significant early encounters took place at Museums and World Fairs. Denoted in French as “Exposition Universelle”, international exhibitions were organized since 1851 to display achievements of nations and “giant new rituals of self-congratulation”¹⁰⁴. They were also sites of economic and cultural exchange. For colonial countries, the expos functioned as an “enframing” platform for construction of the other to produce reductionist representations that matched the outlooks and interests of more superior Western countries¹⁰⁵.

¹⁰² Dwight F. Reynolds, *Arab Folklore: A Handbook*, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2007 (p. 205-210). Rachel Beckles Willson, *Orientalism and musical mission: Palestine and the West*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

¹⁰³ Dwight Reynolds refers to the Egyptian writer Ali Mubarak who wrote a comprehensive account of Egypt entitled “Al-Khitat al Tawfiqiyya” (1888-1889) which serves as a local counterpart to “Description de l'Égypte”. Other examples of European scholarship of folklore in the Levant:

Gistave Dalmann, *Palastinischer Diwan*, Leipzig, 1901;

Enno Littmann, *Le chant de la belle mère en arabe moderne*, *Journal Asiatique*, tom. II/7, 1903, p.97-132;

Martin Hartmann, *Arabische Lieder aus Syrien*, *Z.D.M.G*, LI, 1897, p.177-214;

Jean Lecerf, *Littérature dialectale et renaissance arabe moderne*, *Bulletin d'études orientales*, T.II, 1932, pp.179-258 and T.III, 1933, pp.43-173;

¹⁰⁴ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848–1875*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975.

¹⁰⁵ Timothy Mitchell. *Colonizing Egypt*, Cambridge: Cambridge university press, 1988.

The first World Fair in the United States of America was held in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park in 1876. It featured four exhibitions from Jerusalem in addition to bazars of entertainment, food and merchandize¹⁰⁶. In the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition, the Ottoman Pavilion offered its visitors theater performances by the pioneering Syrian playwright Ahmad Abu Khalil Al-Qabbani who dramatized folk tales and historical events popular in Ottoman-Arab lands¹⁰⁷. Among them are: A Kurdish Drama, An Oriental Wedding in Damascus, The Drama of Antar the Son of Sheddad and The Drama of Haroun Al-Rachid. The plays highlighted traditions of several Arab ethnic and religious groups from different social classes. They featured ethnic household practices and hunting activities and ended usually with a musical wedding scene featuring traditional dances and dabke. The Troupe also participated in the International Folklore Congress that was held in parallel to the expo from 10 to 17 July 1893¹⁰⁸. A selection of 9 songs were recorded; they are still preserved at Harvard University's Peabody Museum. The expo also hosted an Egyptian Pavilion that presented a street in Cairo with musical and theatrical activities¹⁰⁹. Similar entrainment events were hosted in the Paris Expos of 1889 and 1900¹¹⁰. A magazine news clip from 1938¹¹¹ informs that the Syrian literary and political figure Fakhri al-Baroudi is negotiating with Lebanese and Syrian artists to establish a troop to participate in the 1939 World Fair in New York. It became the first world expo in which Lebanon was

¹⁰⁶ Linda F. Jacobs, Palestine at the Centennial Fair of 1876, *Jerusalem Quarterly*, No. 80, Winter 2019.

¹⁰⁷ Cafer Sarikaya, The Ottoman Theatre in the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, in: Suraiya Faroqhi and Arzu Öztürkmen (editors), *Celebration, entertainment and theatre in the Ottoman world*, London: Seagull Books, 2014.

¹⁰⁸ 2018 تيسير خلف، من دمشق الى شيكاغو: رحلة أبي خليل القباني الى اميركا 1893، بيروت: المؤسسة العربية للدراسات والنشر،

¹⁰⁹ Cafer Sarikaya, The Ottoman Theatre in the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, in: Suraiya Faroqhi and Arzu Öztürkmen (editors), *Celebration, entertainment and theatre in the Ottoman world*, London: Seagull Books, 2014.

¹¹⁰ Annegret Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris World Fair*. Eastman Studies in Music, volume 32. Edited by Ralph P. Locke. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2005.

¹¹¹ مجلة الاذاعة، المجلد السنوي لعام 1938

presented as independent entity from both Syria and the “States under French Mandate” category¹¹² following earlier participations in the 1931, 1935 and 1937 expositions. The Lebanese government assigned Charles Corm who had represented Lebanon at other international events to lead the mission¹¹³ and eventually construct the Lebanese discourse associated with the fair.

E. Folklore in Lebanon since the Nahda

Local responses constitute a third starting point in exploring the genealogy of folklore in the Levant. Within the landscape of sectarian violent conflicts, Ottoman Tanzimat Reforms of the 19th century and waves of internal migration to the cities and immigration to Egypt and the Americans, optimistic cultural and intellectual movements emerged in Egypt and greater Syria. Whereas the first was endorsed through legal, administrative and educational reforms by the State, the Nahda was championed in the latter by individual intellectuals and religious communities which established its own schools and mass media institutions¹¹⁴. It is a point of cultural reflection and a trajectory of translation and literary and linguistic renewal. In Lebanon, the Nahda was the synergy between Beirut’s urban cultural infrastructure and Mount Lebanon’s migrants to the city in the “wider context of the opening of both to Europe

¹¹² Asher Kaufman, ‘Too Much French, but a Swell Exhibit’: Representing Lebanon at the New York World’s Fair 1939–1940, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1, 2008.

¹¹³ Franck Salameh, Charles Corm’s Lebanon at the 1939 New York World’s Fair, in: Charles Corm: An Intellectual Biography of a Twentieth-Century Lebanese “Young Phoenician” (The Levant and Near East: A Multidisciplinary Book Series), London: Lexington Books, 2017.

Charles Corm (1894-1963): Francophone writer, humanist and businessman. He was the publisher of the journal, *La revue phénicienne* in 1919 that advocated a Phoenician identity of Lebanon to serve as a common root for all Lebanese beyond their religious affiliations.

¹¹⁴ محمد يوسف نجم، العوامل الفعالة في تكوين الفكر العربي الحديث، متاب الفكر العربي في مائة عام، بيروت: الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت، 1996
خالد زيادة، النهضة والمدنية، عصر النهضة: مقدمات ليبرالية للحداثة، بيروت: مؤسسة رينه معوض-المركز العربي الثقافي- مؤسسة فريديش ناومان، 2000

and the Syrian interior”¹¹⁵. This was reflected in the interplay of European thought and the Arab intellectual legacy in reinforcing dominant discourses of empirical rationalism and progress that implied a pre-existing epoch of decadence¹¹⁶ projected onto centuries of Ottoman rule. Authors expressed their aspirations to emancipate creative literary expression from the realm of the absolute into a historical dynamic medium¹¹⁷. Gibran Khalil Gibran engaged in discussions about the future of the Arabic language¹¹⁸ while Amine Rihani defines his mission as to liberate his readers from fear, illusion, ignorance and poverty¹¹⁹. Literature became a vehicle that conveys new sensibilities of belonging in relation to place, land and nature. Zajal acquired a new popularity among poets and as a subject of study in itself. Early local writings about folklore were published in journals and books. Among these authors were Reverend Youssef Tati, Sheikh Ibrahim Hourani, Bechara Chemali, Michel Safi and Michel Feghali¹²⁰.

The Nahda in Lebanon was closely linked with the rise of nationalism through competing political agendas. In line with the rise of nationalistic movements during the late 18th century in other Ottoman regions in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, folklore

¹¹⁵ Fawwaz Traboulsi, *A history of modern Lebanon*, London: Pluto Press, 2007.

¹¹⁶ شربل نحاس، اعادة تشكيل الشبكات الاقتصادية والبشرية، عصر النهضة: مقدمات ليبرالية للحدائق، بيروت: مؤسسة رينه معوض- المركز العربي الثقافي- مؤسسة فريدريش ناومان، 2000

¹¹⁷ خالدة سعيد، حركة الابداع: دراسات في الادب العربي الحديث، بيروت: دار الفكر، 1986

¹¹⁸ جبران خليل جبران، مستقبل اللغة العربية والعالم العربي، مجلة "الهلال"، العدد 23، 1920/3/1

Gibran's books and correspondences depicted a consistent interest in music and folklore. He is one of the few Arab literary figures of his time who dedicated a book to the theme of music:

جبران خليل جبران، نبذة في فن الموسيقى: بحسب نص الطبعة الأولى (1905) في جريدة المهاجر، تحقيق وشرح: رامي شلمي، نداء أبو مراد، الحدث: دار نشر الجامعة الأنطونية، 2020

¹¹⁹ خالدة سعيد، حركة الابداع: دراسات في الادب العربي الحديث، بيروت: دار الفكر، 1986

Ameen Rihani's works reflect an interest in issues pertaining to folklore particularly in the following books:

The Book of Khalid (New York : Dodd Mead & Co., 1911)

The lore of Arabian nights (Washington, D.C. : Platform International, 2002)

The heart of Lebanon (Louaize, Lebanon : Notre Dame University Press, c2005)

¹²⁰ الخوري يوسف تاتي، سلسلة مقالات نشرها في مجلة المشرق بعنوان "العوائد اللبنانية في تربية الاحداث" بين عامي 1899 و 1902

الشيخ ابراهيم الحوراني، بحث في الشعر العامي في النشرة الاسبوعية العدد 1212، 1906

Bechara Chemali, *Mariage et noce au Liban*, Anthropos, t.5, 1915-1916.

Michel Safi, *Mariage au nord du Liban*, Anthropos, t. 12-12, 1917-1918.

Michel Feghali, *Le parler arabe de Kfar 'Abida*, Paris, 1919.

was recognized as a central ingredient of diverging ideological projects in nation-building processes. Recent studies presented nations as “contingent historical constructs” at the local, transnational and the global levels¹²¹. Benedict Anderson’s concepts “imagined communities” and “long distance nationalism” engage minorities and immigrants in nation building and identity formation to become dynamic processes of social construction¹²². As such, national identities are performed in national events and represented in media and culture on a daily basis and not only imposed by institutions and structures from above. These practices involve multi-scalar and multi-agency negotiations to produce what Eric Hobsbawm called an “invention of tradition” while selectively building on previous histories, traditions and myths¹²³ and contributing largely to the documentation of oral folklore and its further dissemination. The resultant reconstructions are new myths and traditions to “weave new, seamless, and epic histories tracing the evolution of their nation from the origins of time to the present in line with their (current) nationalist objectives”¹²⁴.

Three national ideologies were dominant in what became today’s Lebanon. They marked the era witnessing the end of the horrors of the Great Famine, the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and First World War and the transition to the French Mandate. These ideologies are Lebanism, Arabism and Syrianism (the Fertile Crescent). Each of them has its own agenda, national narrative and an “invented tradition” which may overlap in some instances and contrast in others. While Lebanism refers to a “Lebanese

¹²¹ Eric Storm, The spatial turn and the history of nationalism: Nationalism between regionalism and transnational approaches, in: Stefan Berger and Eric Storm (eds.), *Writing the history of Nationalism*, London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Carol Hakim, *The Origins of the Lebanese National Idea: 1840-1920*, California: University of California Press, 2013.

Nation’’ descendant from the ancient Phoenicia, Arabism reconstructed the past civilizations to be the ancestors of modern Arabs¹²⁵. Accordingly the former argues against the separation of Lebanese communities from their Arab landscape. Among the protagonists of Lebanism are Charles Corm, Michel Chiha, Youssef Sawda, Charles Malik, Jawad Bolous, Kamal Youssef El-Hajj, Fouad Efram El-Bustani and Said Aqel with references to a “Franco-Lebanese dream”¹²⁶ and the works of Alphonse de Lamartine¹²⁷ and Ernst Renan¹²⁸. Syrianism was advocated by Butrus al-Bustani to assert the existence of a natural Syrian nation within a reformed Ottoman Empire. With Gibran Khalil Gibran, this was transformed into a Levantine national revival connected to the foundations of its civilization until it took its final shape with Antoun Saadeh in 1932. Syrianism is in contradiction with Lebanism’s separatism and departs from Arab nationalism’s call towards the unification of the entirety of the Arab World. The three ideologies drift away radically from Islamic nationalism and overlap only partially with Leftist discourses.

¹²⁵ Kais Firro, *Inventing Lebanon: nationalism and the state under the Mandate*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2003.

¹²⁶ A term used by Carol Hakim to represent French interest in Lebanon during the 18th century. Kais Ferro makes reference the writings of four Christian intellectuals between 1912 and 1920. They are: Khairallah Khairallah, Nadra Moutran, George Samne and Jacques Tabet.

¹²⁷ Alphonse de Lamartine (1790 -1869): a French author, poet, orientalist, member of the Académie Française and statesman. He travelled to Lebanon, Syria and the Holy Land in 1832-33, the account of which was published in 1835.

Lamartine’s long series of political speeches about the East have been collected in “La France parlementaire, 1864-1865”. The notes of his second trip to the East are documented in the book “Nouveau Voyage en Orient” (1852), co-written with Chamborant de Périssat and Charles Alexandre. He wrote an 8-volume book entitled “Histoire de la Turquie (1854-1855)” after becoming an advocate of a united Ottoman Empire.

Source: BnF shared history, <https://heritage.bnf.fr/bibliothequesorient/en/alphonse-lamartine-art>, accessed on 7.1.2021).

¹²⁸ Ernest Renan (1823- 1892): a French orientalist, philosopher, historian, and scholar of religion. He led an archaeological expedition to Lebanon, Syria and Palestine from 1864 to 1874. The output was published throughout the expedition and collected in two volumes of 884 pages and 7 plates. According to René Dussaud, this work became “the main treatise on Phoenician archaeology” and the reference for future explorations and was to remain, for over half a century (Source: BnF shared heritage, Ernest Renan’s Mission to Phoenicia. 1864-1874: <https://heritage.bnf.fr/bibliothequesorient/en/ernest-renan-mission-phoenicia>; accessed on 7.1.2021).

With the support of the French Mandate, the advocates of Lebanism were able to push for the establishment of Greater Lebanon in 1920. This reinforced the continuity of the close economic networks that flourished between French and Lebanese elites since the 19th century. It also brought further westernization of lifestyles and daily practices especially in cities. European-style pubs and theaters flourished during the Mandate period, and theatrical performances from France and Egypt, were prevalent. During the 1930s and 1940s, Beirut was gradually consolidating its position as a regional cultural pole of modernity with multiple social constituents from the local countryside and Arab cities, contributing to its “new alphabet” in literature, music, theater, and media. Several national cultural projects were launched under French auspices. Among them are the National Museum (1942), the National Library (1922) and Radio Orient (1938). The radio station witnessed debates about the identity of the “Lebanese song” in becoming the voice of the socio-political changes in the country and how to improve in terms of text, melody, and singing. Regulatory decisions were made to provide productions based on "zajal in the Lebanese accent"¹²⁹. Moreover, its director Albert Adib dedicated special broadcast sections to local folklore singing and zajal. The latter were moderated by the poet William Saab and which contributed in turn to their spread in Lebanon and abroad during that period.

In terms of scholarship, a new generation of researchers occupied with folklore appeared during the late Mandatory period. Their work reflected more rigorous ethnographic methods of inquiry. Anis Fraiha highlighted the importance of collecting Lebanese Folklore and its classification before it is lost¹³⁰. He studied the traditions in

¹²⁹ Administrative Memo No. 47/11 circulated by the Technical Director of Arab Radio in the East Radio George Farah on June 25, 1944.

¹³⁰ انيس فريحة، حضارة في طريق الزوال، بيروت: الجامعة الاميركية في بيروت، 1957

Mount Lebanon. Lahed Khater's two volumes overview the customs pertaining to different stage of the life cycle from birth to death¹³¹. Other major contributions include works by Maroun Abboud, Amine Nakhle, Munir Whaibe, Youssef Ibrahim Yazbek, Jabbour Abdel Nour and later on Salam Racy. In comparison, Egypt has offered more institutionalization and extensive research on folklore based on diverse disciplines ranging from social sciences to music. The Recording Commission at Arab Music Congress held in Cairo in 1932 submitted a plan to collect, record and document oral folk tradition throughout the country. It proposed to study the targeted subjects in their original context. This was followed by the establishment of the Center for the Study of Popular Arts (1957; it became part of the Higher Institute for Popular Arts in 1981) and the launch of a dedicated journal entitled Popular Arts Magazine (1965)¹³². Comparable institutions remain absent in Lebanon until date. Similarly, a ministry of culture was non-existent in prewar Lebanon unlike Egypt whose ministry were found in 1958, and Syria and Jordan in 1976¹³³. In Egypt, ambitious folklore research agendas produced an Arab-English dictionary, a comprehensive bibliography and an encyclopedia¹³⁴. A pan-Arab initiative by the League of Arab States to identify common elements in folk traditions in the Arab countries was held in Cairo in 1971. The published proceedings

¹³¹ لحد خاطر، العادات والتقاليد اللبنانية، بيروت: 1974

¹³² محمد عمران، في الموسيقى الشعبية المصرية: تأسيس نظري وتطبيقات عملية، الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب، القاهرة، 2006 <http://alfunun-alshaabia.esft.info/ar/About> (Accessed on 28.12.2020) مجلة الفنون الشعبية

¹³³ For more information please visit the official websites of the Ministries of Culture in Egypt, Syria and Jordan accessed on 30.12.2020 :

Egypt: <http://www.moc.gov.eg/en/ministry/about-ministry/>

Syria: <http://moc.gov.sy/en/home/>

Jordan: <https://culture.gov.jo/node/33645>

¹³⁴ A similar output on the country level may be observed for Palestinian folklore. Here are the details of the 3 pan-Arab dictionary, bibliography and encyclopedia:

عبد الحميد بونس، معجم الفولكلور : مع مسرد انكليزي - عربي ، بيروت/ مكتبة لبنان، 1983

محمد الجوهرى، و ابراهيم عبد الحافظ، ومصطفى جاد، الانتاج الفكري العربي في علم الفلكلور: قائمة ببليو جرافية، القاهرة: مركز البحوث والدراسات الاجتماعية- كلية الآداب في جامعة القاهرة، 2000

شوقي عبد الحكيم، موسوعة الفلكلور والاساطير العربية، بيروت : دار العودة، 1982

feature a methodology guideline, a final report and a collection of studies submitted by participating delegates¹³⁵. Lebanon is not listed among the participating delegates.

F. Folklore Research in Post-War Lebanon

Research interest in folklore sustained sporadically in Lebanon since the civil war. Several conferences were held by the Cultural Dialogue Circle. Their proceedings were published in separate books¹³⁶. Another conference about Lebanon's rural history was organized by the Lebanese Historical Association in 1995¹³⁷. Zajal remained a vibrant area of research. Themes revolved around the historic origins of different genre as well as zajal in Jabal 'Amel in addition to Mount Lebanon¹³⁸. Further folklore studies were published by historians, anthropologists and ethnomusicologists. They include works by Fawwaz Trabulsi, Farajallah Saleh Deeb, Ali Jihad Racy, Simon Jargy, Salim and Elias Sahhab, Badih Hajj, Marcel Akiki, Jean Lambert and Najla Jerisaty Khoury (independently and in association with Dar Onboz) among others. Most academic research in humanities and social sciences pertaining to Fairuz, the Rahbani Brothers and Ziad Rahbani had folklore and the Lebanese Nights on their agenda in varying extents. Researchers from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Europe and USA include Joseph Obeid (1973), George Haddad (1974), Mohamad Abi Samra (1985), Maysaa Qura'an (1998), Nabil Abou Mrad (1990), Mona Boulos (2000), Christopher Stone (2002), Innes Weinrich (2002), Fadi Bardawil (2002), Suzanne Abu Ghida (2002), Rima Semaan

135 جامعة الدول العربية، حلقة العناصر المشتركة في المأثورات الشعبية في الوطن العربي، القاهرة: 13-20 اكتوبر/ تشرين الاول 1971

136 المؤتمر الاول للثقافة الشعبية في لبنان، بيروت: حلقة الحوار الثقافي، 1993
المؤتمر الثاني للثقافة الشعبية اللبنانية - العربية، بيروت: حلقة الحوار الثقافي، 1999

137 جان شرف (اشراف)، أعمال المؤتمر الاول لتاريخ لبنان الريفي، تنظيم الجمعية التاريخية اللبنانية، بيروت: منشورات فيلون لبنان، 1997.

138 جورج شكيب سعادة، الزجل اللبناني بين جبل لبنان وجبل عامل، بيروت: منشورات الجامعة اللبنانية، قسم الدراسات الادبية رقم 46، 2016.

(2003), Kenneth Habib (2005), Rajaa Chouairi (2006), Fawaz Trabulsi (2006), Jana Al-Obeidiyine (2015), Assad Kattan (2018), Ghassan Nasr (2018) and Dima Issa (2019)¹³⁹. Two conferences were organized by the Anis Maksidi Program for Literature directed by Dr. Maher Jarrar in association with Akram Rayess at the American University of Beirut (2006) and the University of the Holy Spirit (2010) respectively about the artistic collaboration between Fairuz and Ziad Rahbani and the Legacy of the Rahbani Brothers. A collective multi-disciplinary dossier about Ziad Rahbani edited by Akram Rayess was published by Adab Magazine (2009-2010) and a book with contributions by several authors was released by the Lebanese University (2015). Wadih Assafi's legacy was the subject of another conference at the University of Holy Spirit (2014) and a book by the Lebanese University (2016). The Zaki Nassif Program for Music at the American University of Beirut oversaw the transfer of the composer's archives to Jafet Library and their management (2008). The program also published a book¹⁴⁰ of texts compiled from Nassif's archive (2014).

Christopher Stone's award winning dissertation on the "nation" of the Fairuz and the Rahbani Brothers included two inspiring chapters about the Lebanese Nights at the Baalbeck International Festival¹⁴¹. Stone discusses how folkloric events transformed the ancient site into a national symbol and formed a "powerful nation-building combination". He traces the rise of local and national interest in the Roman ruins based on Partha Chatterjee's concepts of the "appropriation of the popular" and the "classicization of tradition" as well as theories of nationalism, modernity, globalism and

¹³⁹ This quick survey does not include other abundant press articles or books that are not necessarily of academic nature.

¹⁴⁰ من أوراق زكي ناصيف، بيروت: منشورات الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت، 2014

¹⁴¹ Christopher Stone, *Popular Culture and Nationalism in Lebanon: The Fairuz and Rahbani Nation*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008.

locality. Rim Mortada gives emphasis to the interplay between the ancient site's "historical/national symbol" and its "suptio-mythical symbol" in serving as a "landscape of the ordinary" for its local inhabitants¹⁴². Ghassan Nasr's dissertation¹⁴³ frames the Fairuz and Rahbani Brothers phenomenon as a process of "mediation between the local and the cosmopolitan" within a historical moment that witnessed the emergence of new cosmopolitan performance aesthetics. Nasr briefly unpacks in chapter 3 the notion of folklore as a marker of locality through the Lebanese Nights repertoire of Fairuz and the Rahbani Brothers while interrogating notions of social poetics, cultural intimacy, affect, nation and nostalgia. Nadia Von Maltzahn presents in her recent article how the Baalbeck Citadel as a heritage site became an "anchor for particular narratives of the country's history and celebrations of the present¹⁴⁴". She argues that it grew into a "national brand and a source of national pride" by the appropriation of heritage as a tool for tourism through the power dynamics and cultural policies underlying the Baalbeck International Festival¹⁴⁵.

Post-war archiving initiatives by individual researchers and independent civic and educational institutions brought to attention visual archives and music recordings pertaining from the date of the introduction of these media to the Levant region up to

¹⁴² Rim Mortada, *The Symbolic Dimension of the Urban and Cultural Landscape in Baalbek (Lebanon): The Challenge of Resistance and/or Instruments of Power*, *dearq* 24, INVESTIGACIÓN TEMÁTICA, 2019.

¹⁴³ Ghassan Nasr, *Fairouz and the Rahbanis: Nation, Nostalgia and A Lebanese Cosmopolitan Modern* (Dissertation), Indiana University, 2018.

¹⁴⁴ Nadia Von Maltzahn, *Heritage, tourism, and the politics of national pride. The Baalbeck International Festival in Lebanon*, *Quaderni Storici*, 161 / a. LIV, n. 2, August 2019.

¹⁴⁵ Baalbeck Citadel remains the subject of a consistent archeological inquiry by local and international researchers. A comprehensive volume was published in the celebration of the 1998 anniversary of the visit of the German Emperor Wilhelm II to Baalbek in November 1898 and the beginning of the archaeological operations in the temple ruins of Baalbek in December 1898: Helen Sader, Thomas Scheffler und Angelika Neuwirth (editors) *Baalbek: Image and Monument 1898 – 1998*, Beirut: F. Steiner, 1998.

It is the result of a collective research effort led by the Orient Institute in Beirut. It includes a chapter on Baalbeck International Festivals:

Annie Tohme, *Le Festival de Baalbek au Carrefour des Paradoxes Libanaises d'Avant Guerre*

the first half of the 20th century. Photography depicted ways of life and associated traditions across rural and urban areas of Lebanon. Shellac records brought into life forgotten rural and urban traditional music practices. Examples include respectively Youssef Taj and Farajallah Baida¹⁴⁶. Baalbeck's site and festival were the subject of a grand exhibition entitled "Baalbek, Archives of an Eternity"¹⁴⁷ organized by Sursock Museum in 2019 as a multi-disciplinary memorialization experience. It was implemented by the international curator Vali Mahlouji with the support of Association Philippe Jabre, Baalbeck International Festival and the Directorate General of Antiquities at the Ministry of Culture¹⁴⁸. The official curatorial statement of the exhibition refers to an investigation of the site of Baalbeck that "reconstructs a complex network of histories and readings" from pre-historic origins to modern times through archaeological, ethnographic, anthropological, cultural, and artistic perspectives. Finally, it is relevant to mention the recent efforts of the Lebanese Ministry of Culture towards the inscription of zajal (not the dabke for instance) on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2014¹⁴⁹. These postwar initiatives may be viewed within the context of a current critical "shift from political to social and economic history" in the region by historians, philosophers and

¹⁴⁶ Examples of such initiative are the Arab Image Foundation AIF (<http://www.arabimagefoundation.org>), The Foundation for Arab Music Archiving and Research AMAR (<https://www.amar-foundation.org>), The Arab Resource Center for Popular Arts Al-Jana (<https://janacenter.org/en/home>) and The Phoenix Center for Lebanese Studies PCLS hosted at the Holy Spirit University at Kaslik USEK (<https://www.usek.edu.lb/phoenix-en/about-us>).

¹⁴⁷ For more information, please visit the exhibition's webpage: <https://sursock.museum/content/baalbek-archives-eternity> (accessed on 21.2.2020). A 16-page exhibition guide is available for download the following link: https://sursock.museum/sites/default/files/baalbek-exhibition_guide-en-web.pdf (accessed on 21.12.2020).

¹⁴⁸ Vali Mahlouji is a London-based curator, founder of Archaeology of the Final Decade, independent advisor to the British Museum, and director of Kaveh Golestan Estate. Mahlouji's recent work includes an exhibition on the Shiraz Festival of Arts (Iran, 1967-1977) entitled 'A Utopian Stage: Festival of Arts, Shiraz-Persepolis'. It was held in 2015 at the Whitechapel Gallery in London.

¹⁴⁹ Al-Zajal, recited or sung poetry, UNESCO website: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/al-zajal-recited-or-sung-poetry-01000>; Inscription decision: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/9.COM/10.25> (accessed on 30.12.2020)

social scientists which is contributing to a redefinition of heritage practices¹⁵⁰. This shift is manifested in revisiting the Ottoman legacy independently from Euro-centric, Arab-nationalist perspectives and Lebanism in the case of Lebanon, rethinking post-colonial and nationalist heritage constructions and recognizing heritage sub-sectors that were previously neglected or contested. Besides state institutions, actors with diverging socio-demographic characteristics, political outlooks, discourses and practices are increasingly engaged in the “definition, production and consumption” of heritage¹⁵¹. They consist of individual collectors, experts, intellectuals, artists, activists, families, local community groups, civil society and private organizations, academia, donors and regional and international organizations.

¹⁵⁰ Rami Daher and Irene Maffi, Introduction, in: Rami Daher and Irene Maffi (editors), *The politics and practices of cultural heritage in the Middle East: positioning the material past in contemporary societies*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2014.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER IV

TOWARDS A POLYPHONIC NARRATIVE OF THE PRACTICES OF THE LEBANESE NIGHTS

This chapter presents the findings of the archival research pertaining to practices. It starts with an overview of the main agents and institutions followed by an attempt to construct an inclusive and a multi-vocal narrative of the trajectory of the practices of the Lebanese Nights and their associated circumstances. After a close up look on their emergence during the early formative period, the narrative traces themes that cross cut through the festival life span until the civil war.

A. Institutions and Agencies

Three main groups of agencies constitute the pillars our subject of study. They are: The President of the Republic, State Institutions and the Baalbeck International Festival; The Folklore Subcommittee; Emerging Local Artists and Intellectuals; Media. Following is a brief biography of each of them to serve as a background for the construction of the discursive space of the Baalbeck's folklore project.

1. The President of the Republic, State Institutions and the Baalbeck International Festival

The President of the Lebanese Republic Camille Chamoun (1900-1987) championed the institutionalization of the Baalbeck initiative in 1956 to offer organized annual events based on the success of earlier sporadic French performances in 1922,

1944 and 1955¹⁵². This was realized by the establishment of an autonomous Non-governmental civil association¹⁵³ whose honorary president is the President of the Lebanese Republic. In its years of activity from 1956 to 1974, the Presidents of the festival¹⁵⁴ were Aimee Kettaneh¹⁵⁵ (1956-1968), Salwa Es-Said¹⁵⁶ (1969-1972) and May Arida¹⁵⁷ (1973-2016). The Baalbeck International Festival was institutionally governed according to a set of bylaws through an executive committee and functional sub-committees of volunteers and a general assembly whose members represent different local socio-economic and cultural elites prominent at the time. It was headed by an executive committee which had twelve members. They were elected annually by a General Assembly¹⁵⁸. It was partly funded by the Lebanese government through the General Commission of Tourism¹⁵⁹ (superseded by the National Council of Tourism in 1962 and the Ministry of Tourism in 1966¹⁶⁰) alongside sponsors from the private sector, and its accounts were audited by the Ministry of Finance. Annex 4 presents a list of the members of the festival's pre-war executive committees.

¹⁵² Comite du festival international de Baalbeck: les riches heures du festival, Beirut: Dar Annahar, 1994. The 1944 performance was organized by "L'Association nationale pour le maintien et le developpement de la culture libanaise".

¹⁵³ خالدة سعيد، الحركة المسرحية في لبنان، 1975-1960: تجارب وابعاد، بيروت: لجنة المسرح العربي في مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية، 1998.

¹⁵⁴ Comite du festival international de Baalbeck: les riches heures du festival, Beirut: Dar Annahar, 1994.

¹⁵⁵ Aimee Kettaneh is the wife of the business man Charles Kettaneh. She studied law and managed the Delhamyeh Country Club in Damour.

¹⁵⁶ Salwa Es-Said is the wife of the business man Fouad Es-Said and daughter of Badr Dimashkieh and Julia Tohme. She was a member of the media committee of the Lebanese Cross and the Board of Trustees of the American University of Beirut.

¹⁵⁷ May Arida is the wife of the business man Carlos Arida. She was a philanthropist and the president of the Lebanese Water Skiing Federation (1953-1961).

¹⁵⁸ Baalbeck International Festivals website: <http://www.baalbeck.org.lb/executive-committee/> (Accessed on 7.1.2021).

¹⁵⁹ The Website of the Ministry of Tourism: <http://mot.gov.lb/Ministry/About> (Accessed on 2.1.2021)

¹⁶⁰ Official Gazette, Law No. 21/66, 4.4.1966.

2. The Folklore Subcommittee

The Folklore subcommittee was established in 1956 and proactively endorsed by the first lady Zalfa Chamoun (1910-1971). It was chaired by Habib Abou Chahla (1956), Khalil Hibri (1957), Salwa Es-Said (1959-1968), Jean Skaff (1969-1970) and Jean Farah (1973-1974)¹⁶¹. The subcommittee recognized folklore as a vehicle to promote social cohesion not only among Lebanese citizens but also expatriates in different regions of the world¹⁶². It also employed folklore as a central pillar of tourism and cultural diplomacy. The Folklore Subcommittee and its network of artists and collaborators have established through the seventeen pre-war Lebanese Nights an encyclopedia of folklore and a repository of contemporary Lebanese popular performing arts. Furthermore, they paved the way for Lebanese folk art to take its “proper position” among the international manifestations of artistic expression¹⁶³.

3. Emerging Local Artists and Intellectuals

The subcommittee commissioned emerging local artists to present annual performances alongside offerings of international music and theater. These artists alongside a group of practitioners and intellectuals sought in coordination with members of the Folklore Subcommittee to reach out to holders of folklore to collect and document local oral knowledge and practices. They communicated folklore through multiple expressions of dance, music/singing, clothing, local knowledge and traditional ways of living. This creative integration brought forward innovative practices that took form progressively throughout the popularization of Dabke, songs with folk themes and

¹⁶¹ No specific names were listed in the annual festival catalogues for the years 1971 and 1972.

¹⁶² Personal Archives of Samia Saab.

¹⁶³ Baalbek International Festivals Catalogue, 1965.

the emergence of musical plays.

4. Media

Newspapers, magazine, radio and later television provide a dynamic platform for the exchange of ideas and political standpoint. They offered reviews of the annual festival performances and the overall preparations made by the Committee. Moreover, media was a venue for engaged journalists, politicians and public intellectuals to convey propositions for the improvement of the festival in the context of ongoing debates about culture and development that took place during the life span of the festival. They reflected as well prevailing ideological perspectives of Lebanism, Arabism and Syrianism among others. The festival Committee consistently issued press releases that recognized the supporting role of press and public opinion in the cultivation of arts and culture in Lebanon and in spreading the word beyond to other countries¹⁶⁴.

B. A Midsummer Night's Dream

It all started in the spring of 1955. Toni Azzi a producer based in Paris expressed an interest to organize public theater performances at the Citadel of Baalbeck to coincide with the announcement of the year of tourism in Lebanon¹⁶⁵. He offered logistic support in the provision of lighting equipment, 7 km of cables and the construction of a theater in collaboration with the directorate of Antiquities¹⁶⁶. The Army provided labour and a power generator. The French Troupe du Jean Marchat presented four plays: *Le guerre de Troie de Giraudoux*, *Polyeucte Corneille*, *Antigone d'Anouilh*, and *Les Bucoliques de Virgile*. Another narrative refers to a small groups of business and a clergyman

¹⁶⁴ Check for example the press release published in *Assiyasah*, 9.9.1959.

¹⁶⁵ The events of the 1955 year of tourism were organized by the National Commission of Tourism.

¹⁶⁶ *Al-Jarida*, 21.1.1962.

conveyed the idea of holding a festival at the Citadel to receptive and welcoming President Camille Chamoun¹⁶⁷. They were Bishop Abdallah Noujeim, Eliya Abou Jaoude (Manager of the Lebanese Commercial Bank), Jean Fattal (co-owner of Khalil Fattal & Fils) and the economist Gabriel Saab¹⁶⁸. Khalida Said points out to the efforts of the members of Les Jeunesses musicales du Liban in promoting music among youth among the incentives to establish the festival¹⁶⁹. In all of these cases, the success of the theater performances that summer was another reason that motivated the Lebanese President to establish the first formal committee in charge of the preparations of a more elaborate festival to be held in the following summer. The launching meeting took place towards the end of 1955 at the presidential palace.

Aimee Kettaneh was elected as the first president of the festival committee¹⁷⁰. The government through the National Commission of Tourism made a financial contribution of L.L. 125.000¹⁷¹. Other funding to cover the festival costs came from the committee members. Kettaneh signed an agreement with Philips to provide lighting of the festival and the citadel during the summer. The Committee announced a collaboration with the Middle East Airlines to promote tourism to Lebanon¹⁷². Road works were implemented, a parking space and the entrance to the citadel were improved¹⁷³. The festival program featured music besides theater. It hosted a performance by the Orchestre de la NDR de

¹⁶⁷ Al-Hayat, 29.7.1956

¹⁶⁸ A brief bio of Gabriel Saab by L'Orient L'Jour is available on the following link: https://www.lorientlejour.com/article/458106/Gabriel_Saab_%253A_parcours.html (accessed on 31.12.2020)

¹⁶⁹ Les Jeunesses musicales du Liban was founded on 26.2.1956. Its president Antoine Medawar became a member of the executive committee of the festival.

خالدة سعيد، الحركة المسرحية في لبنان 1960-1975: تجارب وأبعاد، بيروت: لجنة المسرح العربي في مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية، 1998.

¹⁷⁰ An interview with Aimee Kettaneh, Telegraph, 8.6.1960.

¹⁷¹ Al-Jarida, 21.1.1962.

¹⁷² Daily Star, How to improve the festival, 5.9.1956.

¹⁷³ Prelude for the 1957 Festival, Daily Star, 7.9.1956.

Hambourg, The Open Air Theater Company from England and for the second time Troupe de Jean Marchat. The festival received a warm reception from the press. The new logistics and efficient assistance of ushers and boy scouts were appreciated; still hotels in the region surrounding the Citadel required improvement and the town of Baalbeck needed to “improve hospitality and internal politics”¹⁷⁴. For the Daily Star, it is an event for the young and old¹⁷⁵, while L’Orient finds that the Baalbeck Festival is Lebanon’s biggest political victory since independence. Moreover, it signifies the “huge importance of the insertion /re-insertion of Lebanon in the international art scene”¹⁷⁶. Gabriel Saab who became one of the festival committee’s founding members elaborates further aspirations to proclaim that the festival is a rite: “It inserts itself in a physical and aesthetic context that respects the spirit of the acropolis. This involves a search for the authentic (and) a call towards the internationalization of the festival to do the most to attract an international audience”¹⁷⁷.

President Chamoun announced in August 1956 that Baalbeck Festival have become an institution¹⁷⁸. It was formalized as a civic organization at the Ministry of Interior under the official name of the Baalbeck Festival Committee with registration number of 340 dated 1.3.1956. The registration documents depicts two objectives of the festival: first, promotion and support of art and music in Lebanon; second, reinforcement of tourism based on the cultural and historical manifestations of the legacy of Lebanon¹⁷⁹. The committee membership was expanded and specialized sub-committees were established to cover the following thematic and administrative functions: Folklore,

¹⁷⁴ Prelude for the 1957 Festival, Daily Star, 7.9.1956.

¹⁷⁵ Daily Star, 9.8.1956.

¹⁷⁶ George Naccache, Ce Qui Sera Celebre Ce Soir, L’Orient, 28.7.1956.

¹⁷⁷ Gabriel Saab, L’Orient, 8.9.1956

¹⁷⁸ Al-Jarida, Rushdi Maalouf, 7.8.1956.

¹⁷⁹ جمعية "الجنة مهرجانات بعلبك"، علم وخبر رقم 340، 1 آذار 1956

English theater, French Theater, Music, Information, Administration, Finance, Technical matters and Reception. Every sub-committee submits its annual budget to the Executive Committee for approval before implementation¹⁸⁰. The Festival received the sum of L.L. 250.000 from the National Commission of Tourism. Another advance payment of L.L. 150.000 was granted¹⁸¹. Other funding sources were provided through membership fees, donations and sponsorship from embassies, companies and civic organizations. Preparations commenced 6 months before the date of the festival. One of the meetings of the Music sub-committees was chaired by President Chamoun on 10.12.1956¹⁸².

A consistent communication campaign was held to promote the festival internationally and to build confidence in Lebanon. A series of declarations were issued by the festival committee to disseminate the preparations that started in November 1956¹⁸³ for the forthcoming festival in the summer of 1957. A competition was launched in February to engage local talents in the design of posters and publicity publications¹⁸⁴. A full time secretariat was established and a dedicated office space was rented to allow operations to run smoothly throughout the year¹⁸⁵. Siemens was contracted to study and implement the technical requirements of sound and stage construction in an effort to bring the festival to an international standard¹⁸⁶. Furthermore, the Festival Committee coordinated closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs so that Lebanese Consulates and Embassies in Canada, Paris, Rome and other

¹⁸⁰ Baalbeck International Festivals Executive Committee Meeting, 25.1.1957 (Baalbeck International Festivals Archive denoted hereafter as BIF Archive; USEK)

¹⁸¹ Internal correspondence with the Commission of Tourism, 5.1.1957 (BIF Archive; USEK)

¹⁸² Baalbeck International Festivals Executive Committee Meeting, 25.1.1957 (BIF Archive; USEK)

¹⁸³ Sada Lubnan, 5.2.1957.

¹⁸⁴ Internal memo, 12.2.1957 (BIF Archive; USEK).

¹⁸⁵ Declaration No.3 (13.2.1957). (BIF Archive; USEK).

¹⁸⁶ Declaration No. 6 (26.3.1957). (BIF Archive; USEK).

countries assist in the promotion of the festival and in the provision of the issuance of travel documents for participating artists. The Committee announced the support of the Italian government and the participation of a prominent orchestra from Rome and recognized the efforts of the Lebanese Ambassador in Italy towards realizing these achievements¹⁸⁷. The growth of the festival required additional coordination with other state institutions. Discussions were made with the National Commission of Tourism to produce a film about Baalbeck and the Festival to be used by Consulates and Embassies for promotional purposes¹⁸⁸.

C. Beginnings of the Lebanese Nights

Tony Azzi announced in the summer of 1956 that the next season will feature Lebanese Folklore¹⁸⁹. This was a much anticipated action. Internal discussion about the inclusion of local art started as early as in 1955. Habib Abou Chahla¹⁹⁰ followed by Khalil Hibri¹⁹¹, a founding member of the festival, called for folklore to be one of the festival's constituents¹⁹². Abou Chahla was appointed to be the head of "commission des dans folklorique"¹⁹³. Internal festival documents reveal that dedicated meetings were held in March 1956 to plan a performance about a traditional Lebanese marriage

¹⁸⁷ Declaration No. 4, 1.3.1957 (BIF Archive; USEK).

¹⁸⁸ Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Commission of Tourism, 28.8.1957 (BIF Archive; USEK)

¹⁸⁹ Salah Steitie, Le festival de Baalbeck: petit historique D'un grand festival, *Revue du Liban*, 28.7.1956

¹⁹⁰ Habib Abou Chahla (1902 -1957): a politician, lawyer and public figure. He studied at the American University of Beirut and earned a PhD in law from the Sorbonne. Abou Chahla was a Head and then Member of Parliament and a Minister. He published a book in French entitled *L'extinction des capitulations en Turquie et dans les regions arabes* (Paris: Picart, 1929).

¹⁹¹ Khalil Hibri (1904- 1979): a politician and a business man. He led a transitional government during the 1958 Crisis and contributed to the development and modernization of public water services. Hibri was a member of the parliament, Minister of Public Works and Board Member and later Chairman of Beirut's Water Company.

¹⁹² *Al-Jarida*, 21.1.1962.

¹⁹³ *Le Soir*, 14.2.1956.

with dance and singing¹⁹⁴. Najib Hankash¹⁹⁵ was assigned to oversee the production, direction and in association with Khalil Hibri to identify eligible professional musicians and set the budget. These efforts had again to wait for another years to materialize into concrete results. Fouad Sarrouf¹⁹⁶, a committee member and later the deputy president of the festival committee admitted that the “festival was indeed missing a Lebanese folklore evening”¹⁹⁷ and expected that they “should be able to include it in the 1957 or 1958 festival”¹⁹⁸.

Following a performance in Beirut in April, Igor Moiseyev was commissioned by the first lady Zalfa Chamoun through the Lebanese Commission of UNESCO to provide recommendations about folkloric dances in Lebanon. Moiseyev (1906- 2007) is accredited for his pioneering work in reinterpreting peasant dances into choreographic spectacles and professional practices presented to local multicultural audiences of the USSR. The Moiseyev Dance Company reflected the Soviet Union’s “interest in folk dance as a political tool”¹⁹⁹ and was a vehicle of cultural diplomacy to international audiences in different parts of the world. Following a two-week residency that consisted of field visits of rural areas in Lebanon, Moiseyev announced the findings of his report in a press conference held at the Ministry of Information²⁰⁰. He started the presentation by highlighting the significance of preserving traditional dances and dresses which he

¹⁹⁴ Committee Meetings, 19.3.1956 and 26.3.1956 (BIF Archive; USEK)

¹⁹⁵ Najib Hankash (1904-1979): Author, journalist, TV presenter and comedian. He immigrated to Brazil in 1922 and returned to his home country few years after its independence in 1947.

¹⁹⁶ Fouad Yaacoub Sarouf (1900 1985): A scientist, literary writer and translator. He was the author of several books and the editor-in-chief of *Al-Muqtataf* (1927-1944), *al-Mukhtar* (1943-1947) and *Al-Abhath* published by American University of Beirut (1959-1966). He served as the Vice President of the American University of Beirut, President of the Executive Board of UNESCO and as a member of many international and cultural bodies in the Arab world.

¹⁹⁷ Fouad Sarrouf, *L'Orient*, 14.9.1956.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ Anthony Shay, *Choreographic Politics*, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2002.

²⁰⁰ *Annahar*, 10.6.1956.

expects to be under the threat of disappearance within few years as a result of forceful social changes. This needed to be associated with the sum of traditions and customs of the human lifecycle. Similarly, choreographers should maintain a close connection with rural resources. Traditional music should be preserved and at the same time made compatible to the symphony orchestra. Local and national competitions can foster public interest and promote awareness about preservation. Moiseyev recommended to introduce traditional dance to the curricula of universities and music conservatories and proposed to enroll two local dance trainers for a study tour in Russia. They will in turn convey the newly learnt practices to the dance troop will participate in the planned folklore performances at Baalbeck Festivals. He communicated other observations related to solo and group dances, the specification of the theater to be constructed at Baalbeck and his artistic observations about the setting within the Citadel.

The encounter with Moiseyev injected new energy into the preparations of the folklore performance. Some newspapers even announced that he will oversee their production²⁰¹. Subsequent discussions revolved about the more appropriate venue for folklore. Some proposed that Beiteddine may be more suitable to folklore than the Citadel²⁰², while other found that Byblos will be better for Lebanese presentations²⁰³. Wadi'a and Marwan Jarrar were selected for the 2 months study tour in Russia which started in September of the same year²⁰⁴. Wadi'a Jarrar already has an extensive experience. She studied popular dancing in England and Denmark and was teaching it at schools in Beirut. She was also involved with the Folk Dance Festival at the American University of Beirut which has been active for 7 years. This festival was founded by

²⁰¹ Nelly Gedeon, Daily Star, 2.7.1956.

²⁰² Baalbeck: Bilan et perspective, Orient, 12.9.1956

²⁰³ Daily Star, How to improve the festival, 5.9.1956

²⁰⁴ Al-Hayat, 3.9.1957.

Ester Thomas Kourani and Nelda Wallace to “encourage joyous sharing in music and song of the tradition and folk culture of many nations and to help spread to others the feeling of good will, happiness and mutual understanding that is found through the medium of folk dancing”²⁰⁵. The annual event featured a regular presentation of Lebanese folk dances by participating schools. It is to be considered as one of the precursors of re-emerging interest in folklore after Lebanon earned its independence²⁰⁶. The names of Najib Hankash in the Mahjar²⁰⁷ and Sami Salibi’s Institute of Arts in Ras Beirut²⁰⁸ recurred as other early contributors to the folklore revival apart from the vibrant musical movement at the Near East Radio Station championed by Sabri El-Sharif and a group of musicians and singers, many of whom will be eventually participating in the Baalbeck Festival.

A new sub-committee was instated to assure the dynamic kick off of the folklore evening at the Baalbeck Festival led by Khalil Hibri with the membership of Mrs. Salam, Mrs. Sidawi, Mrs. Daouk and Najib Hankash. Among its missions was to identify and mobilize the qualified Lebanese artists with the overall consulting support of the historian Youssef Ibrahim Yazbek, Prince Maurice Chehab the Director of the Directorate of Antiquities and Michel Touma the Director of the National Commission of Tourism. A parallel sub-committee of ladies led by Zalfa Chamoun focused its efforts on traditional costumes and dresses. Minutes of meetings²⁰⁹ reflect deliberations on the scenario with the Rahbani Brothers, costumes per scene with the help of Dr. Fuad Achkar, music instruments and orchestra preparations with Toufic el Bacha, choir

²⁰⁵ The Third Folk Dance Festival Brochure, 22.5.1953, AUB Special Collections.

²⁰⁶ Such reference is mentioned by Marwan Jarrar, Al-Hayat, 14.7.1959 and Le Sour, 12/5/1960.

²⁰⁷ Kul Shayy, 19.8.1961.

²⁰⁸ Al-Ousbou’, 22.6.1959; Al-Jarida, 23.3.1960.

²⁰⁹ Minutes of meetings dates: 18.3.1957; 25.3.1957; 4.4.1957; 24.4.1957; 2.7.1957.

rehearsals, dance troop members selection and training with the Jarrars, rehearsals in Beirut and on site, stage management with Mohamad Chamel and Mohieddine Salam, accommodation in Baalbeck for 40 musicians and 80 participants, stage accessories, purchase of make-up materials from London through the Lebanese Embassy, budget, ticket prices, photography and catalogue. It is worth mentioning that President Chamoun attended one of the rehearsals at Beirut's UNESCO palace on 28.4.1957. He expressed his readiness to support the Folklore Nights and its sub-committee towards establishing a new cultural and artistic renaissance that represents Lebanese traditions by all available means²¹⁰.

The scenario was expanded from a wedding ceremony into two acts that begin with the initial meeting of the two lovers to progress through their engagement and culminate with marriage procession²¹¹. 120 dancers who belong to "respected families"²¹² were recruited from schools and universities by the Jarrars to constitute the first folklore dance troop of the festival. The final line up of contributing artists to the first Lebanese Nights comprised of Fairuz as the leading soloist, the Rahbani Brothers (music and scenario), Zaki Nassif (music and lyrics), Toufic el Bacha (music and conductor), Philemon Wehbe (music and acting), Wadi'a and Marwan Jarrar (Choreography), Assad Said (Solo dancer), Boughos Gelalian (Music rehearsals), Sabri Sherif (Director), Nizar Mikati (Assistant Director), Mohamel Chamel (Stage Manager), Joseph Rabbath (Scenography), Mohieddine Salam (Production) and collaborating artists from the Lebanese Recording Company (LRC)²¹³. This huge endeavor had led to a financial

²¹⁰ Al-Hayat, 11.9.1957.

²¹¹ Al-Hayat, 16.2.1957.

²¹² Addiyar, 26.4.1957.

²¹³ Baalbeck International Festivals Catalogue, 1957.

deficit²¹⁴. The cost of the newly added two folklore performances to the program mounted to L.L. 120.000 of the total 1957 festival budget equivalent to L.L 825.000²¹⁵, out of which L.L. 30,000 were allocated to the traditional costumes²¹⁶. This is to be compared to the total budget of the 1956 festival of L.L. 420.000²¹⁷.

The responses to the inaugural folklore nights were generally euphoric. The Daily Star reported that “songs and dance from many part of the country brought a fresh national pride which the audience shared readily”²¹⁸. Yet, much hard work is still to be done as the stylized costumes, the monotonous dance steps and the orchestrated music seemed to be “too artificial and out of context that a group of oldsters from villages would not have recognized them as Lebanese”²¹⁹, the same newspaper indicated in another review. Rushdi Maalouf agrees that a more comprehensive effort still needs to be exerted towards the thorough collection and documentation of the different aspects of folklore in Lebanon²²⁰. Other newspapers from diverging political standpoints shared similar reflections of a sense of triumph. Al-‘Aamal newspaper affiliated with the Kata’eb pointed that the “Lebanese audience came out from the Temple of Jupiter after each performance as if they are within a church procession submerged with reverence and holiness”²²¹. This was reasserted by Al-Hayat newspaper with an Arab Nationalist outlook whose editor Kamel Mroueh pointed that “every citizen who attended the festival is proud of this artistic genius, which was hidden for generations and exploded through the festival like an unstoppable spring”²²². He goes even further to consider the

²¹⁴ Assayad, 12.9.1957.

²¹⁵ Al-Hadaf 4.3.1957.

²¹⁶ Telegraph, 15.4.1957.

²¹⁷ L’Orient, 12.9.1956.

²¹⁸ Daily Star, 3.9.1957.

²¹⁹ Daily Star, 11.9.1957.

²²⁰ Al-Jarida. 3.9.1957.

²²¹ Al-Aamal, 3.9.1957.

²²² Al-Hayat, 3.9.1957. Other comparable reviews include: Revue du Liban, 7.9.1957; Le Jour, 3.9.1957.

performances as a new starting point towards a powerful and on-going folklore revival that needs to be properly nourished by the government through introducing folklore to school curricula²²³ and “establishing an institute of folklore music and dance and a permanent troop whose offering may be by far more vital to Lebanon compared to the current output of other official institutions”²²⁴. Mroueh later calls the artists themselves to take over the responsibilities of this mission if the government does demonstrate timely actions²²⁵. Comparable concerns were raised by Al-‘Aamal newspaper, however they were framed by its editors as part of sustaining the Lebanese mission in arts and culture²²⁶.

The international dimension is another point of consensus in most reviews. Accordingly, the whole folklore performance while maintaining the present discipline could not only “go now to any country and give an excellent account of itself”²²⁷ but also “preach and tell the world that we have found our souls”²²⁸. Besides, it will be a magnificent ambassador to the 1958 Brussels World’s Fair²²⁹ and the Lebanese communities in the mahjar²³⁰ as well as a starting point to organize in parallel to the festival an annual international conference on folklore music and dance²³¹. The euphoria reached also government officials. Minister of Information Raymond Edde called to allocate a national budget for the troop to be able to conduct tours outside of Lebanon²³². It was not long before these aspirations came to life. Two triumphant and

²²³ Al-Hayat 25.9.1959.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Al-Hayat, 25.9.1959.

²²⁶ Al-Aamal, 12.10.1959.

²²⁷ Daily Star, 3.9.1957.

²²⁸ Al-Hayat, 2.9.1959.

²²⁹ Le Jour, 3.9.1957

²³⁰ Al-Jarida, 10.9.1957.

²³¹ Assiyasah, 21.6.1959.

²³² Beirut Al-Masa, 1.9.1959.

unprecedented tours to Brazil and Argentina in the fall of 1961 and to London and Birmingham in spring of 1962 were organized under the leadership of Salwa Es-Said. In both tours, the Lebanese Folkloric Troop of singers and dancers with its star singer Fairuz, the Rahbani Brothers composers and the Director Sabri El-Sherif presented selections from the repertoire of the Lebanese Nights. Another performance produced by Romeo Lahhoud was held in Tahrán in 1967. It was recognized as a contribution to strengthen cultural relation between the countries²³³.

Suggestions for improvement were shared by Daily Star's reporter. They include logistics for later comers, photographers during performances, managing traffic, engaging local talents in the festival international acts and disclosing financial information to the public. Hussein Mroueh who is a senior member of the Lebanese Communist Party was more critical of the huge expenses allocated for inviting European performances. He indicated that while they were not attracting more tourists, it would be more effective to use some of this budget to build instead a national theater or an opera house, a national symphony orchestra or a national performing arts troop²³⁴. Similar critiques suggested that 10 hospitals to respond to community needs could have been built with the same amount of money while others referred to the high ticket prices which are unaffordable to large segment of the interested population²³⁵. The Vice President of the Baalbeck Festival Committee Salwa Es-Said published an article in Al-Hayat newspaper in response to these critiques²³⁶. She highlighted the economic benefits to the hospitality sector in areas neighbouring the festival in addition to the festival's positive international acclaim. She added that the idea of establishing a

²³³ BIF Archives: USEK, 1968.

²³⁴ Al-Hayat, 29.8.1957.

²³⁵ Assayad, 12.9.1957.

²³⁶ Al-Hayat, 31.8.1957.

national folklore troupe is a resultant of the successful performances pioneered by the festival which is also offering local artists opportunities to participate in music and theater performances of international acts from Italy and France. The last point was a subject of conflicting opinions calling for a greater participation of local talent. It was also the main reason for the composer and Director of the Music Conservatory Anis Fuleihan to request a termination from participation in the music sub-committee after the 1957 season ended²³⁷. The festival committee lost one of its most competent experts who mobilized his extensive network of contacts with international orchestras and music centers to serve as an engine of growth for the festival²³⁸.

D. Contestation and Assimilation

A general assembly and elections were held on 30.11.1957. New members joined the executive office and new sub-committee heads were appointed²³⁹. Preparations for the new season of the summer of 1958 commenced. An advance payment of L.L. 150,000 was approved by the Council of Ministers²⁴⁰. The political crisis and the armed violence that exploded in July halted the Committee's efforts and the festival was cancelled for that year. Restarting the festival in 1959 amidst local tensions meant for the Committee dealing with resulting practical limitations while conveying a sense of trust to international partners and audiences as well as a message of reconciliation and reinforcement of common values²⁴¹ for locals. Committee member and parliamentarian

²³⁷ Letter from Anis Fuleihan to the President of the Baalbeck International Festivals, 6.9.1957 (BIF Archive; USEK)

²³⁸ Khalida Said quoting an internal festival document by Aimee Kettaneh about the festival's beginnings. خالدة سعيد، الحركة المسرحية في لبنان 1960-1975: تجارب وأبعاد، بيروت: لجنة المسرح العربي في مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية، 1998.

²³⁹ Internal Committee document, 31.1.1958 (BIF Archive; USEK)

²⁴⁰ Official Gazette, decree number 19832, 17.6.1958.

²⁴¹ Kamel Mroueh, Al-Hayat, 1.9.1959.

Jean Skaff declared that Lebanon is still a country of beauty and peace while the festival's mission remains to cultivate public interest in arts, support local development and situate the country as a pioneering destination for tourism and international festivals²⁴². A similar position was conveyed by the Vice President of the festival Dr. Fouad Sarrouf²⁴³ and reasserted at the highest level by the country's new president Fouad Chehab who recognized the successful continuity of the festival as a prime national cause²⁴⁴. This is in line with the inauguration of the Casino du Liban on 25.4.1959²⁴⁵ and other plans for tourism during that year.

Further steps in terms of logistics and communication were taken to salvage some the risks of the political situation while capitalizing on the achievements and the lessons learnt from the last festival. Seating capacity was expanded, a 75 ton stone was removed from the Citadel's front yard with the assistance of the Directorate of Antiquities, a huge lighting pillar was installed and three theaters were erected²⁴⁶. The roads in Baalbeck were cleaned and old cottages near the site were demolished. New traffic management arrangements were planned while not getting the approval of the Ministry of Defense to use the nearby Riyaq Airport to facilitate travel logistics for international artists participating in the festival performances²⁴⁷. The Minister of Interior chaired a meeting of the Council of National Internal Security in Baalbeck to assure proper implementation of provisions²⁴⁸ with the coordination of the festival's administrative sub-committee in charge of transportation, accommodation, seating and reception²⁴⁹. On

²⁴² Al-Hawadeth, 27.7.1959; Tayar 25.7.1959; Annahar 28.6.1959.

²⁴³ Al-Hayat, 30.6.1959.

²⁴⁴ Al-Shabaka, 13.7.1959.

²⁴⁵ Assiyasah, 25.4.1959.

²⁴⁶ Al-Hayat, 17.7.1959.

²⁴⁷ Tayar, 26.6.1959.

²⁴⁸ Raqeeb el-Ahwal, 23.7.1959.

²⁴⁹ Al-Jarida, 11.7.1959.

a different level, Aimee Kettaneh visited Europe to personally conduct promotion activities²⁵⁰. She held press conferences in the Lebanese Embassies in London and Paris attended by international news agencies and media. It was also announced that the director of the Edinburgh International Festival will be attending the Baalbeck performances²⁵¹. Moreover, publicity booklets, post cards and posters were dispatched internationally to travel agencies and Lebanese Consulates and Embassies towards attracting a wider base of potential international audiences.

Additional financial grants of L.L.150.000 and L.L. 50.000 was approved respectively in June and July by the Commission of Tourism²⁵². The total budget for the year's festival summed to L.L. 750.000²⁵³. The festival's Vice President Salwa Es-Said clarified that ticket sales and advertisements do not cover expenses²⁵⁴. Deficits of L.L.108.000 were covered by Committee members²⁵⁵. She urged officials to give more attention and financial and logistic support. One of the priority needs was a dedicated training space for the participating performers, particularly the local folklore group²⁵⁶. This was later echoed through the official request by 16 members of the parliament to allocate a budget of a quarter of a million USD to the development of the festival²⁵⁷. A press conference was held by the festival committee after the end of the 1959 season to share with the public the results of the efforts exerted for increasing international attention through reputable media coverage²⁵⁸. New plans to outsource an international

²⁵⁰ Al-Youm, 19.7.1959.

²⁵¹ Al-Hawadeth, 31.7.1959.

²⁵² Official Gazette, Decree No. 1528, 15.6.1959; Decree No. 1823, 29.7.1959.

²⁵³ Al-Ousbou', 27.7.1959.

²⁵⁴ Assiyasah, 16.6.1959.

²⁵⁵ Al-Ousbou', 27.7.1959.

²⁵⁶ Foundational Expenses incurred by the festival since 1956 include: Electrical equipment and acting accessories L.L. 120.000 (1956); Technical Equipment L.L. 75.000 (1957) and L.L 70.000 (1959).

Source: Al-Jarida, 22.5.1959.

²⁵⁷ Addunia, 15.8.1959.

²⁵⁸ Al-Jarida, 14.11.1959.

producer for folklore performances and to launch with the administrative and financial support of the Ministry of Education²⁵⁹ the Sound and Lights events during the next season not only at the Citadel but also in Byblos, Beiteddine and Tripoli²⁶⁰. Vice President Fuad Sarrouf mentioned that one of the organizational lessons learnt is to assure the early announcement of the festival's agenda of events. This helps in contracting premiere attractions²⁶¹ and prime international orchestras and theater groups. It also allows enough time for travel agencies and tourists to plan their trips²⁶². Further coordination was made with local travel companies to seek better travel deals and facilities²⁶³. On the other hand, President Aimee Kettaneh requested the government's assistance the allocation of a budget to rent a rehearsal space²⁶⁴ and was granted a tax exemption for the import of technical equipment²⁶⁵. It is an example of in-kind contributions made by the government.

The second Lebanese Nights marked the end of Zalfa Chamoun's engagement and arising disparities among the artistic team. They featured almost the same group of artists with the premier participation of the singers Wadih Assafi and Nasri Chamseddine alongside Fairuz²⁶⁶. The programming of artistic contributions were allocated in a way that Toufic el Bacha and Zaki Nassif with one song by Mohamed Mohsen constituted the first act, whereas those of the Rahbani Brothers with one song composed by each of Philemon Wehbe and Wadih Assafi made up the material of the

²⁵⁹ Al-Jarida, 12.2.1960.

²⁶⁰ Al-Kifah, 28.12.1959.

²⁶¹ Daily Star, Samir Souki returning with suggestions for Baalbeck Festival, 11.3.1961.

²⁶² Al-Jarida, 12.2.1960.

²⁶³ Beirut Al-Masaa, 27.1.1960

²⁶⁴ Al-Bina', 3.2.1960.

²⁶⁵ Official Gazette, Decree No. 4547, 27.6.1960. Addiyar, 17.6.1960.

²⁶⁶ The names of Nizar Mikati and Mohieddine Salam who participated in the first Lebanese Nights were not listed among the participation of the 1959 performances (Baalbeck International Festivals Catalogue, 1959).

second act. The former transited from a Bedouin to a village scene, while the second revolved around a plot of recapturing the stolen goat of one of the villagers. This new programming reflected the artistic preference of the Rahbani Brothers to have an independent creative space towards a more elaborate scenario than in the first Lebanese Nights. It was also the sign of the start of diverging paths between them and the Director Sabri Sherif on one side and their collaborators from the days of the Near East Radio Toufic El-Bacha and Zaki Nassif on the other. News of the exclusion and re-invitation of El-Bacha and Nassif circulated in the media²⁶⁷. Other composers in the caliber of Nicolas El-Manni, Afif Radwan and Sami Sidawi were expected to be invited to participate. This was followed by explicit objections from a group of singers who are not given the chance to engage in the festival and allegations that the Committee is biased to a closed circle of Lebanese singers and musicians²⁶⁸ and is monopolizing the festival not only artistically but also its overall resources²⁶⁹.

Despite this tense background, the 5 Lebanese performances were warmly welcomed and praised as progressive step forward from the previous one. The scenes reflected a wider variety of traditions, new compositions and dance choreographies with one of the rare performative instances in the Arab world of 46 men and women dancing side by side²⁷⁰, and a set of new costumes added to the ones already in use since the last festival. The Jarrars had to recruit and train new dancers from universities as half of the previous dance troupe could not participate due to their study or travel commitments²⁷¹. Reverend Mikhael Moawwad expressed his objection of the Bedouin scene as it is “not

²⁶⁷ Al-Hawadeth, 22.5.1959.

²⁶⁸ Addiyar, 22.6.1959; Al-Kifah, 15.6.1959.

²⁶⁹ Arrasid, 31.7.1961.

²⁷⁰ Al-Hawadith, 4.9.1959.

²⁷¹ Al-Jarida, 29.7.1959.

a constituent of Lebanese traditions”²⁷², while others found that Lebanese traditions are part of a diverse repository of living Arab traditions that sustain actively through people from different social classes rather than through festivals²⁷³. In between these two discourses, additional reviews observed that the Lebanese Nights set a new renaissance of Arab art by local artists based on authenticity and science²⁷⁴ though yet it still has a long way to go towards becoming an international act²⁷⁵.

E. Growth and Innovation

Recordings of the festival songs were released on 45 inch and 33 inch records. They were broadcasted on radio and soon on TV that was launched in the same year in Lebanon²⁷⁶. More schools were interested in engaging their students with folk dance²⁷⁷. Recurring suggestions were offered to the government as in the previous festival for the prompt empowerment of the folkloric revival which echoed some of Moiseyev’s recommendations in 1956. The folklore performances gained a wider recognition and trust among officials and the public audiences. Fuad Sarrouf declared that folklore art has become a national mission²⁷⁸ while Jean Skaff pointed to its economic dimensions²⁷⁹ that transcend the limited financial capacities of the Folklore sub-commission. It has transformed the folklore revival into an attractive creative industry²⁸⁰ with new opportunities for artists and producers within the country and

²⁷² Al-Aamal, 12.9.1959.

²⁷³ Sawt al-Ourouba, 9.8.1960.

²⁷⁴ Al-Hawadith, 4.9.1959.

²⁷⁵ Beirut Al-Masa, 12.9.1959.

²⁷⁶ Al-Jarida 2.7.1961.

²⁷⁷ Al- Jarida 23.3.1960. The article calls the Ministry of Education to play a vital role in the promotion of folk dance at public and private schools.

²⁷⁸ Al-Jarida, 13.8.1960.

²⁷⁹ Telegraph, 23.12.1961.

²⁸⁰ Wajih Redwan, Al-Hawadeth, 21.2.1960.

abroad. Moreover, it has a “merit to enhance the festival’s special character”²⁸¹. Enthusiastic feedback communicated through media suggested engaging new committee members with technical knowledge about acting and directing to provide informed advice to local artists²⁸² and to explore methods in which the festival will increase its overall income²⁸³, become self-sustaining and contribute financially to the national economy. Additionally, the Festival’s Committee was invited to consider producing two different performances based on folklore each season²⁸⁴ to allow more participation channels for local artists as well as meet public demand. The poet Said Aqel took a similar position a few years later demanding the Committee to assume a productive role that transcends contracting international groups to empower local creative industries. He finds the true mission of Baalbeck Festivals is to be the ambassador of Lebanese culture to the world. This takes place when 90% of its programming will be by Lebanese artists and poets and not the other way round²⁸⁵.

With the absence of academic studies that may offer grounded visions for the development of artistic productions based on folklore²⁸⁶ and the relatively young age of the modern musical movement in the country as indicated by Toufic El-Bacha²⁸⁷, suggestions were raised to invite European folkloric groups to the festival²⁸⁸ at the time Aimee Kettaneh expressed her fascination about Indonesian folkloric performances²⁸⁹ she had recently attended during one of her travels. This evolved eventually to the endorsement of a new function in the festival’s committee dedicated to international

²⁸¹ Beirut, 4.9.1961.

²⁸² Telegraph, 31.8.1959.

²⁸³ Telegraph, 8.6.1960.

²⁸⁴ Al-Aamal, 12.9.1962 and 28.2.1962.

²⁸⁵ Said Aqel, For Baalbeck to be ours, Al-Jarida, 4.9.1969.

²⁸⁶ Al-Hurriya, 7.8.1961.

²⁸⁷ Arrasid, 7.8.1961.

²⁸⁸ Beirut, 4.9.1961.

²⁸⁹ Al-Kifah, 21.5.1962.

folklore²⁹⁰. The festival's prewar repertoire of international folklore featured La Troupe Folklorique Libano-Armenienne (1965), The Beryzoka State Dance Ensemble, USSR (1966), Bayanihan - The National Ballet of Philippines (1971) and Le Ballet Folkorique Du Mexique (1973).

The following festivals brought further innovations with the Rahbani Brothers, Fairuz, Sabri El-Sherif and the Lebanese Folkloric Troupe. In 1960, the performance took the form of an operetta with a story defined by traditions and the local values of ambition and optimistic resilience²⁹¹ featuring acting, plots and singing that gradually started to serve its dramatic purposes²⁹². An ensemble of 5 musicians with traditional instruments participated on stage with the actors and singers in a similar manner to actual village festivities²⁹³. It also marked Sabah's premiere performance. In 1961, the performance presented the classical mouwachahat and a scene with a mythological theme of a girl from Baalbeck who refuses the invitation of the Gods to leave the destroyed city with them. The operetta was further established in 1962 with a more intricate dramatic plot, characters and music deploying a wide range of folkloric and traditional resources. Lebanese history was the subject of grand production about the times of the Prince Fakhereddine in 1966. Romeo Lahhoud, a newcomer to the festival with a design and production background, offered in 1963 and 1968 a different visual perspective for the scenography and costumes reflecting a more aristocratic rather than a peasant tradition in collaboration with his sister Aline (scenario) and Papou (costumes) along with Walid Gholmieh (music). The dances were choreographed based

²⁹⁰ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogues, 1970-1974.

²⁹¹ Baalbeck International Festivals catalogue, 1960.

²⁹² Lisan Al-Hal, 24.4.1960.

²⁹³ Ibid.

on newly documented movements from villages in Southern and Northern Lebanon (Nouhad Chehab and Sarkis Pascalian)²⁹⁴.

A dedicated folklore dance Troupe was established by the subcommittee in 1963²⁹⁵. Two international dance experts Bert Stimmel (USA) and Franz B. Pantoulier (Germany) were recruited to support in training, collection of traditions and choreography with Nouhad Chehab and Sarkis Pascalian as a fulltime trainers. Another sub-committee concerned with modern Arab Theater emerged from the Folklore sub-committee in 1962 amidst a dominant interest among the festival's committee members in American, French and Anglo-Saxon culture²⁹⁶. It was realized through the insistent internal advocacy by Fouad Sarrouf, Salwa Es-Said and Suad Najjar²⁹⁷. The latter chaired the new subcommittee and oversaw the establishment of the Beirut School of theater under the direction of Munir Abou Debs²⁹⁸. It also hosted folkdance classes offered to the public²⁹⁹. Local competitions were launched³⁰⁰ to cultivate scenario writing skills for folklore performances as well as modern Arab theater. A project long due on the agenda was the founding of an institute of folklore did not materialize due to the lack of funding³⁰¹.

²⁹⁴ Telegraph, 26.4.1963.

²⁹⁵ Salwa Es-Said indicated during a press conference after 5 years that the Committee was not able to sustain this Troupe for financial and technical reasons, BIF Archives, USEK, 1968.

²⁹⁶ Al-Chabaka, 4.5.1959.

²⁹⁷ Interview with Suad Najjar (March 1994) in:

خالدة سعيد، الحركة المسرحية في لبنان 1960-1975: تجارب وأبعاد، بيروت: لجنة المسرح العربي في مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية، 1998

²⁹⁸ Official Gazette, Decree No. 11251, 23.11.1962.

²⁹⁹ Al-Aamal, 27.3.1961.

³⁰⁰ Al-Ousbou', 12.6.1960.

³⁰¹ Al-Ousbou', 12.1.1969.

F. A Nation of Festivals

Debates about other historic venues and festivals were active on the public agenda, as “every historical location in Lebanon is a suitable framework for a festival”³⁰². Besides history and archeology, new celebratory themes “may be invented” for each of the touristic destinations in the country. Officials and different voices raised questions to the government about the capacities of the National Commission of Tourism and the Ministry of Education and the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs towards meeting this agenda³⁰³. Also debates approached the centrality of Baalbeck Festivals and the potentials of holding international exhibitions and festival events of similar caliber in Byblos³⁰⁴, Jeita Grotto³⁰⁵, Nahr Ibrahim, Tyr, Beirut³⁰⁶, Beit Mery and Rachana³⁰⁷. Results started to crystalize with the launching of the Saida festivals in 1962 followed by Cedars, Ehden and Beiteddine festivals in 1963. The Nahr el Kalb (The Phoenician Valley) and Beirut Folklore Theater emerged in 1965. Both were private initiatives respectively by Wadih Assafi and Romeo Lahhoud sustaining for one season for the former and three calendar years for the latter. Byblos Festival was one of the last entrants to the scene in 1970. All of these festivals featured artists who already appeared at the Baalbeck Theater along others who were active during that period, though not all artists with exclusion claims. These festivals maintained a local to national character and did not compete with Baalbeck Festivals international standing.

³⁰² Al-Aamal, 2.9.1959.

³⁰³ Annida', 4.6.1959.

³⁰⁴ Al- Aamal, 2.9.1959; Al-Bayraq, 27.8.1959.

³⁰⁵ Al-Hayat, 9.7.1959.

The Grotto hosted a unique performance by German music composer Karlheinz Stockhausen in November 1969.

³⁰⁶ Al-Bina', 29.4.1959.

³⁰⁷ Al-Bina, 16.4.1960.

The Social Welfare Department and the National Commission of Tourism following the directions set by the Lebanese President Fouad Chehab reached to out to villages across different regions to hold festivities that will promote the values of openness, justice and dignity among local communities³⁰⁸. Themes of such festivities ranged from agriculture to beauty contests and immigrant reunions. New municipal legislations were endorsed to empower the role of municipalities in developing these local initiatives. On another level, Baalbeck Festival's success story motivated the Jordanian government to collaborate with its Lebanese counterpart in seeking a comparable folklore revival movement³⁰⁹. Likewise, the Syrian government had serious plans in organizing in the Roman site of Busra a similar festival with an opera about Queen Zennobia composed by the Rahbani Brothers and performed by Fairuz as its opening act³¹⁰. A parallel wave of the emergence of folk dance troupes took place in the following years in Lebanon and across the Arab world³¹¹.

G. The Lebanese Nights After 1967

The festival committee has to deal with the challenges of another political crisis after that of the 1958 conflict. This time it was a regional war that led to the defeat of Arab Armies and the loss of additional parts of Palestine in the 6-day war in June 1967. The immediate impact was the postponement of the programmed operetta for Lebanese Nights "The Citadel" to the next season. Instead a musical variety show was presented

³⁰⁸ Sada Al-Janoub, 17.10.1963.

³⁰⁹ Al-Chabaka 3.7.1960.

³¹⁰ Al-Hayat 24.9.1962.

³¹¹ Walid Gholmieh makes reference to the following troupes: Al-Anwar Troupe (Lebanon, 1960-1964), The Caracalla Dance Troupe (Lebanon, 1968-), Fahd El Abdallah Troupe (Lebanon, 1978-), The Council of Tourism Dance Troupe (Lebanon), The Phoenicia Folklore Theater (1965-1967), Reda Dance Troupe (Egypt, 1959-), The Syrian National Folklore Troupe, The Iraqi National Folklore Troupe, The Jordanian National Folklore Troupe and other groups in Tunisia and Libya. Source: Walid Ghomlieh, Contemporary Arabic Classical Music, 18.3.1986, Walid Gholmieh Archives, Special Collections at the AUB Jafet Library.

featuring Sabah and Nadia Jamal under the direction of Romeo Lahhoud³¹². Throughout the next years, the Festival Committee under the leadership of its newly elected president Salwa Es-Said had to exert powerful communication efforts with its media stakeholders in Lebanon and abroad to make sure that a “true picture of the situation is presented”³¹³ and to convey that “tourists can (still) visit Lebanon with confidence”³¹⁴. The Festival Committee was preoccupied with the identification and adoption of new and efficient ways to assure the widest publicity and advertising in the world. They held meetings with experts and local representatives from the tourism industry to collaboratively and on a win-win basis “study the methods of increasing the number of tourist groups from all over the world wanting to visit a new country or to attend a high caliber festival”³¹⁵ such as Baalbeck. Another approach was to invite esteemed and world known personalities to attend the festival such as Princess Margarete from the British Royal Family to convey a sense of trust to European audiences. In parallel, the Minister of Tourism Sheikh Habib Keyrouz presented in a press conference a new national strategy for tourism. It is based on the understanding that tourism is the result of a set of inter-related public and private activities pertaining to a productive interchange between different sectors³¹⁶.

Internally, the new festival committee president announced her plans to reinforce additional institution building. Es-Said expressed her outlook for the festival committee to be functioning in a “business like clockwork fashion”³¹⁷ according to specific work

³¹² Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1967.

³¹³ Press Conference by Mrs Salwa Es-Said, 3.6.1969 (BIF Archive; USEK)

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Internal meeting summary, 1969 (BIF Archive; USEK).

³¹⁶ Assafaa', 18.3.1969.

³¹⁷ Daily Star, 2.2.1969.

plans and themes³¹⁸ with a clear division of labour³¹⁹ and more coordination among the subcommittees³²⁰. Additionally, she was seeking to inject new blood in the institution, particularly from younger generations with diverse specializations. This was realized in the following year with the entry of 4 new members³²¹ to the executive committee and the exit of Jean Skaff, Fouad Sarrouf and Shafika Diab. An official logo was endorsed for the first for the festival. The Arab Theater subcommittee launched its own rented theater space in Beirut's Quntari neighbourhood. It was designed by Watheq Adeeab with a 14x8 m² theater with the capacity of 200 seats³²². The new theater was warmly received by the President of the republic Charles Helou³²³. Moreover, the subcommittee pursued a close cooperation with the Department of Social Welfare to present theater performances throughout Lebanon's rural areas with a vision of promotion of culture and making it more accessible³²⁴ and signed a formal cooperation agreement in that respect³²⁵. A similar approach was followed with other civic society organizations with the vision of positioning modern Arab theater as another national cause³²⁶.

Beirut was able to maintain during that period its unprecedented prosperity and its role as a regional economic hub, a haven for cultural platforms and freedom of expression, and a Mecca for medical, educational, and entertainment services³²⁷. It also

³¹⁸ Al-Ousbou', 22.9.1969.

³¹⁹ Al-Hasnaa', 11.1.1969.

³²⁰ Internal communication, 29.5.1969 (BIF Archive; USEK)

³²¹ Al-Hayat, 12.12.1970.

The new members are: Eliane Choukair (administration), Nicole Andraous (General Secretary), Ghida Khalidy (Festival Theater) and Antoine Medawwar (Ballet). Source: Baalbeck Catalogue, 1971.

³²² Al-Ousbou', 6.1.1969.

The theater building was reconstructed after the war to become the headquarters of the Court of Audit.

³²³ Al-Hayat, 29.1.1969.

³²⁴ Addiyar, 10.2.1969.

³²⁵ The agreement was signed on 7.7.1966.

³²⁶ خالدة سعيد، الحركة المسرحية في لبنان 1960-1975: تجارب وأبعاد، بيروت: لجنة المسرح العربي في مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية، 1998

³²⁷ Adapted from: Akram Rayess, Beirut and Fairouz: A path of gold and loss, Al-Ahramonline, 21.11.2020, <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/393831.aspx> (accessed on 5.1.2021).

kept a delicate balance of contrasts in which opposites and divided identities subsisted side by side: a laboratory of regional avant-garde culture, a destination of continuous rural migrations, and an open of demonstrations triggered by exacerbated social disparities. This tense social and cultural reality imposed another change in the literary fabric, intellectual context, and artistic approaches after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War Defeat. The famous French journalist Claude Sarraute wrote in *Le Monde* that a generation of children grew up with the Baalbeck festival and learnt from it about Western arts. They are now bored of it; they demand what is serious, daring and challenging³²⁸. Local artists and critics reflected similar position regarding the Lebanese Nights, a direction that has been already endorsed by the modern theater performances in Beirut. The composer Walid Gholmieh aspired that a new approach will be followed by the committee that entail a different vision of folklore that will explore new sources in literature with a wider humanitarian outlook³²⁹. The play writer and critic Fares Yowakeem found that prototypes of characters and events are becoming increasingly static and recycled from year to year. Instead, he proposed that folklore festivals need to dig deep into the history of traditions as a starting point for an artistic adaptation and not the other way round³³⁰. The leading modernist poet and editor of *Annahar* newspaper's cultural supplement Unsi el-Hajj wrote a commentary entitled "Baalbeck at a distant time"³³¹. It echoed the changing cultural ambiance in Beirut during the early 1970s from the one that was dominant a decade earlier at the inception of the Lebanese Nights. The increasingly rich and fast paced offerings of Beirut's vibrant cultural life contributed to

³²⁸ *Al-Jarida*, 29.9.1969.

³²⁹ *Al-Anwar*, 30.11.1969.

³³⁰ *Al-Jarida*, 17.11.1969.

³³¹ *Annahar*, 15.8.1971.

a change of public perception of the annual folklore festival³³² and its triumphant festive vibes.

News of the Folklore subcommittee's plans to put the Lebanese Nights on hold for two years³³³ were received with skepticism and rejection³³⁴ after Jabal Asswan by the Rahbani Brothers, Fairuz and the Lebanese Popular Troupe was presented in the summer of 1969. The subcommittee decided to resort to an open call for "all interested artists and authors to submit their creative proposals"³³⁵ by 20.10.1969. The play writer, poet and critic Issam Mahfouz expected that this practice will help in transforming folklore performances into more sophistication³³⁶. The subcommittee received 8 applications 5 of which were shortlisted. They included a historical play about the 19th century revolutionary leader Tanious Chahine featuring Wadih Assafi and for the first time Nour el-Hoda, star of the 1940's and 1950's musical films in Egypt, a play by the actor Chouchou directed by Nizar Mikati, a performance with folklore and mythology directed by Berj Fasilian in four acts, a musical inspired by the work of Gibran by Walid Gholmieh and an application by Aline Lahhoud featuring the participation of the Francophone poet Nadia Tueini. The selection team delegated by Folklore subcommittee chose the 5th title with critical objections from other participants and media.

The selected play brought back the director Romeo Lahhoud to the Lebanese Nights after a one year absence alongside the composer Zaki Nassif whose last participation was in 1964 and a new singer Majdala. An overall look at the results of the open calls

³³² محمد ابي سمرا، فيروز ظاهرة الاخوين رحباني، رسالة دبلوم علوم اجتماعية، الجامعة اللبنانية، 1985

³³³ Al-Chabaka, 1.9.1969.

³³⁴ Alf Laila wa Laila, 8.9.1969.

³³⁵ Lisan Al-Hal, 20.9.1969.

³³⁶ Annahar, 27.10.1969.

during that period reveals that they did not pave the way for the inclusion of new artists, nor the singers who protested for years for not being invited to the festival. It also did not mark a clear inflection point from previous years in terms of creative content and approach to folklore. Romeo Lahhoud was selected for the performance of the following year. He presented a musical comedy about a festival committee wanting to select the suitable proposition among 4 applicants which is quite reminiscent of the open calls practice. In 1972 and 1973, the Rahbani Brothers presented a play and a musical variety show respectively. The play tells the story of a despotic rule and the nonviolent revolt of the people. The final prewar act was led in 1974 by the director Sabri Sherif with Sabah, Wadih Assafi and Caracalla Dance Troupe that emerged since 1972 as an independent participant in the Lebanese Nights. It was a return to village aesthetics resonating with those of the early Lebanese Nights. Plans to present an epic play about Elissa the Queen of Carthage by the Rahbani Brothers and Fairuz in 1975 were halted due to the armed violence of the civil war.

CHAPTER V

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE FOLKLORE PROJECT

The conflicts arising among the participating artists during the preparations of the second Lebanese Nights in 1959 signaled a growing disparity. It was the result of not only competition amongst them, but also due to diverging artistic outlooks and perceptions of folklore. Many of them had already been working together under the umbrella of the Near East Radio Station since 1952. Sabri El-Sherif was the musical director and a folklore enthusiast who sought to attract new talents. Among them were the Rahbani Brothers, Zaki Nassif and Toufic El-Bacha who soon established the "League of Five" in 1954, inspired by the Russian league of composers, along with Toufic Sukkar. The league aimed to establish a local artistic identity and embark on a mission musical modernity. According to Zaki Nassif, the aim of this league was to explore the horizons of a new wave of local music that is derived from folklore's vibrant repository of raw melodies and content and refined into new artistic productions. He adds that the works of the Russian composers inspired by their national heritage channeled their attention to the vitality that local rural folklore can inject into music³³⁷. The cooperation among these composers continued after the sudden closure to the radio station in the aftermath of the Suez Crisis and tripartite British, French and Israeli invasion of the Suez Canal in 1956. Their new hub was the Lebanese Recording

³³⁷ Zaki Nassif Interview – Mohamad Abi Samra, Annahar Cultural Supplement. Date N/A.

Company (LRC) funded by Badih Boulos in the same year. It was also closely linked with the first Lebanese Nights³³⁸.

Accusations were exchanged in public among the artists after the end of the second Lebanese Nights. They were aligned into two opponent groups: Zaki Nassif, Toufic El-Bacha and Marwan and Wadi'a Jarrar on one side, and The Rahbani Brothers and Sabri El-Sherif on the other. The songs of Nassif and the choreography of the Jarrars were allegedly attributed to be influenced by Russian folklore at the expense of local traditions. On the other hand, Nassif and his supporters accused the Rahbani Brothers of transforming the Lebanese Nights into a performance centered on Fairuz as a lead vocalist and lighting effects while marginalizing folk dance. Individualism prevailed over group spirit³³⁹. Furthermore, the Baalbeck Folklore Subcommittee was held accountable for not pursuing an expert opinion and insisting instead on ungrounded practices while appropriating public funds for their own ends³⁴⁰. Toufic El-Bacha found that the artistic priority of the Rahbani Brother was Fairuz³⁴¹. Efforts for reconciliation did not help³⁴². A press conference was held by Marwan and Wadi'a Jarrar on 23.3.1960 to announce their withdrawal from the Lebanese Nights and their plans to constitute a new folk dance group³⁴³ while vocalizing the blame on the Rahbani Brothers and Sabri El-Sherif. The latter were meanwhile progressing in the preparations of the first Lebanese operetta based on folklore presented in the summer of 1960. It was the fruit of the artistic aspirations of the Rahbani Brothers expressed around the time of

³³⁸ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1957.

³³⁹ من أوراق زكي ناصيف، بيروت: منشورات الجامعة الاميركية في بيروت، 2014

³⁴⁰ 21.5.1960 توفيق الباشا يتكلم بصراحة، مجلة كوكبتيل،

من أوراق زكي ناصيف، بيروت: منشورات الجامعة الاميركية في بيروت، 2014

³⁴¹ 21.5.1960 توفيق الباشا يتكلم بصراحة، مجلة كوكبتيل،

³⁴² Assiysah, 27.3.1960.

³⁴³ Annahar, 24.3.1960; Beirut Al-Massa, 12.3.1960; Annida', 4.3.1960

the launching of the Lebanese Nights. The critic Nizar Mroueh advocated persistently in favor of local musical theater as a vehicle for developing Arab music. He also traced the evolution of the works of the Rahbani Brothers in that respect since the early 1950s³⁴⁴. The launching of Al-Anwar Troupe took place at the Casino du Liban on 1.7.1960 with the participation of 115 dancers and singers featuring Wadih Assafi, Suad Hachem, Michel Breidi and Hassan Abdul Nabi among others³⁴⁵. The performance was entitled “the Story of Lebanon”, directed by Nizar Mikati and funded by the journalist Said Freiha. It was warmly welcomed by the press and the first of their international series of performances was announced to take place at the Athenaeum Cinema Theater in Cyprus³⁴⁶.

A bitter press campaign was launched against Baalbeck Festivals and the new operetta starring Sabah and Wadih Assafi by the Rahbani Brothers accusing the committee of mismanagement and lack of transparency³⁴⁷ and the operetta of being the worst failure Lebanon has ever known³⁴⁸. At that stage, the rivalry passed on from the artists to a polarized press³⁴⁹ with a tension that will continue for a couple of years. Eventually, Al-Anwar Troupe were invited to perform at Baalbeck in 1964. The 3-act play entitled “The Land is Mine” starring Sabah and Wadih Assafi was written and directed by Nizar Mikati with music composed mostly by Toufic EL-Bacha and Zaki Nassif along others. The Jarrars were excluded and dance choreography was provided

³⁴⁴ Please check his articles dated January 1953, December 1953, May 1957, June 1966 and April 1968.

Source: 1998 نزار مروءة، في الموسيقى اللبنانية العربية والمسرح الغنائي الرحباني، بيروت: دار الفارابي، 1998

³⁴⁵ Al-Anwar, 4.6.1960.

³⁴⁶ Al-Anwar, 13.8.1960.

Subsequent international performances took place in Paris (Théâtre des nations, 1961), Amman Philadelphia Theater, 1961), Frankfurt (Palmengarten Theater, 1962), Cairo and Alexandria, 1962, Kuwait (Andalus Theater, 1962) and Vienna (Finnair Stadion Stadthalle, 1963).

³⁴⁷ Check for example: Arrasid 31.7.1960; Al-Anwar 14.8.1960.

³⁴⁸ Addiyar 9.8.1960; Al-Anwar 12.8.1960; Al-Anwar 26.8.1960

³⁴⁹ Arrasid, 19.8.1961.

by Nouhad Chehab and Sarkis Pascalian under the supervision of the German dance expert Franz Bauer Pantoulier³⁵⁰. It was also the final performance by Al-Anwar which was disbanded due to administrative and financial reasons.

A. Zaki Nassif's Folklore

Folklore defined by Zaki Nassif is the “set of customs and traditions unique to a group of people”³⁵¹. Variations may exist within these sets. In Lebanon, Nassif finds that variations in customs are most likely due to the climatic characteristics of different geographic. They are also dependent on the ethnic origins of current inhabitants descending from different populations that have historically settled throughout Lebanon bringing along much of their cultural and ideological heritage. This is why the dabke dance is practiced in most Lebanese, Syrian, Jordanian, Palestinian, and Iraqi regions and is a shared folklore among these countries. Moreover, "Dal'una" according to Nassif is the most prominent folk song in terms of its melodic, kinetic and rhythmic comprehensiveness. Its name is of Syriac origins and means cooperation and is the basis of the dabke dance³⁵². The song is a call for villagers to work together to stack soil roof tops. Likewise, dabke is an embodiment of noble social values of dignity, perseverance and unity³⁵³. Unlike Dal'una, the stretched melodies of Attaba and Muwwal are related to their historical environment of extended desert plains. Nassif was preoccupied with folklore as an attribute of the interaction between communities with land and nature. Individuals becomes constructive and active members of their nation and society only if

³⁵⁰ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1964.

³⁵¹ من أوراق زكي ناصيف، بيروت: منشورات الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت، 2014

³⁵² Annahar, 11.9.1971.

³⁵³ Ibid.

they recognize the importance of land and its material and spiritual values. Without such awareness, they remain marginal and alienated³⁵⁴.

Besides folklore, Zaki Nassif recognizes another instrumental and vocal tradition. It is a product of a historical urban interaction between Andalusian and Ottoman-Byzantine art music³⁵⁵. Nassif focuses on the critical role of indigenous musical instruments like the folkloric Mujwiz and the classical oud in determining the characteristics of the musical phrases of each of the two traditions nurtured within our socio-spatial environment over time. He calls for the continuity of enlightened efforts in excavating the musical traces accumulated in the historical layers of this environment as they constitute the elements of a unique and elaborated communal personality and a local musical construction³⁵⁶.

Nassif's understanding of folklore has been shaped by the writings of Antoun Saadeh on the role of literary and artistic renaissance in the "development of the social and spiritual lives of nations"³⁵⁷, their "communal personality"³⁵⁸ and "new outlook"-to the world. Saadeh defined the concept of "nation" from a sociological³⁵⁹ anthropological perspective whose pillars are people and geography and the interaction between them. Accordingly, a nation constitutes of a "group of people living in a geographic region a life of unified interests, destiny and psycho-material elements". The continuous interaction of these people with the specific characteristics of that region

³⁵⁴ Zaki Nassif Interview – Mohamad Abi Samra, Annahar Cultural Supplement.

³⁵⁵ This resonates with the proposition of the critic Nizar Mroueh in 1958 about the recognition of both rural and urban traditions as sources for a musical renaissance.

Source: 1998 نزار مروءة، في الموسيقى اللبنانية العربية والمسرح الغنائي الرحباني، بيروت: دار الفارابي،

تأثير التراث الفولكلوري في موسيقانا، كتاب من اوراق زكي ناصيف، منشورات الجامعة الاميركية في بيروت، بيروت: 2014.

³⁵⁷ أنطون سعادة، الفنون الجميلة – فن الغناء، مجلة "المجلة"، الجزء السادس، تموز 1924.

³⁵⁸ أنطون سعادة، نشوء الامم، بيروت: دار فكر للابحاث والنشر، 1998 (ص. 13).

³⁵⁹ أنطون سعادة، الصراع الفكري في الادب السوري، سلسلة النظام الجديد، منشورات عمدة الثقافة في الحزب السوري القومي الاجتماعي، 1978.

provides them with “attributes and qualities that distinguish them from other groups”. Each of the specifying traits of a nation is dependent on the “principle of unity in life from which traditions, customs, language, literature, religion and history arise”. Zaki³⁶⁰ Nassif positions the musical and artistic renaissance initiated through the folklore-based Lebanese Nights as a “sign of the adoption of the Syrian National Socialist ideology by artists and educated people at the time”. Still, he acknowledges that national³⁶¹ identities evoked by nature and land are not unique to this ideology. As such, folklore revival becomes a duty of every artist who understands his or her constructive role within an emerging nation³⁶².

Nassif’s vision intersects partly with that of Arab nationalism and the Lebanese state. The statement of the President Chamoun in the festival catalogue focus on the centrality of "Lebanese exceptionality" in the artistic revival of folklore that highlights its aesthetics in line with the spirit of the times, while preserving its essence. This process is a central purpose of our Lebanese existence. It is consistent with dissemination of constructive and tolerant thought to promote the "Lebanese mission" as a bridge of understanding and convergence among peoples³⁶³. With President Chehab, the Lebanese mission becomes an "enlightened progressive mission" in every Arab renaissance striving with a new spirit towards a glorious future. Lebanon will be a Global center while assuming a proactive and progressive role in the Arab countries, the East, and the world³⁶⁴. The equivalent of the “Lebanese mission”³⁶⁵ for Saadeh is a

³⁶⁰ أنطون سعادة ، نشوء الامم، بيروت: دار فكر للابحاث والنشر، 1998 (ص. 165)

³⁶¹ Zaki Nassif Interview – Mohamad Abi Samra, Annahar Cultural Supplement.

³⁶² مهمة الفنان، كتاب من أوراق زكي ناصيف، بيروت: منشورات الجامعة الاميركية في بيروت، 2014.

³⁶³ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1957.

³⁶⁴ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1959.

³⁶⁵ To illustrate Lebanist perspectives of folklore and heritage, Charles Malik the diplomat, philosopher and advocate of Lebanism, presents heritage with an outlook towards the future. It is living inheritance embodied in institutions and safeguarded from the past through the continuity of time that is decided by the future. For Malik, the term institution is a participatory construct central to the understanding of

“new look at life, the universe and art, and a new understanding of existence, in which we find the truth of ourselves, our aspirations and our ideals”. Through this new³⁶⁶ outlook, Saadeh adds that we can “steer our own constructions of love, wisdom and beauty using the talents and historical repository of philosophies, mythologies and wisdoms of our Syrian nation that address the major issues of human life”³⁶⁷. While both the Lebanese mission and Saadeh’s new outlook aspire a “glorious future”, they diverge in defining the sources and the boundaries of their constructions.

This "new outlook" was reflected on several levels in Zaki Nassif's work and life. His songs based on folklore become vehicles of Saadeh’s ideas on national emancipation. The texts of his songs were characterized by the abundance of local vocabulary and images related to the social and geographical environment in which he grew up and lived in his Bekaa village Machghara. The imageries in a large number of his songs convey to the listener scenes of communal rural life rather than individual concerns. The communal personality is at its best³⁶⁸ when hearts are clear and efforts are intertwined³⁶⁹ towards unity. It becomes empowered to overcome challenges towards reaching a new dawn of victory³⁷⁰ and achieving a renaissance from within the

heritage. He defines it as a “common and stable pattern of life, judgement and expression” that has a shared goal based on mutual consent of people through which they organize their existence on the basis of principles and rules. Accordingly no heritage exists in individual imagination. Malik proceeds in identifying seven collective institutions of Lebanese heritage. They are: (1) the village (2) mediation as the fate of Lebanon is to be an intermediary entity between entities (3) language (4) tolerant confessional personality as Lebanon is a confessional federation (5) the state – its meaning is in establishing security and freedom, removing injustice and strengthening the common good over private interest. (6) the school (7) the Church. (Charles Malik, Lebanon in itself, Lebanon: Notre Dame University Press, 2004).

³⁶⁶ أنطون سعادة، الصراع الفكري في الادب السوري، سلسلة النظام الجديد، منشورات عمدة الثقافة في الحزب السوري القومي الاجتماعي، 1978.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ سهرنا سهرنا: حلوة حلوة حكايتنا / واحلى منها غابتنا. نظم ولحن زكي ناصيف وغناء المجموعة بالاشتراك مع زكي ناصيف.

³⁶⁹ سهرنا سهرنا : خلي قلوب تصافي قلوب / وتتغنى بمحبتنا، نظم ولحن زكي ناصيف، غناء المجموعة.

³⁷⁰ صبحنا وفجر العيد: وبهالة فجر جديد / ونصر جديد جايي يبشرنا / والله معنا يا رجالنا / نمشي والنصر بينصرنا، نظم ولحن وغناء زكي ناصيف.

nation's resources³⁷¹, values and human aspirations³⁷². These goals and values highlighted in Zaki Nassif's songs are almost a direct stylization of Saadeh's words and ideas presented in an accessible and simple manner that appeals to a wide range of audiences regardless of their political affiliation or social class. They are also perceived as adaptations based on folklore by general audiences. To illustrate Zaki Nassif's approach and compare it with the source, a translation of Saadeh's text follows: "a political outburst is trivial if it is not based on a solid value system that is firmly established in the heart of each individual, whether a man or a woman, through a vibrant literary and musical legacy that unites emotions and brings them together around a higher cause". Such a cause becomes a common social faith based on love.³⁷³ Unity, compassion and love inject hope and energy into life. They empower and sustain political struggles.

B. Futures in the Aftermath of a Crisis

Zaki Nassif finds that Lebanon is still lagging behind in keeping up with transnational scientific progress and cultural contributions. Music is no exception despite his achievements and those of his contemporaries. This is in clear contrast to the aspirations indicated in the Presidential statements published in the Baalbeck Festival catalogues. A long term and comprehensive effort is needed in planning the future of our instrumental and vocal music and reinforcing our communal musical personality locally

مهما يتجرّح بلدنا: أهل مروة هيك ربينا وبالعدة قلايل / مش عجيبة لولا كبيننا الكبوة للأصايل / لا سهوتنا ولاصبوتنا بتصحينا من كبوتنا /

ما ألنا إلا مروتنا المروة بتخلق أبطال، نظم ولحن وغناء زكي ناصيف.

على فجر جديد: على فجر جديد صحينا / صحينا وعالجرح قوينا / وشيكنا سواعد بسواعد / ونهضنا وعدنا مشينا/ آلام على دروب³⁷² بعيدة / رح نمشي ونحملها / وجروح مفتوحة جديدة / بمحبتنا منغلها / بمحبة انسانية / كلها دموع وحنينة / من هالارض اللبنانية / مطرح ما خلقنا وربينا / ما زالوا الشعب بيزرع / والايدي بتقدر تصنع / تفتح مقلع تبني وتشقع / هاي نهضتنا منا وفيها، نظم ولحن وغناء زكي ناصيف.

³⁷³ أنطون سعادة، مجموعة الأعمال الكاملة، الجزء السادس، بيروت: مؤسسة سعادة للثقافة، 2001. ص 331-332

and in the world. Musical composition based on European classical traditions may serve a suitable vehicle to embody our own national music³⁷⁴. Nassif recommend that such endeavors seek an ongoing exploration of the primary sources that make up the elements of our music. On another level, governmental interventions in terms of musical literacy are necessary to cultivate the talents of professional musicians³⁷⁵ and facilitate the access to music education in schools and universities across the nation and proactive dissemination of art music through public performances and mass media³⁷⁶.

The status reflected in Nassif's words presents an insightful assessment of the trajectory of folklore and music in Lebanon since the exuberant creative upheaval that took place with the first Lebanese Nights until the end of the 1960s. A sense of saturation was taking over those euphoric movements in the summers of 1957 and 1959³⁷⁷. The overwhelming increase in the number of local and national festivals and events contributed to the transition of folklore from a national soundscape to a market of vicious consumption. This transition is attached to the socially powerful who "revalue and refashion cultural arts and mark them with new forms to fit changing circumstances"³⁷⁸. With an overarching tourism economy, folklore was packaged into sanitized and mummified products and goods. This is not isolated from a prevailing official tendency during the 1950s and 1960s to link arts and culture with tourism which is in turn connected to international capitalism. Questions were raised about the role of the artists and intellectuals in defining future alternatives and pathways. The critic

³⁷⁴ Addiyar, 13.12.1969.

³⁷⁵ Al-Jarida, 22.9.1957.

³⁷⁶ من أوراق زكي ناصيف، بيروت: منشورات الجامعة الاميركية في بيروت، 2014.

³⁷⁷ Check for example:

وجيه رضوان، نكسة فلكلورية، مجلة الحوادث، 31.1.1969

وفيق رمضان، القلعة: ابهى نهاية للفلكلور اللبناني، قصاصة صحافية من ارشيف وليد غلمية، ب.ت.

³⁷⁸ Katherine Borland, Unmasking class, gender, and sexuality in Nicaraguan festival, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2006.

Nazih Khater presented the positions of artists participating in the Lebanese Nights about what he called the “crisis of Lebanese folklore”³⁷⁹ in a series of 6 episodes.

The composer Walid Gholmieh acknowledges a crisis threatening the near and longer term future of folklore in Lebanon. He defines folklore as people in the wide sense of the word and categorizes the causes of the crisis thematically to scientific, historical and Lebanese³⁸⁰ factors. Locally inaccurate or incomplete understanding of folklore devoid of historical knowledge have led to unfavorable artistic, administrative and commercial practices. The same applies when folklore is reduced to a passive carrier of daily political commentaries or a plot of musical play with preset characters favoring words over music and dance as its main constituent as well as solo songs of a superstar singer over an innovative folkloric vision. Moreover, Gholmieh observes lack of academic knowledge among practitioners in the related fields of mythology, anthropology, music aesthetics and music paleography who refrain from consulting original historical manuscripts in researching their themes. In terms of historical factors, he highlights the significance of understanding the central role of local languages in the oral and written transmission of folklore across generations. Last but not least, he points out to the impact of the geopolitics of the Middle East on Lebanon, the sociocultural differences between the Lebanese in the Mahjar and those residing in the home country, and cultural manifestations of political, intellectual and social revolutions on collective identity. Gholmieh’s disappointment is better understood in reference to the threats that the crisis poses to the meanings and functions he constructs about the rediscovery of folk and traditional music. As such, this encounter brought “new light” to Arabic music

³⁷⁹ Annahar 5.9.1971.

³⁸⁰ Annahar 6.9.1971.

and “myriad responsibilities to the Arab music composer and scholar”³⁸¹. The contemporary composer has to be engaged in research and documentation alongside creative efforts, thus encompassing new financial burdens that may affect the continuity of work without institutional support. The folk encounter also paved the way to a new perception of the universal human goals of art and music, the influence of historical and cultural contexts and at “the same time, and with no contradiction, the appreciation of art as an individual expression of artistic uniqueness”³⁸². Gholmieh adds that this intense and comprehensive process of change marked a “more definite break with the missing textuality of the musical past” and the search for a new “tonal framework and a sense of contribution to human universality”³⁸³.

Annahar’s series continues with the choreographer Marwan Jarrar³⁸⁴. He observes that the crisis resides with the attitudes of some of the current practitioners and not in the traditions. It has escalated with the abundance of festivals and the absence of guiding professional standards, thus leading to chaos and a decline in the artistic caliber. He does not find that the emergence of musical plays is essentially related to folklore, unlike dance and music. Jarrar’s recommendations call for further financial support from the state to maintain continuous fieldwork for collecting and documenting folklore and traditions. He invites experienced practitioners to preserve a clear identity of folkloric elements used in their artistic adaptations while giving priority to dance and music and to plots that are rooted in our history and culture. On the other hand, Romeo Lahhoud points to lack of professionalization in the performing arts as a main obstacle

³⁸¹ Walid Ghomlieh, *Contemporary Arabic Classical Music*, 18.3.1986, Walid Gholmieh Archives, Special Collections at the AUB Jafet Library.

³⁸² *Ibid.*

³⁸³ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁴ Annahar, 7.9.1971.

in the trajectory of folklore. He thinks that “we are going in circles and repeating ourselves”³⁸⁵. For that reason, he plans to further modernize the presentation of folklore through combining traditional and contemporary elements so that “our rich art will not be stagnant with over repetitions”³⁸⁶. He projected these concerns onto his production for the 1971 Lebanese Nights entitled “Mahrajan” (festival)³⁸⁷. The plot introduces on the stage four producers with different proposals of musical comedies submitted to an imaginary festival’s higher committee. The first proposal consists of a simple presentation of village folklore, the second is a stylized literary musical whereas the third is a modern musical comedy and the fourth is a historical musical play. As the events of the plot progress, the festival’s higher committee finds out that all the four plays propose the same story of the accession of a female village singer into stardom though in different artistic styles. The committee decides to invite the competing producers to participate in the realization of a play with a unified scenario in four acts, such that each of them will handle only one act. The plot of the play features discussions and different perspectives about folklore mirroring the local situation and current concerns at that time. The play ends with the committee selecting the act based on historical adaptation to be the suitable approach proposed for the future of folklore.

The Annahar series concludes with an interview with Assi Rahbani³⁸⁸. He considers that the creative output of musical plays, songs and instrumental composition are not folklore even if they integrate folkloric elements. These works represent essentially the identities and approaches of their authors and composers. Rahbani illustrates further by giving examples of Greek tragedies inspired from mythology and

³⁸⁵ Daily Star, 22.12.1970.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

³⁸⁷ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1971.

³⁸⁸ Annahar, 9.9.1971.

classical works by Russian composers Rimsky Korsakov and Alexander Borodin encompassing folkloric melodies. He distinguishes between folkloric and popular (shaa'bi) idioms and situates his works to fall under the latter. A look at the album covers of the plays by the Rahbani Brothers and Fairuz depicts a qualifying statement under the title that reads “a popular musical play (operetta)” or “a Lebanese operetta”. Assi Rahbani sums up that the controversy is not about a crisis as much as it is a confusion resulting from the unjustified chaotic use of ambiguous and overlapping terminologies.

C. The Eclectic Humanism of the Rahbani Brothers

The Baalbeck International Festival catalogue of 1957 recognized Sabri El-Sharif's pioneering role in Lebanon's post-independence folk revival. El-Sharif's preoccupation with folklore began in Mandatory Palestine upon his appointment as a manager of the musical section at the Near East Radio in Jaffa in 1945. He commissioned the Lebanese zajal poet As'ad Said to collect folk songs in Lebanon and Palestine and collaborated with Youhanna El-Khel and musicians from Egypt in broadcasting folk tunes performed on piano. One of the few remaining written traces of El-Sharif's perception of the role of folklore within a musical renaissance is the lecture he gave at the Cénacle libanais in May 1957³⁸⁹. He calls for a musical emancipation through a disruptive transition from what he metaphorically denotes as “the music of the night” to the “music of the day”. The former is historically associated with destructive hedonism while the latter is a rebellious and sincere search for an “honest expression of the spirit and thoughts of the

صبري الشريف، ارتباكات الموسيقى العربية وآمالها، محاضرات الندوة اللبنانية، السنة 11، النشرة الخامسة، نوار 1957 389

people”³⁹⁰ and a vibrant representation of its social and natural environment. Such an aspiration is not totally disconnected to our past and may help to set the “deeper foundations to build the design of the future”³⁹¹. These motivations are reflected through El-Sharif’s vision of an innovative and a locally grounded modernity. They are also manifested in his practice of patronage and the provision of an efficient technical and administrative infrastructure at the Near East Radio Station and the Lebanese Recording Company.

This enabling environment contributed actively to equip the Rahbani Brothers and Fairuz with the suitable tools to develop their skills and enrich their repertoire in terms of musical diversity and quantity. Folklore was an ingredient of a significant number of their songs and radio musicals. This experience also provided them with the needed assets to assume a leading position in the launching of the Lebanese Nights with the blessings of Igor Moiseyev³⁹². Besides music, they were in charge of developing the scenario of the collaborative first nights in 1957 that grew into a plot for the second act in 1959. The plot blossomed further into an operetta in the following year and acquired its mature form in the 1962 festival season. As such the Baalbeck Festival provided the Rahbani Brothers after Sabri El-Sharif with the suitable infrastructure to facilitate a vigorous transition from a radio studio to an open air theater in a unique archeological setting. The transition was soon institutionalized with the formalization of the Lebanese Popular Troupe into a partnership company listed in the official commercial register on 13.1.1960 under the number 8788³⁹³. The owners were Assi Rahbani, Mansour Rahbani and Sabri El-Sherif and the goals of the troupe were to revive Lebanese and Arab

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Annahar, 10.6.1956.

³⁹³ Ahmad Chamseddine, The Second Lebanese Nights, The Rahbani Blog.

folklore in theater, television, radio and cinema. Throughout the following years, the institution will grow further and weave its own intricate network collaborators from the public and private sectors and a circle of consultants and intellectuals whose affiliations extend into other Arab countries.

Musical plays were a creative hub for the synergy of music, singing, dance and costumes. They were also a dynamic platform for the Rahbani Brothers to seek a wide array of musical and artistic resources that range from urban traditional music from Aleppo and Cairo, Byzantine and Syriac liturgy and Quranic chanting besides European classical and popular idioms. Moreover, the plays presented a convergence of elements derived from local and regional rural and pastoral folk sources that included oral traditions, mythology and history. On another level, their characters and plot mirrored local value systems, communal concerns and themes compatible in varying extents with both dominant and critical sociopolitical ideologies in Lebanon before the civil war. Their language embodied a poetic locality connected to the literary renaissance emerging since the Nahda. As such, musical plays constituted a multi-layered and versatile creative field of eclectic exploration and artistic growth for the Rahbani Brothers and Fairuz that extended through the lifespan of the pre-war Lebanese Nights and eventually poured into other urban performative contexts³⁹⁴. The study of these layers goes beyond the scope of our current research. Accordingly, our focus will be more on tracing their attached discourses within the framework of the Lebanese Nights and the constellation of discourses by other contributing artists. This includes the

³⁹⁴ Other regular venues were the annual International Damascus Fair starting from 1959, the Piccadilly Theater in Beirut starting from 1967 and sporadic performances in each of Capitol Theater (1962) and Casino du Liban (1963 and 1978).

mobilization of folklore and construction of a modern heritage in relation to nation building and cultural diplomacy.

The Baalbeck repertoire of musical plays by the Rahbani Brothers offers an encyclopedia of contemporary Lebanese “popular” culture that juxtaposes folklore and modernity. It constitutes a creative journey marked as well by the lead characters designed for Fairuz. ‘Oter El-Layl³⁹⁵, the soldier’s daughter in the play “The Days of Fakhreddine” (1966) embodied a sublime expression of the process of folklore collection just as the cultural renaissance of the Lebanese Nights aimed to “extract folkloric traditions from their origins”³⁹⁶. Her role was to gather forgotten song traces from the elderly throughout the different villages of the country. She is destined to eventually become an entrusted custodian of this threatened legacy and a “nightingale of tales and stories”³⁹⁷. ‘Oter El-Layl reminds us of the formative efforts of the saviors of national music traditions and the beginnings of field research in ethnomusicology. One of those pioneers is the Hungarian composer Bela Bartok (1881–1945) who commenced in 1906 his travels to the rural regions of Hungary, Romania and Turkey to record and document their oral heritage equipped with limited technological tools available at that time. The field recordings became the basis of further research and the raw materials of elaborate symphonic compositions.

In the 1961 Lebanese Nights, the opening act is based on a fictitious mythology of the Gods of Baalbeck. They are at the verge of leaving the citadel after its destruction. They demand that an enchanted local girl accompanies them. Fairuz plays the role of

³⁹⁵ ‘Oter El-Layl is a compound name invented by the Rahbani Brothers with traditional connotations in content and form. Its literal meaning is the scent of the night.

³⁹⁶ The Baalbeck International Festivals catalogue, 1965.

اكرم الريس، قصة فيروز وبعليك : عطر الليل في الرحلة البهية، جريدة النهار، 6 تموز 2006

³⁹⁷ The Days of Fakhreddine, 1966: صارت عطر الليل عصفورة القصص

the girl who insists on staying among the ruins of Baalbeck as she has a duty to fulfil. Her quest is a journey to the “hearts and the homes of the people”³⁹⁸ in Lebanon and the Mahjar, to “plant a tree next to a song”³⁹⁹ and to “tell the world a divine story”⁴⁰⁰ while she remains anchored within the Citadel and at instances from underneath the scared cedar trees⁴⁰¹. It is a journey to the ancestral land and rediscovery of the deep roots of the communal ethos where they embrace each other in harmony. Land is both geopolitical and unbounded. The first embodies physical and environmental traits whereas the second is a temporal fountain of human existence⁴⁰².

Fairuz builds a bridge between the geopolitical and the unbounded as well as between reality and fantasy to "encapsulate her audience with a sense of belonging and an embracing collective emotion"⁴⁰³. Her roles convey a resilient will to remain attached to her land amongst her people though a changing horizon adds additional layers of meaning after 1967. A “strange breeze”⁴⁰⁴ calls her to another journey. She becomes the guardian of exiles and deserted houses⁴⁰⁵ and a symbol of memory and land. It is a greater quest to meet her vows⁴⁰⁶; to rebel⁴⁰⁷; to pray⁴⁰⁸; to liberate⁴⁰⁹; to unite people in peace⁴¹⁰. She fulfills her sacrificial journey as she becomes the “greater bride”⁴¹¹ who “cultivates the joy of the future and the fields of times to come”⁴¹².

³⁹⁸ The Girl from Baalbeck, 1961.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ The opening song of the Cedars Festival, 1964.

⁴⁰² منى بولس، الله، الارض والحبيب في الليل والقنديل وجبال الصوان، جبيل: دار عصام حداد للطباعة والنشر، 2001.

⁴⁰³ Nazih Khater, Annahar, 12.7.1989.

⁴⁰⁴ Jibal Asswan, 1969.

⁴⁰⁵ The Guardian of Keys, 1972.

⁴⁰⁶ The Days of Fakhreddine, 1966. Jibal Asswan, 1969; The Guardian of Keys, 1972.

⁴⁰⁷ Jibal Asswan, 1969; The Guardian of Keys, 1972.

⁴⁰⁸ The Days of Fakhreddine, 1966. Jibal Asswan, 1969.

⁴⁰⁹ Jibal Asswan, 1969.

⁴¹⁰ The Bridge of the Moon (Jisr El-Qamar), 1962.

⁴¹¹ Jibal Asswan, 1969.

⁴¹² Ibid.

Accordingly, songs become missions to resurrect the ruins of Baalbeck⁴¹³, reconcile conflict⁴¹⁴ and rebuild Lebanon⁴¹⁵. Here resides one of the main contributions of the Rahbani Brothers in employing an assembly of modern and folkloric elements to address within a humanistic outlook the aspirations of people towards a better future. Assi and Mansour transit from a celebratory and descriptive utilization of folklore that preserves customs and traditions pertaining to the stages of the human lifecycle towards a more critical contestation of the social order while departing from dominant state ideologies and discourses, particularly in *Jibal Assawan* (1969) and *The Guardian of Keys* (1972).

The journey of Fairuz's characters takes place within a framework of socioeconomic and political events happening in pre-war Lebanon. Fawaz Trabulsi argues that these events are in direct relation to the characters struggles brought forward in the plots of the plays⁴¹⁶. The Rahbani Brothers present them through a configuration of ideological elements from Lebanism, Syrianism, Arab Nationalism and Leftist ideas. Their synthesis sets the basis of an eclectic humanistic outlook that aspires to serve as a tolerant space of social cohesion and convergence among different communities in Lebanon and the region. It also highlights representations of otherness juxta positioned against the values of the recaptured ethos as symbolized in the roles played mostly by Fairuz. Roles of otherness and redeemed otherness by salvation and love prevailing in many plots include Merhej el-Qlai', the hunter who is an outsider to the village (*Seasons of Glory*, 1960) and Rajeh, the savage lie that is transformed into a truth of continuity (*The Seller of Rings, Cedars Festival*, 1964). The dialectics between the

⁴¹³ The Girl from Baalbeck, 1961.

⁴¹⁴ The Bridge of the Moon (Jisr El-Qamar), 1962.

⁴¹⁵ The Days of Fakhreddine, 1966.

⁴¹⁶ فواز طرابلسي، فيروز والرحابنة: مسرح الغريب والكنز والاعجوبة، بيروت: دار رياض الريس للكتب والنشر، 2006.

symbol, the community and the other is interpreted by Christopher Stone who resorts to Arjun Appadurai's work on the "interplay between globalization and locality". Stone observes the conceptualization of otherness in the historical production of human communities and their boundaries through social forces as in plots by the Rahbani Brothers. They are distinguished from ecological boundaries such as wastelands, deserts or swamps beyond which nonhuman or barbaric forces arise similar to the wild spaces associated with the construction of the characters of others like Merhej⁴¹⁷.

Mohamad Abi Samra finds that the plays travel along sectarian boundaries⁴¹⁸ within Lebanon and at the frontiers of diplomacy⁴¹⁹ in Arab countries giving them potency to transcend prevailing ideologies during that period and sustain beyond the green lines of the civil war. They eventually engage in a process of heritagization despite contested feedback received at the times of production. This is salient particularly in the cases of *The Days of Fakhreddine* and *Jibal Assawan*. For the former disputes revolved around the sectarian appropriation of the representation of the 17th century Prince while challenging its central position in Lebanism and the state ideology. Druze religious figures and politicians requested formally the censorship of the play to which the Baalbeck Festival Committee had to promptly respond by issue apologetic clarification statements and the Rahbani Brothers to introduce amendments in one of the roles portraying a Druze character. Furthermore, the history of Fakhreddine was the subject of debates published in most magazines and newspapers. The Cultural Supplement of *Annahar* Newspaper during the weeks following the performance featured interventions

⁴¹⁷ Christopher Stone, *Popular Culture and Nationalism in Lebanon: The Fairuz and Rahbani Nation*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008.

⁴¹⁸ محمد ابي سمرا، فيروز ظاهرة الاخوين رحباني، رسالة دبلوم علوم اجتماعية، الجامعة اللبنانية، 1985

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

by historians in the calibre of Kamal Salibi and Kamal Youssef El-Hajj alongside writers including its editor Ounsi El-Hajj⁴²⁰ and other cultural critics.

The internal records of Baalbeck Festival's publicity subcommittee report categorizing media coverage before, during and after the performances of Jibal Assawan⁴²¹. The report identifies 64 essays. Most essays before the performance were positive. Subsequent essays were in turn classified into praise (11 essays), dislike (10) and borderline (8) besides (3) specialised texts that focused on the dabke dances, Fairuz and Nasri Chamseddine. Most of the criticism revolved around costumes and playback recording whereas the scenography by Aref Rayess, dance by Caracalla and Fairuz received high acclaim. Other comments indicated unease about aspects of the scenario some of which were reminiscent of previous works, the dim atmosphere prevailing in the play and sense of shock in reaction to the death of Ghorbi, the lead character played by Fairuz. It was a precedent since the inception of the Lebanese Nights that death takes place on stage. Individual reactions from the Festival Committee members in the press indicate a desire to maintain a joyful celebratory ambiance within future performance that drifts away from intense dramatic plots. Jibal Asswan was also the subject of another episode of contestation, this time led by Leftist intellectuals.

Mehdi Amel finds that the representation of the people's strife against tyranny loaded with symbolism transposes what is supposed to be a communal rebellion targeting an oppressive state apparatus into a reductionist individual struggle embodied allegorically by Ghorbi's heroism against Fatek the despotic ruler⁴²². Accordingly, Mehdi Amel observes that the plot misses an opportunity to steer critical social

⁴²⁰ Annahar Weekly Cultural Supplement (June – August 1966).

⁴²¹ BIF Archives, Report about Jibal Asswan by Samir El-Jisr, publicity subcommittee, 1969; USEK.

⁴²² مهدي عامل (حسن حمدان)، حول مسرحية الرحابنة الأخيرة جبال الصوان، مجلة الطريق، العدد 9، تشرين الأول 1969

awareness. Instead, much of the vigour of dialectical class struggles is lost in the interest of a metaphysical emancipatory discourse intertwined with mythology and liturgy. He proposes alternative critical aesthetics of dialectical materialism as in the "Epic theatre" movement championed by the German playwright Bertolt Brecht (1898 - 1956). Through infusing popular themes and forms with avant-garde modernism, Brecht redefines the institutional function of theater to provoke rational self-reflection and raise awareness of injustice instead of receptive compliance among audiences. A transformative vision of heritage in relation to "reality", the present temporality and historical colonial and capitalist relations underlies Mehdi Amel's critique that he further elaborated in the recently published English compilation⁴²³ of his works.

⁴²³ Mehdi Amel, *The Problem of Cultural Heritage*, in: *Marxism and National Liberation*, Leiden (The Netherlands): Brill, 2020.

CHAPTER V

VISUAL TRACES AND NARRATIVES

This chapter aspires to offer the reader a visual parallel to the narrative in the previous two chapters. The selective display incorporates photographs, press clippings, administrative documents and correspondences as well as pictures of posters, books, catalogues, music vinyl records and stamps. Their sources are from private and public collections listed in Figure 1 on page 28. Otherwise mentioned, the remaining items are from my personal collection.

The display presents documents that may contribute as a supporting evidence, and in limited instances as a supplementary source of information to the themes highlighted in the constructed narrative of the Lebanese Nights practices and subsequent discourse analysis. This approach invokes an archival conversation between written texts of historical documents and visual and sound objects related to the practices underlying the Lebanese Nights. It invites questions about functional representations and terminologies revolving around the discourse of folklore, collective identity and nation building. Moreover, it enriches the diversity of resources for the study of decisions made by the festivals committee. The approach was applied in the illustrated lecture I gave at Sursock Museum⁴²⁴ in September 2019 and was further reinforced through interactive discussions and archival work sessions held during the Fall 2020 semester at the Arab Image Foundation⁴²⁵ within the framework of my MA

⁴²⁴ On folklore and theater: Akram Rayess in conversation with Vali Mahlouji, 21.9.2019: <https://sursock.museum/content/folklore-and-theater> (accessed on 8.1.2021)

⁴²⁵ The Arab Image Foundation (AIF) is an independent non-profit organisation established in 1997. Its collection consists of over 500,000 photographic objects and documents from and related to the Middle

internship. The sessions explored the social life of a photographic object, how photography shapes political and socio-spatial imagination and what it does mean to assemble an archive for Baalbeck's Lebanese Nights in our specific temporal and spatial context.

The sequence of the display is moderated by the parameters of chronology, theme and archival type. It is organized in four sections that align with the trajectory of the folklore project and the Lebanese Nights while providing incentives to think about the continuity and rupture with the preceding folklore engagements dating back to the second half of the 19th century. The sections are: The Road to Baalbeck, Mobilization, Heritagization and Documentary texts.

East, North Africa and the Arab diaspora. Furthermore, it looks to engage a broad local, regional and international community in collaborative and interdisciplinary experimental thought and practice that extends the photographic concept and visual heritage to “explore, question and confront the complex social and political realities of our times” and forge new pathways for visual archival practices (Source: <http://arabimagefoundation.org/> , accessed on 8.1.2021).

The Folklore Project of the Baalbeck International Festival

1956-1975

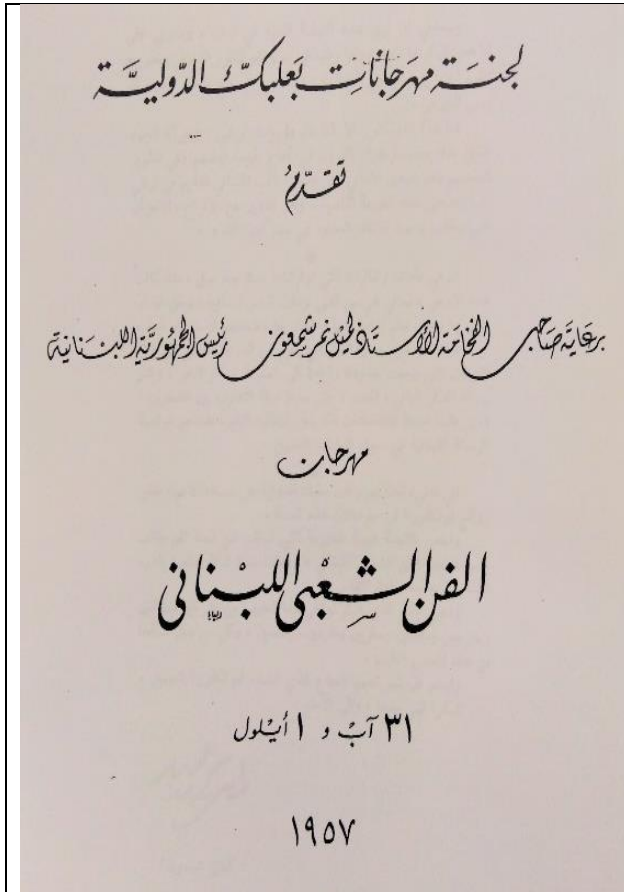


Figure 1 The First Lebanese Nights
The Baalbeck International Festival catalogue, 1957.

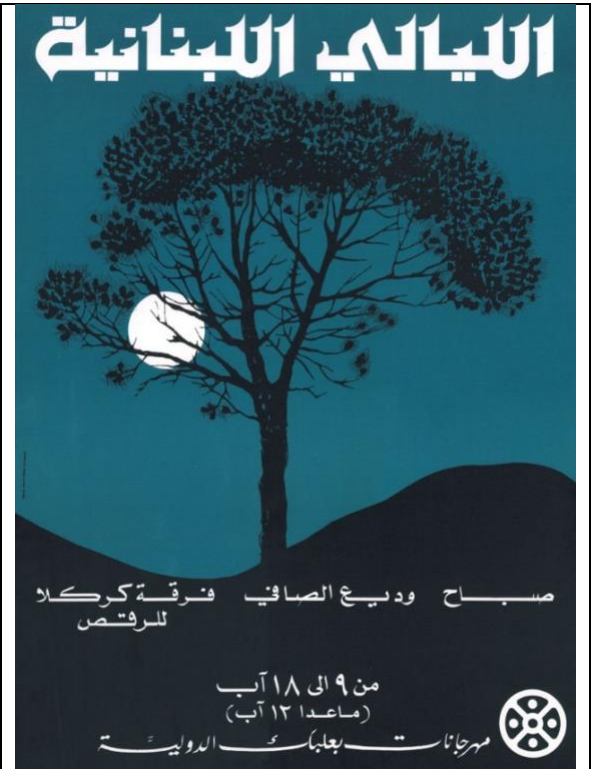


Figure 2 Poster of the Lebanese Nights 1974

A. The Road to Baalbeck

This section opens with an overview of local and international precedents to the festival (items 3-6) and moves to show folklore early manifestations in Lebanon and the Mahjar (items 7-10) through shellac records, film and radio. The display moves to show traditional costumes in shifting natural and social contexts through early Lebanese painting, orientalist illustrations and caricature (items 11-14). It closes with scenes of the Baalbeck village and archeological site before the festival was launched (items 15 - 16).

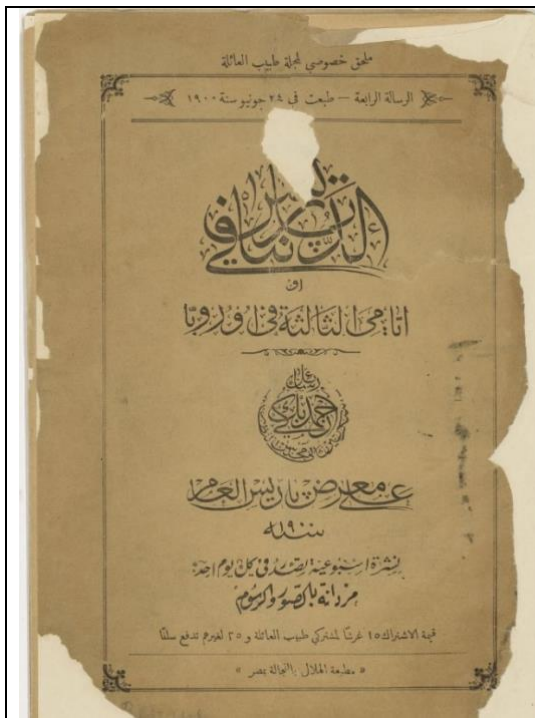


Figure 3 Reports from the Paris 1900 Expo, Ahmad Bik Zakī (1867-1934).

Source: Bibliotheque Nationale de France.

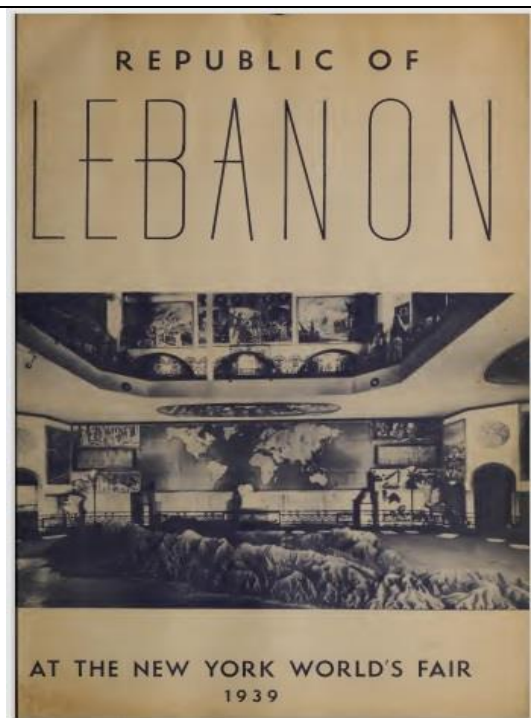


Figure 4 Lebanon's first independent participation in a World Fair, 1939.

It included representations of Baalbeck's Citadel.

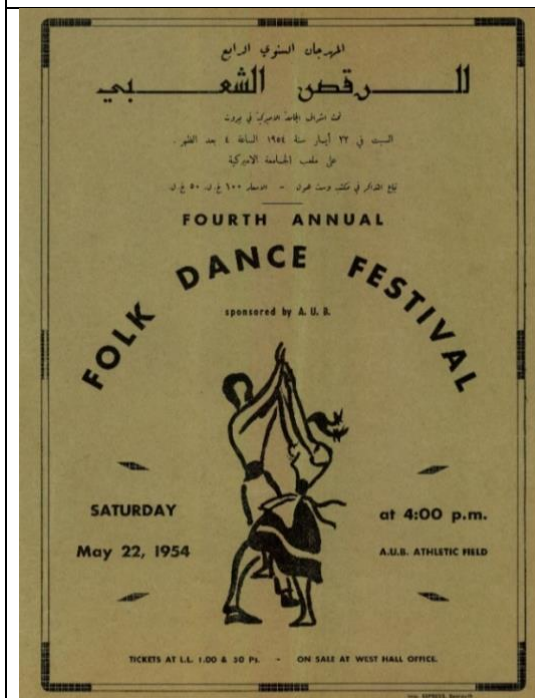


Figure 5 AUB Folk Dance Festival Poster, 1954.

Source: Jafet Library Special Collections

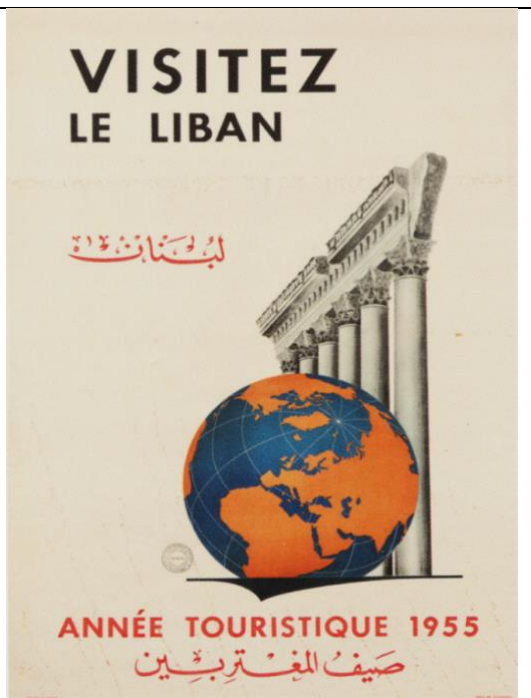


Figure 6 Year of Tourism organized by the National Commission for Tourism, 1955.



Figure 7 A magazine clip narrating the increasing popularity of folksongs broadcasted by Radio Orient.

Source: The Radio Magazine, 1940.

Figure 8 An independent film production about rural life featuring folkloric songs and dances by Wadiah Assafi and Najah Salam. Produced by Mohamad Salman in 1960.

Source: Abboudi Abou Jaoude, Tonight: Cinema in Lebanon 1929-1979, Beirut: al-Furāt Publishing & Distribution, 2015.

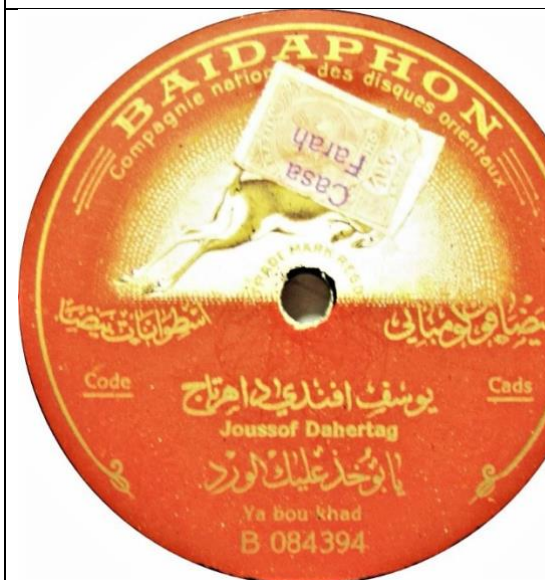


Figure 9 Youssef Taj on Baidaphon Records (1930s).



Figure 10 Folklore in the Mahjar: Dabke by Semi Sheheen; Al-Sharq Records (Albert Rashid 1949-1957).

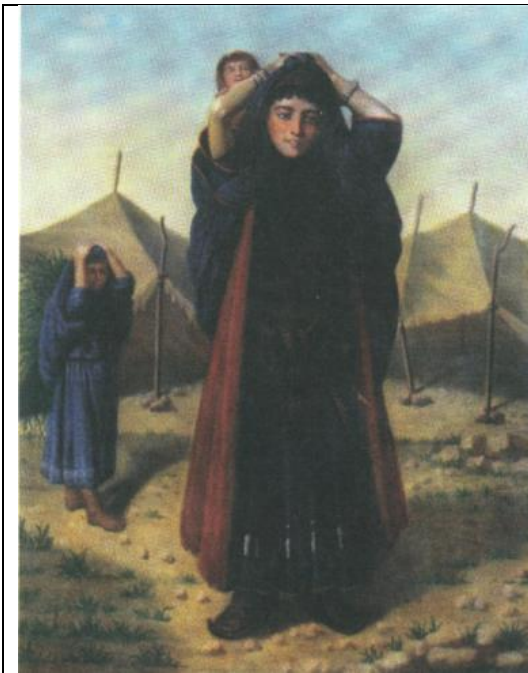


Figure 11 Daoud Corm, Bedouin woman with her child, 1900, oil on canvas, 58x83cm.
David & Hiram Corm Collection



Figure 12 A Prince from Lebanon, XIX Century.
Source: Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1971.



Figure 13 Beauty queen Samia Baroudi-Corm with a Lebanese girl in a traditional dress at the New York World Expo, 1939.
Source: سمير الصليبي، سوق الغرب في ذاكرتي، بيروت: دار المراد، 2000.



Figure 14 A caricature depicting Abu Khalil. Abu Khalil was a rural character always wearing a folkloric costume. It was constructed by Said Fraiha to represent the voice of the Lebanon citizen after independence. The illustrators were Khalil Achkar and Jean Mechaalani. The caricatures were published in the weekly magazine Assayad. Source: سعيد فريحة في ذكراه الاولى: نصف قرن من العطاء، بيروت: دار الصياد، 1979.

Traditional costumes in shifting contexts



Figure 15 Baalbeck village during the Mandate. Photo by Marilyn Stafford.

Source: Brochure of the “Baalbek, Archives of an Eternity” exhibition organized by Surssock Museum in Beirut, 28 June - 22 September 2019.



Figure 16 The Archeological Site, 1897.

Source: Personal Archive of Houssam Najm.

The Baalbeck Landscape

B. Mobilization

In this section the inception, growth and dominance of the festival is traced. The growing appeal of Baalbeck's folklore revival is reflected in its continuous endorsement by the Presidents of the Republic (items 17-19), the increase in interest to become a hot topic on the public agenda (item 35), abundance of commercial recordings of Dabke (items 31-34). The growth in operations of the folklore subcommittee is captured in photographs of local press conferences and logistic preparations (items 21-23), events in Lebanon (item 19) and outside Lebanon in Latin America (Item 20) and England and their association with mass mediated national celebrations of Independence Day (item 36). A specific example of folk dance's transition from villages to Baalbeck's theater is illustrated through orientalist photography and pictures of the field visits conducted in villages (items 28-30).

The annual catalogue published by the festival committee is by itself a significant contribution to the study of history and archeology of the Roman Citadel in Baalbeck besides illustrated presentations of literature, folklore and contemporary art in Lebanon and the region (items 38-41). Catalogue themes included: Lebanese Heritage, Engravings in wood and copper, the Holy Land (1961); Contemporary painting and sculpture in Lebanon (1962, 1973, 1974); Orientalist travelers to Lebanon (1962; 1963); Jupiter, Venus and the site of the Citadel (1960, 1969, 1970, 1972); Historical sites in Lebanon (1967); Costumes of the Orient (1971). The catalogue featured the official statement of the President of the Republic, the President of the Baalbeck International Festival (item 59), occasionally news of activities of subcommittees (item 52), and statements by officials from other state agencies such as the Directorates of Antiquities

and Tourism. Accordingly, the catalogues contained 2 statements by President Chamoun (1956, 1957), 6 by President Chehab (1959-1964), 6 by President Helou (1965-1970) and 4 by President Frangieh (1971-1974). On another level, the collection of advertisements (item 25) in the festival's 18 catalogues constitute a reliable source that invites a separate study on the commercial network and non-governmental funding sources affiliated with the festival. One of the main contributors of the thematic content of the catalogue is the member of the generally assembly Camille Aboussouan⁴²⁶ (items 38 and 40).

⁴²⁶ Camille Aboussouan (1919 - 2013): a Francophone lawyer, curator, publisher, writer, translator and archeological collector. He was a former Lebanese ambassador to UNESCO (1978) and held the French Academy Literary Award (1986).



Figure 17 President Camille Chamoun, the First Lady Zalfa Chamoun, Aimee Kettaneh and May Arida at the first Lebanese Nights performance, 31.8.1957.

Source: Comite du festival international de Baalbeck: les riches heures du festival, Beirut: Dar Annahar, 1994.

**الرئيس شهاب يقول للجنة مهرجانات بعلبك
"مهرجانات ١٩٥٩ قضية وطنية"**

قد عاد ارض الصداقة المفتوحة المضيافة ، وانه بالتالي ، ارض الثقافة ...» وأضاف فخامته قائلاً للوفد : « ان الحكومة على استعداد لبذل كل ما يمكنها من اجل انجاح هذه المهرجانات انجاحاً باهراً » .

استقبل الرئيس شهاب في مقره بصربا امس وقدما عن لجنة مهرجانات بعلبك. وقد شرح الوفد لفخامته الاستعدادات التي تم اتخاذها حتى الان بعد ان لم يعد يفصل بين هذه الاستعدادات وافتتاح المهرجانات سوى ١٥ يوما .

و قد شجع فخامة الرئيس اعضاء الوفد على المضي فسي استعداداتهم وانبغهم « انه يعتبر نجاح مهرجانات هذا العام قضية وطنية وانه من الضروري ، بعد حوادث الصيف الماضي المؤلمة ، الاظهار للناس ان لبنان قد استعاد هدوئه واتزانته وانه

Figure 18 A first page headline conveying President Chehab's declaration of the 1959 Baalbeck Festivals as a "national cause".

Source: Al-Jarida, 8.7.1959.

بمناسبة افتتاح مشاهد
اللمح والاضواء
في بيت الدين
تقديم
المديرية العامة الآثار
بالاشتراك مع
لجنة مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية
تحت رعاية فخامة رئيس الجمهورية
ثلاث ليالٍ ساهرة
ايام الخميس ٢٧ والجمعة ٢٨ والسبت ٢٩ أيار
في الساعة ٨ مساءً
وذلك في قصر بيت الدين
تشترك فيها
فيروز
تقدم مجموعة من الأغاني اللبنانية بصحبة جوقة ووركسترا

تساع التذاكر عند
مكتبة انطوان باب ادرين اعتباراً من ١٠ أيار
سعر التذكرة ٢٥ و ٣٠ ل.د.

Figure 19 Announcement of the Sound & Lights presentation and Fairuz concert at Beiteddine.

Organized with the Directorate of Antiquities, 1965.



Figure 20 Fairuz, Assi Rahbani, Najib Hankash, Sabri Sherif and members of the Folklore Subcommittee at a press conference in Brazil, 1961.

Source: Samia Saab Archives.



Figure 21 Members of the Folklore Subcommittee during preparations for costumes design. From left: Samia Saab, Najla Hamieh, Badi'a Aawar and Marcel Rebeiz.

Source: Samia Saab Archives.



Figure 22 The Arab Theater Subcommittee at a press conference.

From Left: Antoine Medawar, Madeleine Helou, Suad Najjar, Robert Abella, Salwa Said, Melhim Karam, Ghida Khalidi. Source:

خالدة سعيد، الحركة المسرحية في لبنان 1960-1975: تجارب وأبعاد، بيروت: لجنة المسرح العربي في مهرجانات بعليك الدولية، 1998.



Figure 23 Salwa Es-Said signs the contract for the Lebanese Nights (1963 season) with Romeo Lahhoud.

Source: The Daily Star, 4.11.1962.



Figure 24 A meeting of the Folklore Subcommittee and Said Fraiha at Dar Assayad, 1964.

From left: Said Frieiha, Fouad Sarrouf, Suad Najjar, Salwa Es-Said, Aimee Kettaneh, Jean Skaff, Walid Gholmieh, Toufic El-Bacha,

سعيد فريحة في ذكراه الاولى: نصف قرن من العطاء، بيروت: دار الصياد، 1979.

III^{EME} FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE BAALBECK



ECLAIRAGE PHILIPS

Figure 25 Philips provided lighting services of the Citadel.

An example of a catalogue advertisement from the Festival Catalogue, 1957. Source: AUB Archives.



Figure 26 The Theater of the Lebanese Nights: Mawsam El-Ezz, 1960.

Source: Comite du festival international de Baalbeck: les riches heures du festival, Beirut: Dar Annahar, 1994.

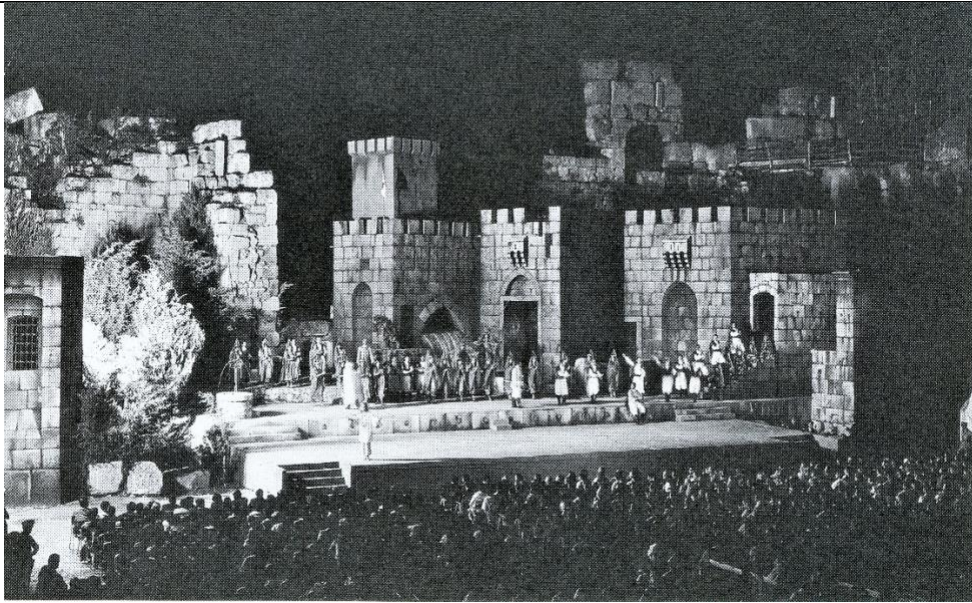


Figure 27 The Theater of the Lebanese Nights: The Citadel, 1968.

Source: Comite du festival international de Baalbeck: les riches heures du festival, Beirut: Dar Annahar, 1994.



Figure 28 Village Dabke with male dancers and the Meiwiz and the daff players, Mount Lebanon, Early 20th Century.



Figure 29 Samia Saab during an exploratory field visits in Lebanon with Mosieyev, 1956.

Source: Samia Saab Archives



Figure 30 Dabke with male and female dancers with traditional costumes at the Baalbeck Theater, 1964.

The Journey of Dabke from villages to the theater of the Lebanese Nights



Figure 31 A compilation of songs from the 1957 and 1959 Lebanese Nights on 33 inch Vinyl, LRC.

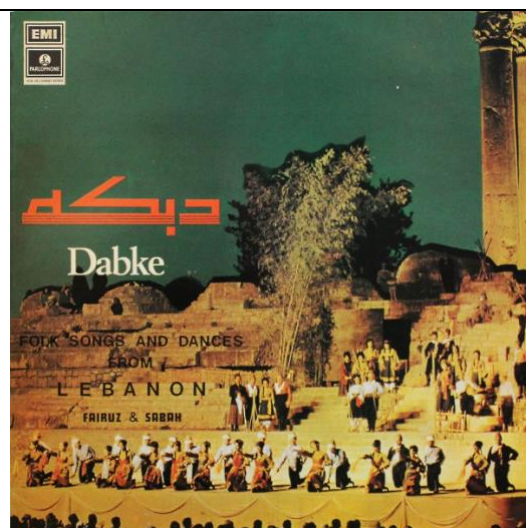


Figure 32 A compilation of Dabke songs by Fairuz and Sabah released on LP and later CD due to popular demand, Voice of the Orient.



Figure 33 45-inch single cover depicting the singer Sabah in a traditional dress of the aristocratic classes, 1963.

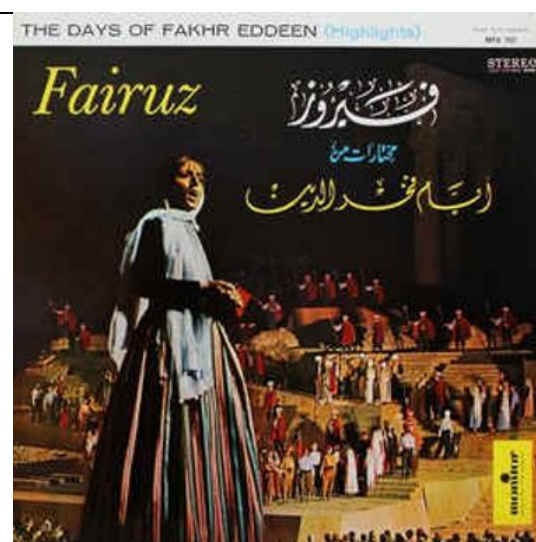


Figure 34 33-inch album cover portraying the singer Fairuz in a traditional peasant dress from the historical play “The Days of Fakhr Eddine”, 1966.

The Lebanese Nights on Vinyl Records



Figure 35 TV panel on the future of Lebanese folk dance.

With Salwa Es-Said, Wadi'a Jarrar, Toufic El-Bacha and Zaki Nassif, 18.9.1959.



Figure 36 The 1973 Lebanese Nights on TV in celebration of Independence Day.

Press Advertisement.

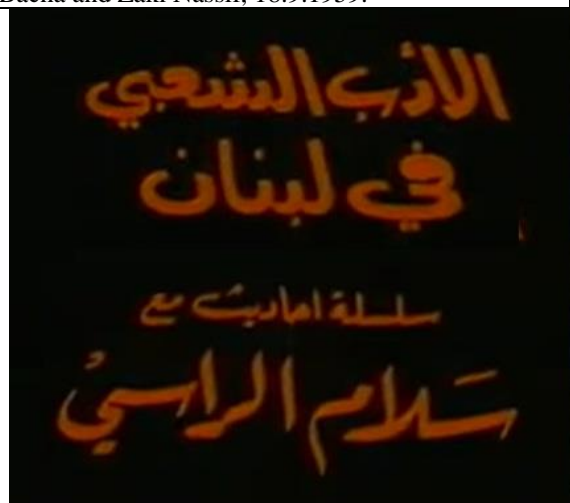


Figure 37 Salam Racy's TV series on folk literature.

Tele Liban, Presented by Jean D'arc Abi Zeid (1980) and Zeinat Nassar (1983); directed by Ramzi Racy.

Folklore and the Lebanese Nights on local television

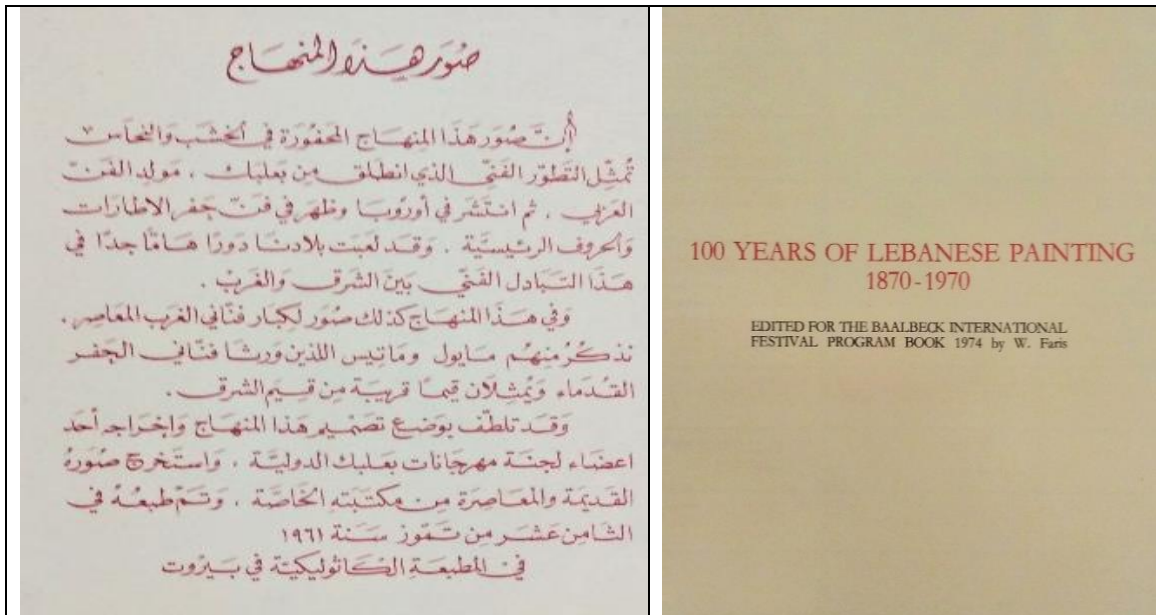


Figure 38 The theme of the 1961 catalogue was engraving on wood and copper

It was compiled by “a member of the Baalbeck International Festival Committee”. AUB Archives

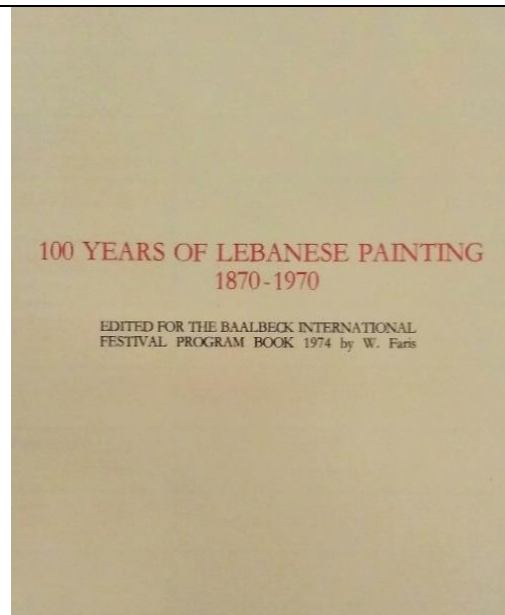


Figure 39 The theme of the 1973 Baalbeck Catalogue was a retrospective of 100 years of painting.

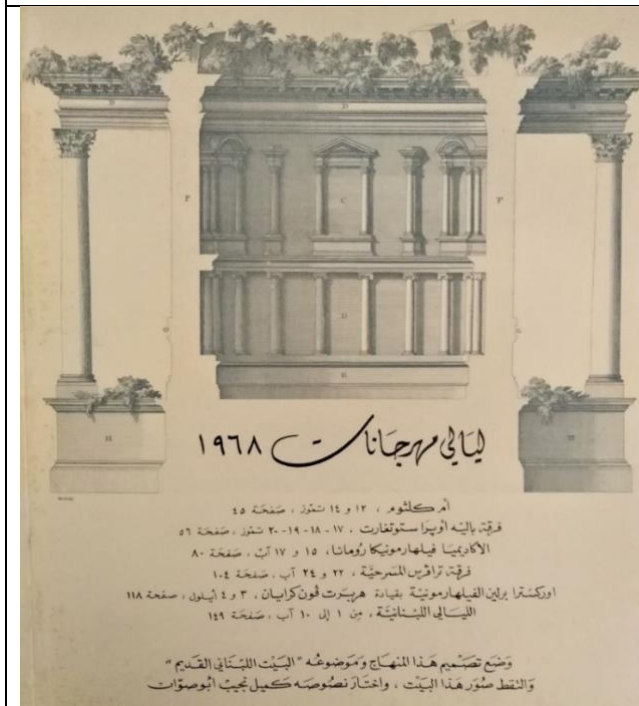


Figure 40 The theme of the catalogue for 1968 was the traditional Lebanese house.

Photos and texts were compiled by Camille Abousouan.

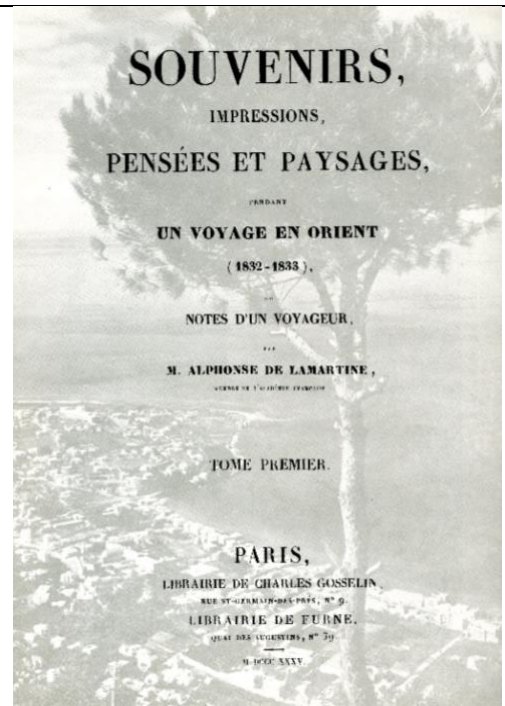


Figure 41 Orientalist Travelers to Lebanon was a theme of the 1963 Catalogue.

Source: AUB Archives

C. Heritagization

The consistent increase in awareness about the importance of documentation and preservation is manifested through publication of memories by committee members (item 44), documentary studies and films (items 43, 45) as well as exhibitions (item 42), post cards (figure 48) and commemorative stamps (figure 46). This trend was reflected earlier in summaries of achievements presented in the festival catalogues (item 47). It further expanded and crystallized with the passage of time locally and internationally. Zajal was for example inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2014 (item 49).

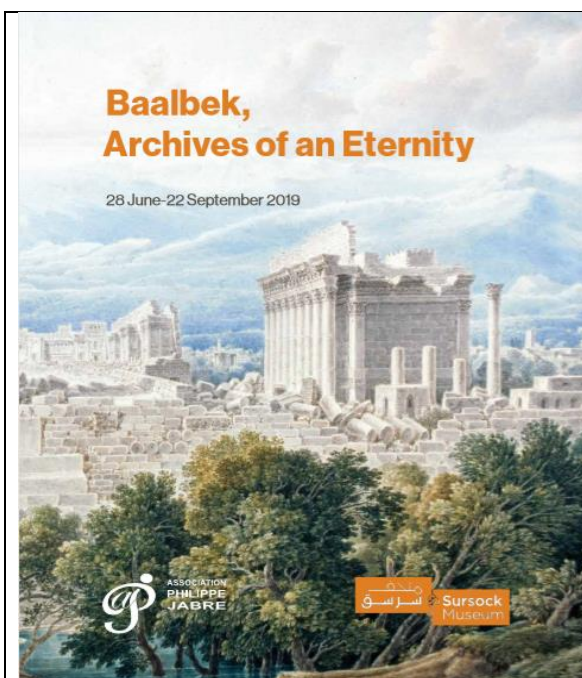


Figure 42 Brochure cover of the “Baalbek, Archives of an Eternity” exhibition.

It was organized by Sursock Museum in Beirut from 28 June to 22 September 2019. Source: [Sursock Museum website](#)



Figure 43 A 15-minutes documentary directed by Philippe Aractingi.

Produced by the Baalbeck International Festival (DVD, 2006), the film highlights the festival moments in the occasion of 50 years of inception.

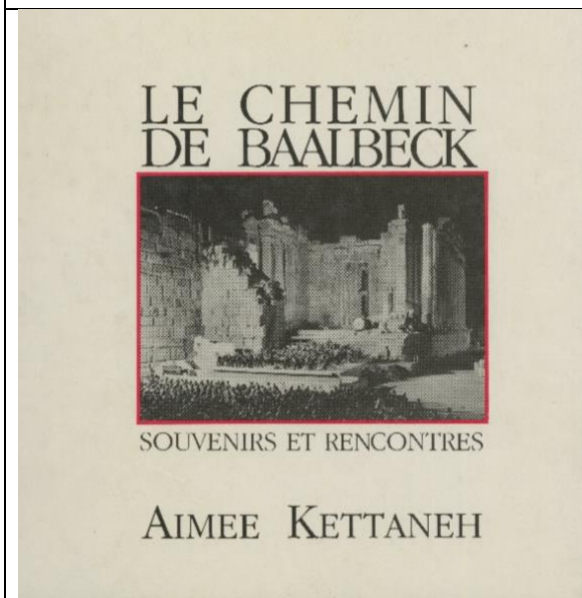


Figure 44 Memoires of the President of the Baalbeck International Festival Aimee Kettaneh.

Le chemin de Baalbeck: souvenirs et rencontres, Beirut: Fiches du Monde Arabe, c1986.

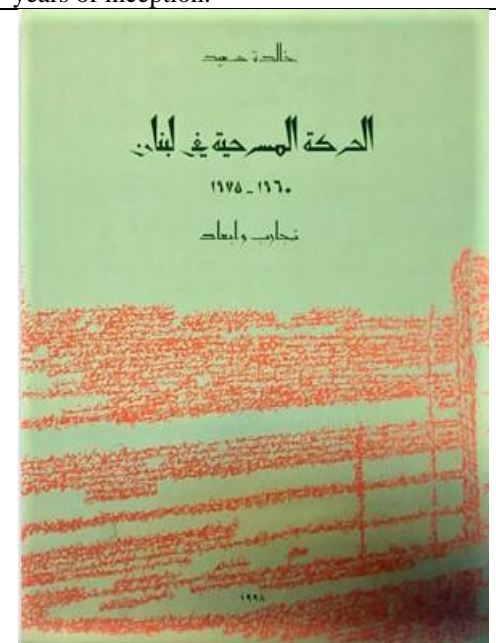


Figure 45 Book documenting the Modern Arab Theater, Commissioned by the Arab Theater Subcommittee and authored by Khalida Said, 1998.

 <p>A 100p postage stamp from the Lebanese Republic, issued around 1930. It features a sepia-toned illustration of the Baalbeck temple ruins. The text includes 'POSTE AERIENNE' on the left, 'REPUBLICQUE LIBANAISE' at the bottom, and 'BAALBECK' in the center. There is handwritten Arabic text 'لبنان' and '1930' on the stamp.</p>	 <p>A 2P50 postage stamp from Lebanon, issued in 1956 for the Baalbeck International Festival. It depicts a woman in traditional dress standing next to the temple ruins. The text includes 'LIBAN POSTE AERIENNE' and 'FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE BAALBECK'.</p>
<p>46-A: The Baalbeck site, c.1930.</p>	<p>46-B: Baalbeck International Festival, 1956.</p>
 <p>A 5p postage stamp from Lebanon, issued in 1966 for the Baalbeck International Festival. It shows a group of women in traditional Lebanese dress performing a Dabke dance. The text includes 'INTERNATIONAL DE BAALBECK 1966', 'FESTIVAL', 'POSTE AERIENNE', and 'LIBAN'.</p>	 <p>A 2000 L.L. postage stamp from Lebanon, issued in 2016 for the 60th anniversary of the Baalbeck International Festival. It features a stylized illustration of the temple ruins with the text '60 YEARS', 'LIBAN 2000 L.L.', and 'VISIT THE SUN 2016'.</p>
<p>46-C: Dabke Dancers in Baalbeck, 1966.</p>	<p>46-D: The 60th anniversary of the festival, 2016.</p>
 <p>A 5000 L.L. postage stamp from Lebanon, issued in 2006 for the Baalbeck International Festival. It features portraits of three women: Aimee Kettaneh, May Arida, and Salwa Es-Saiid. The text includes 'BAALBECK INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL' and 'LIBAN 5000 L.L.'.</p>	 <p>A 2000 L.L. postage stamp from Lebanon, issued in 2017 for the first Lebanese Nights. It features a portrait of Zalfa Chamoun. The text includes 'LIBAN 2000 L.L.' and 'Zalfa Chamoun'.</p>
<p>46-E: From left: Aimee Kettaneh, May Arida and Salwa Es-Saiid, 2006.</p>	<p>46-F: Zalfa Chamoun who championed the first Lebanese Nights, 2017.</p>
<p>Figure 46 Stamps issued by the Lebanese Government</p>	

مدرسة التمثيل وفرقة مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية



أنشأت لجنة مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية

في سنة ١٩٦٠ : مدرسة التمثيل

في سنة ١٩٦٦ : فرقة مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية للمسرح

في سنة ١٩٦٨ : مسرح مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية

النشاطات الفنية لسنة ١٩٦٨

"السوز والقاعدة" تأليف برنخت ، قدمت في بيروت

"امتنال الزنجي مقتول" تأليف اربال ، قدمت في بيروت

"فوست" تأليف غوته ، تقدم في دير القمر (السراني الكبير)

في جبيل (الميناء الفينيقي) ، في طرابلس (القلعة)

وفي بيروت (مسرح مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية) .

ادارة واخراج ،

مُنير أبودبس

اعضاء الفرقة ،

صبيحي أيوب

رمزي داغر

ريمون جبارة

رضي خوري

انطوان كرجاج

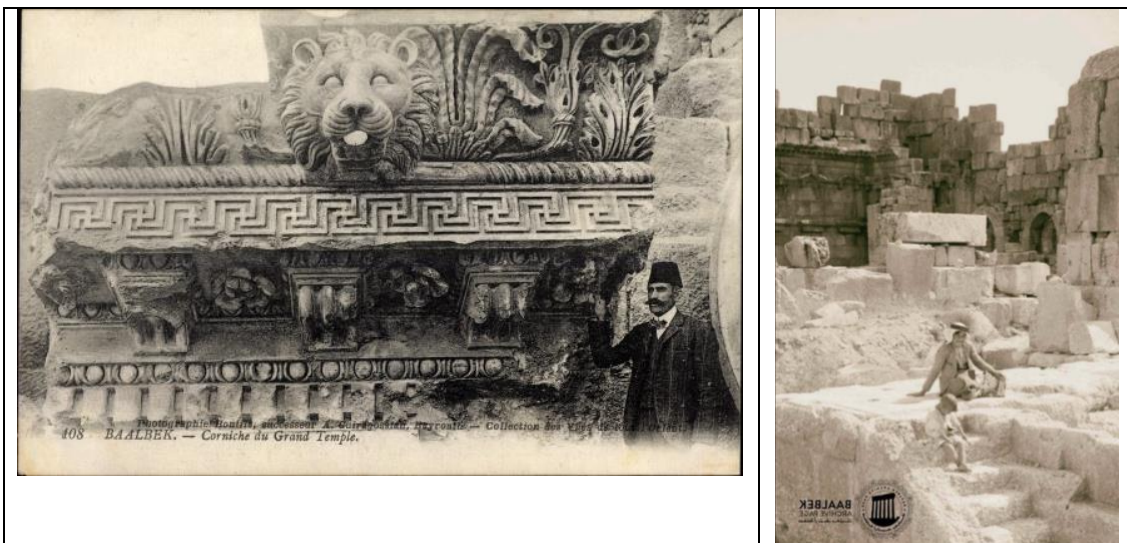
ميشال نبعة

انيس سماحة

Figure 47 A summary of the achievements of the Arab Theater Subcommittee up to 1968

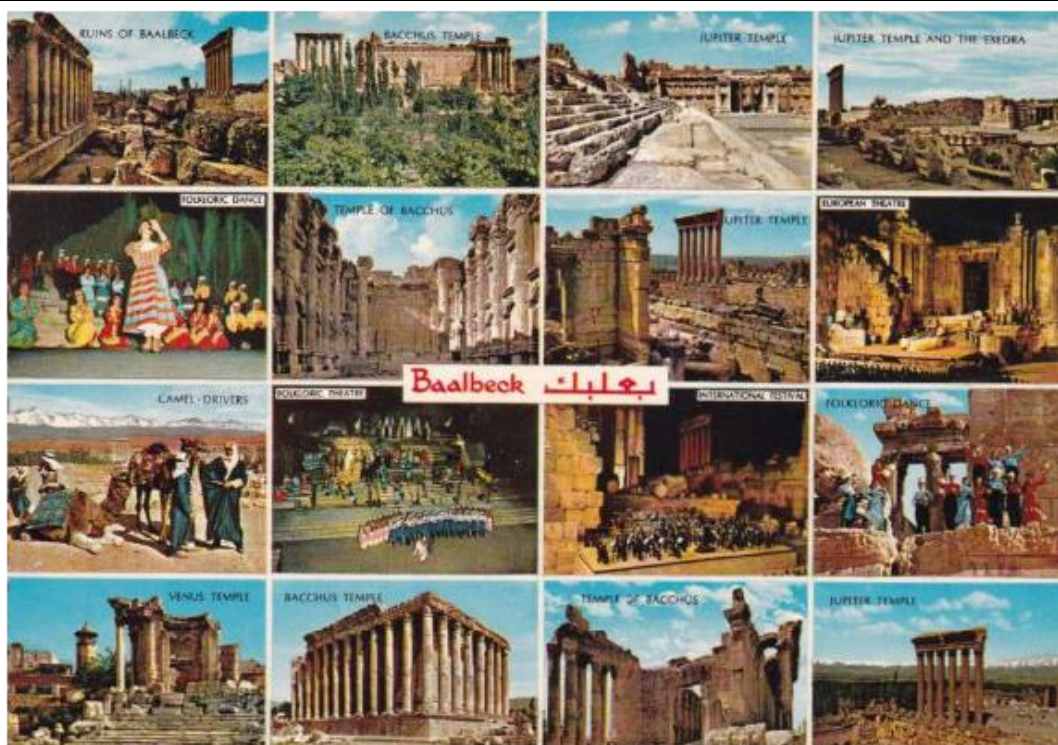
The theater institute (1960), Troupe (1966), The Baalbeck Theater in Beirut (1968).

Source: The Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1968.



48-A (Left): Carte Postal. Grand Temple Jupiter, Photographie Bonfils, ca 1909.

48-B (Right): A local at the citadel, 1898. Source: Baalbeck Archive [FaceBook](#) Page.



48-C: 16 views of Baalbek, including various views of the site, folklore and international performances, and local Bedouins and camel drivers, Published by: Jack P Dadian, c1970s.

Source: British Library: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_EPH-ME-8113

Figure 48 Postcards: Baalbeck Citadel's Changing Guests

The screenshot displays the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage website. The header includes the UNESCO logo, the text 'Intangible cultural heritage', and a search bar. The navigation menu features 'NEWS', 'EVENTS', 'CONVENTION', 'LISTS', 'SAFEGUARDING', 'ACTORS', 'THEMES', and 'COUNTRY'. The breadcrumb trail reads 'UNESCO > Culture > Intangible Heritage > Actors > Intergovernmental Committee > Decisions'. The main heading is 'Decision of the Intergovernmental Committee: 9.COM 10.25'. A sub-menu for 'Intergovernmental Committee' is open, showing 'Decisions'. The main content area is titled 'The Committee' and contains the following text:

1. **Takes note** that Lebanon has nominated **Al-Zajal, recited or sung poetry** (No. 01000) for inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity:

Al-Zajal is a form of Lebanese folk poetry declaimed or sung at social and family celebrations and in daily life. The performers, both men and women, express themselves either individually or collectively on a variety of themes including life, love, nostalgia, death, politics and daily events. During poetic jousts, troupes of poets and musicians gather around a table laden with dishes of meze and arrack to perform verses in front of a mixed audience to the rhythm of the tambourine and **derbouka**. The poets declaim verses, often in the form of challenges, which are then repeated by the singers and audience. These verbal exchanges evoke the beauty of Lebanon, the importance of tolerance, dialogue between communities and religions, and the right to difference. Transmission of Al-Zajal is largely informal, transmitted and renewed within the family or in a spontaneous manner through observation, imitation and participation. Troupes and non-governmental organizations are also actively involved in its practice and recreation. The religious and communitarian inclusiveness of Al-Zajal promotes its continuity, with poetic jousts serving as a safety valve and playing an important role in resolving conflicts and strengthening social cohesion.

1. **Decides** that, from the information included in the file, the nomination satisfies the following criteria for inscription on the Representative List:

R.1: Practised throughout Lebanese territory, Al-Zajal plays an important role in promoting social cohesion and inclusion and provides Lebanese people with a sense of cultural identity and continuity;

R.2: Inscription of Al-Zajal on the Representative List could encourage dialogue while promoting human creativity and diversity, particularly given that it is practised by different cultural and religious groups;

R.3: Past, on-going and proposed measures to safeguard and promote Al-Zajal include formal and non-formal education, inventorying, documentation and research, as well as development and promotion of the element;

R.4: A variety of **actors** including Al-Zajal poets, non-governmental organizations and institutions were involved in the process of elaboration of the nomination, and the non-governmental organizations provided evidence of free, prior and informed consent;

R.5: The element was pre-inventoried in the framework of the Mediterranean Living Heritage Project (**MedLiHer**) and included in 2013 in the national register of intangible cultural heritage established by the Ministry of Culture.

2. **Inscribes Al-Zajal, recited or sung poetry** on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Figure 49 UNESCO inscribes Zajal on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

(Meeting No. 9.Com, Paris 26/27.11.2014): <https://ich.unesco.org/en/decisions/9.COM/10.25>

D. Documentary texts

The final part of the display overviews administrative decisions (items 51, 54), historical presidential statements (item 52) and correspondences (items 50, 53, 55). The earliest correspondence dates back to 10.11.1925 by Gibran reflecting an interest in folklore and the last of which is a letter from May Arida to Baalbeck Studios informing them of the cancellation of the 1975 festival though at that time she probably did not think that it will be a long suspension of a quarter of a century before the postwar relaunch of the festival.

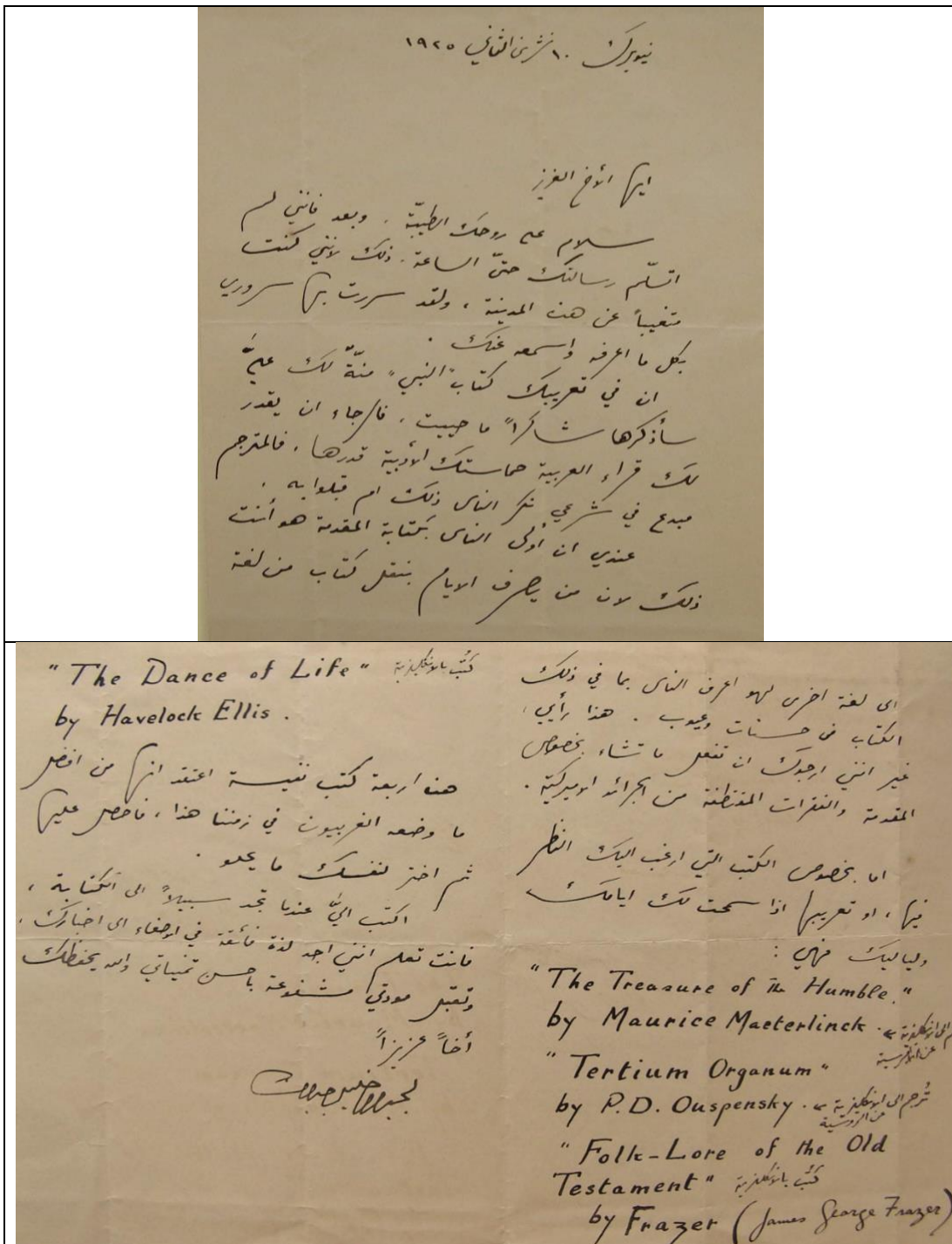


Figure 50 A letter dated on 10.11.1925 from Gibran Khalil Gibran to Antonious Bachir depicting his interest in folklore. Gibran recommends that Bachir translates Folk-lore of the Old Testament by Frazer- James George Frazer to Arabic. Source: Francesco Medici, Un abito arabo per Il Profeta. Lettere inedite di Kahlil Gibran a Antony Bashir, Kervan – Rivista Internazionale di studi afroasiatici, No.. 7-11, gennaio 2010.

يسعدني ان ارى هذه النهضة الفنية في لبنان ، ويسرني على
الاخص ان اراها تتجه اتجاها وطنيا في بعث الفولكلور اللبناني وتطويره
تطورا فنيا يبرز نواحي الجمال فيه وينسجم مع روح العصر ، دون ان
يمس الجوهر .

فما هذا الفولكلور الا كما قال مؤرخنا الوطني : «ميرآة للجهد
الذي بذله جدودنا طوال القرون في كفاح طبيعة ارضهم وفي تطوير
شخصهم وهو صدى الاماني التي عصفت بقلب اللبناني القديم في فرض
انسانيته على تلك الطبيعة القاسية . وهو التعبير عن الاقراخ والاحزان
التي رافقت وجود اولئك الجدود في معتركهم ذلك » .

*

ان في عاداتنا وتقاليدنا التي توارثناها جيلا بعد جيل ، منذ كانت
هذه الارض ، معاني هي من اغنى نزعات البشر انسانية ، وحق لنا ان
تفخر بها ، وان نعلم ابناءنا حبها والفخر بها ، فنعلمهم الاستمرار فيها .
ذلك لان مبرر وجودنا اللبناني يقوم في الدرجة الاولى على تلك
النزعات التي وجهت جدودنا وآباءنا الى العمران ومآثر الخير ، ونشر
رسالة الفكر الباني ، المحب ، حتى صرنا صلة التقارب بين الشعوب .
ومتى علمنا ابناءنا تلك العادات الكريمة والتقاليد الخيرة علمناهم مواصلة
الرسالة اللبنانية في سبيل التعاطف البشري .

*

اني اهنيء لجنة مهرجانات بعليك الدولية على مسعاها لاحياء بعض
روائع فولكلورنا في مهرجانات هذه السنة .
واخص بالتهنئة الهيئة المحترمة التي انبثقت من لجنة المهرجانات
باسم « لجنة الفن الشعبي اللبناني » وعملت عملا شاقا ومثمرا يقدره
اللبنانيون جميعا صادق التقدير .
واحبي جميع الذين اشتركوا في هذا الجهد ، من مؤرخين ومؤلفين
ومخرجين وملحنين ومطربين وعازفين وراقصين ، وكل من عمل صالحا
في هذا المسعى الطيب .
وارجو ان يثمر تعبهم النجاح الذي تشده لفولكلورنا الجميل .
شكرا لهم جميعا ، والى الامام .

كميل شمعون

Figure 52 President Chamoun's statement, Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1957.

مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية
Festival International de Baalbeck

Rue d'Alger
B. P. : 4216
BEYROUTH
Tél. : 37006
Télég. : FESTBAAL

شارع الجزائر
ص. ب. ٤٢١٥
بيروت
تلفون : ٣٧٠٠٥
العنوان البرقي : فستبال

اخ / س ح /

حضرة الاستاذ الفاضل صبري الشريف المحترم

ب بيروت

تحية واحتراما،

وبعد، فيطيب لي ان اقدم لكم شكرى الشخصي مع
شكر زملائي، اعضاء لجنة المهرجانات نظرا لما قدمتم به من الجهود المتواصلة
المشعرة لانجاح حفلات الفن الشعبي اللبناني .
وانني اذ اقدر لكم الخدمات التي اديتموها، ارجو ان تتقبلوا تحياتي
وتحيات اعضاء لجنة المهرجانات .

وتفضلوا بقبول مزيد الشكر وفائق الاحترام

ايمي كانه

ايمي كانه

رئيسة لجنة مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية

بيروت في ١٠/٩/١٩٥٧

Figure 53 Letter of thanks from Aimee Kettaneh to Sabri Sherif, 1957.

Source: Munjed Sherif Archives.

<p>العدد ٤٨ - ٢٨ / ١١ / ١٩٦٢ المراسم والقرارات</p> <p>تدبر الحاجة .</p> <p>بيروت في ٢٣ ت ٢٤ سنة ١٩٦٢</p> <p>الامضاء : فؤاد شهاب</p> <p>صدر من رئيس الجمهورية رئيس مجلس الوزراء الامضاء : رشيد كرامي</p> <p>وزير التربية الوطنية الامضاء : كامل الاسعد</p>	<p>المراسم والقرارات الخاصة ٢٢٧٧</p> <p>مرسوم رقم ١١٢٥١</p> <p>اعتبار اجازة فتح مدرسة التمثيل في بيروت - خاصة بلجنة مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية</p> <p>ان رئيس الجمهورية اللبنانية بناء الدستور اللبناني</p> <p>بناء على المرسوم رقم ١١٣٦ تاريخ ٢٣ / ٣ / ١٩٥٠ بناء على المرسوم رقم ٨١٠١ تاريخ ٣٠ / ١٢ / ٦١ المتضمن اعطاء الاجازة الى السيد منير او ديس بفتح مهد التمثيل الحديث في بيروت .</p> <p>بناء على القرار رقم ٢٥٧ تاريخ ٣٠ آذار سنة ١٩٦٢ المتضمن ابدال تسمية مهد التمثيل الحديث .</p> <p>بناء على العقد المصدق من الكاتب العدل في بيروت بتاريخ ١١ ايلول ١٩٦٢ والمتضمن تفويض كامل الحقوق العائدة لاجازة المدرسة الى لجنة مهرجانات بعلبك بشخص ايحيى كنانة .</p> <p>بناء على الطلب المقدم من السيدة ايحيى كنانة رئيسة لجنة مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية لتاريخ ١٢ / ١ / ١٩٦٢ .</p> <p>وبناء على اقتراح وزير التربية الوطنية</p> <p>يرسم ما يأتي :</p> <p>المادة الاولى - اعتبرت الاجازة المنصوص عنها في المرسوم رقم ٨١٠١ تاريخ ٣٠ / ١٢ / ١٩٦١ بفتح مدرسة للتمثيل الحديث في بيروت - خاصة بلجنة مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية وبإدارة السيد منير او ديس .</p> <p>المادة الثانية - ينشر هذا المرسوم ويبلغ حيث</p>
---	---

Figure 54 Official decree licensing the Arab Theater School, Official Gazette, No. 48, 28/11/1962.



FESTIVAL INTERNATIONAL DE BAALBECK

RUE OSMAN BEN AFFAN, BOITE POSTALE 4215, BEYROUTH, LIBAN □ ADR. TÉLÉG.: FESTBAAL □ TÉL. 237005 & 242600

Ref. 339/75/S

Misc
Beyrouth, le 12 Août 1975

Monsieur Mohamad Jannoun
Président-Directeur Général
BAALBECK STUDIOS, s.a.l.

Sin El Fil

Cher Monsieur Jannoun,

Par la présente lettre nous vous confirmons l'annulation de la saison 1975 du Festival International de Baalbek due aux circonstances et vous prions donc de considérer, comme nous en avons convenu avec vous, que le contrat de sonorisation (daté du 14 Juin 1975) relatif à cette saison est nul et non avenu.

Nous vous prions de bien vouloir nous signer copie de cette lettre et vous adressons, Cher Monsieur Jannoun, nos salutations les meilleures.

umam

La Présidente

May Arida

May Arida

Documentation & Research

WG/SB

Figure 55 Letter from May Arida to Studio Baalbeck About the Festival Cancellation, 1975. The letterhead bears the official logo instituted in 1969.

Source: UMAM Documentation and Research.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

*



Figure 56: The Traveling Shrine: Traces of the Lebanese Nights

(Image concept and co-design by Akram Rayess).

Our present is characterized by the gradual and often violent collapse of the dreams of previous political generations: old promises and ideals, whether associated with national sovereignty, socialism or for that matter development, “do not name visionary horizons of new beginnings” but, on the contrary, refer now to “forms of existing social and political reality whose normative limits we now live as the tangible ruins of our present” (David Scott)⁴²⁷.

What gives works of art their greatness is that they reveal what ideology is trying to conceal (Theodore Adorno)⁴²⁸.

*The image, the imagined, the imaginary – these are all terms that direct us to something critical and new in global cultural processes: the imagination as a social practice. No longer mere fantasy (opium for the masses whose real work is somewhere else), no longer simple escape (from a world defined principally by more concrete purposes and structures), no longer elite pastime (thus not relevant to the lives of ordinary people), and no longer mere contemplation (irrelevant for new forms of desire and subjectivity), the imagination has become an organized field of social practices, a form of work (in the sense of both labor and culturally organized practice), and a form of negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility. This unleashing of the imagination links the play of pastiche (in some settings) to the terror and coercion of states and their competitors. The imagination is now central to all forms of agency, is itself a social fact, and is the key component of the new global order (Arjun Appadurai, *Disjuncture and Difference*)⁴²⁹.*

This chapter begins with a collage. An ambiance of a holiday season postcard springs from its upper section of stars with the colorful logo of the Baalbeck International Festival and colorful shade of the temple of Jupiter. As it cascades down, we see a joyous array of green and yellow colors. They are the festive folklore dancers and the ecstatic audiences of citizens, visiting immigrants and tourists who recaptured in these performances a sense of communal values. The mood of the collage starts to change as we navigate further to its lower end. It is not anymore that holiday feeling as

⁴²⁷ Frangie, Samer. “Post-Development, Developmental State and Genealogy: Condemned to Develop?” *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 32, no.7, 2011.

⁴²⁸ Quoted from:

ماهر جرار، الرواية اللبنانية والحرب وعلم الاجتماع، مجلة الابحاث، عدد 52-53، الجامعة الاميركية في بيروت، 2004-2005

⁴²⁹ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

we dig into the infrastructures of memory and material pasts. A closer look to these images bring back images of famine, violence and destruction. Layers of bygone times we seemingly think that they have ended or are lost in the ruins of history. Across these present pasts, the collage embodies narratives. Narratives in their turn are weaved by agents and institutions. They are intertwined with practices and shape each other like church bells and their soundscape while constituting a microcosmic representation of prewar Lebanon. As we are approaching the finale of our research, the collage is an invitation to sum up the previous chapters and bring their findings together into one scene. The green colored dancers represent the agencies of the artists and their collaborators and the red colored temple the agency of the Baalbeck International Festival, its subcommittees and their network of governmental agencies whereas the audience in yellows is reflection of the citizens of the emerging state.

A. The Artists and Intellectuals of the Lebanese Nights: Policies of Imagination

The discourses of the artists reflect affinities to political ideologies. Zaki Nassif affirms the close association of his works to the writings of Antoun Saadeh. The Rahbani Brothers assume a more eclectic stance that satisfies the dominant state ideology and Lebanism while integrating elements from Arab Nationalism, Syrianism and Leftist ideologies. Walid Gholmieh proposed a more philosophical and epistemological lens to approach folklore. While all three nationalist ideologies tend to claim different tones of progressive futures of communal progress, class consciousness and other leftist preoccupations become increasingly among the elements of the works of the Rahbani Brothers. They share constructions of folklore to amplify the revival of a glorious past, a temporality that may extend to different ancient times while excluding

an Ottoman legacy which was among other events the historical framework of the Nahda. For Lebanism, it is an outreach to a Phoenician imagery while Syrianism endorses mythological legacies of the Syrian Crescent. Portrayal of rural life in the Lebanese Nights transits from descriptive documentation of happy peasantry into a critical outlook of revolt and resistance particularly in the late works of the Rahbani Brothers, *Jibal Assawan* (1969) and *The Guardian of Keys* (1972). It is a turning point that is missed in the musical play “The Citadel” (1968) written by the poet Maurice Awwad based on Aline Lahhoud’s script with music by Walid Gholmieh. According to the Palestinian writer Ghassan Kanafi, the play falls into unconvincing stunts of chauvinistic exhibitionism⁴³⁰. Likewise, the earlier repertoire of the Lebanese Nights propose reconciliations and dominantly festive moods that astray from bringing onto the stage the “tragedies of peasantry without excessive optimism”⁴³¹ as denoted by journalist Rafic Khoury to evoke critical public awareness while at the same time offering an overwhelming sense of beauty. At another level, the repertoire, particularly in the works of the Rahbani Brothers and Fairuz, present women as custodians of nation building. These noble aspirations of women protagonists are consistent with research findings about their role across different cultures as intergenerational “keepers of (traditional) technical and environmental knowledge”⁴³². However, they remain quite disconnected from the realities of the legal and socioeconomic status of women citizens governed in Lebanon by religious personal status law systems. This gap is amplified in rural communities.

⁴³⁰ غسان كنفاني (فارس فارس)، ملحق جريدة الانوار، 1968/8/11. نشر في مجلة الاداب، العدد 7-8، السنة 40، 1992

⁴³¹ Al-Ahad, 20.8.1961.

⁴³² Elizabeth Edna Wangui, *Development interventions, changing livelihoods, and the making of female Maasai pastoralists, Agricultural Human Values, Volume 25, 2008.*

It will be of benefit in a separate research to hold a comparison between folklore constructions of the Lebanese Nights with the Tammuzi poet's critical approach to mythology. They relate Tammuz, the god of fertility and other ancient gods to the modern Arab world to "recruit its failing energies and even raise it from the dead"⁴³³. Musically, the composers of the Lebanese Nights employed folklore as an ingredient of a new local modernism with innovations in the dance choreographies and the dabke compositions made by Zaki Nassif alongside other innovations by the Rahbani Brothers in the emergence of the operetta⁴³⁴. This approach was under the scrutiny of music scholars from Lebanon and abroad. Selim El-Helou (Lebanon), Mahmoud Quttat (Tunisia) and Simon Jargy (France) poised concerns of dominant westernization that would eventually become a source of threat to the musical practices pertaining to the sustainability of local and regional traditional legacies⁴³⁵. A comparable westernized approach was endorsed among prominent Armenian folklorists. Komitas (1869-1935) standardized folk tunes according to the Western music system unlike other conservative folklorists maintaining traditional systems. His approach is currently highly esteemed in Armenian academic circles for "unifying Armenian music with Western European musical culture"⁴³⁶.

⁴³³ Sir James George Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (New York, 1963), p. 377. Frazer is quoted in: Nazeer Al Azma, *The Tammūzī Movement and the Influence of T. S. Eliot on Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 88, No. 4, 1968.

⁴³⁴ Walid Gholmieh during the war joined the circle of Lebanese composers like Toufic Sukkar, Toufic el-Bacha, George Baz and others. He focused his efforts on European classical music idioms based on local musical, literary and historic themes.

⁴³⁵ Simon Jargy, *La musique arabe*, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1977.

1987 محمود قطاط، دراسات في الموسيقى العربية، سوريا: دار الحوار للنشر والتوزيع،

⁴³⁶ Brigitta Davidjants, *Identity Construction in Armenian Music on the Example of Early Folklore Movement*, *Folklore (Estonia)*, Vol 62, December 2015.

B. The Baalbeck International Festival’s Folklore Subcommittee: Policies of Passion

The Folklore Subcommittee provided an infrastructure to a vibrant modern folklore revival and incentives to artists to further explore and engage directly or independently in this new project. The members of the sub-committee were driven by a sense of a missionary commitment to bring this revival into light. Similar to the *Girl from Baalbeck* played by Fairuz, they weaved the threads of a story of an awakening amongst the people and carried a Lebanese mission the world. As such they resembled a “shrine”⁴³⁷ of cultural diplomacy and nation building. It is a traveling shrine encompassing an encounter of East and West⁴³⁸ that evolved as the works of identity building of a “great nation”⁴³⁹ were taking shape between the ruins of the past and present modernity⁴⁴⁰. It is not only an “image of Lebanon”⁴⁴¹ that had become firmly “anchored in Lebanese life and in the Near East”⁴⁴² but an agency that has sustained for 18 years in a troubled world “torn by struggles and rocked by dissent”⁴⁴³. Furthermore, the “shrine” carries the hope to travel through time and survive as creative interaction between the intangible heritage-to-be of the Lebanese Nights performances and the tangible heritage of the Roman citadel in the “hearts and minds of people that it is rising”⁴⁴⁴.

The internal records of the Folklore Subcommittee reflected a learning approach that improved its performance year after year. Its pioneering work in the region has set

⁴³⁷ Salwa Es-Said, *Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue*, 1970.

⁴³⁸ Salwa Es-Said, *Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue*, 1972.

⁴³⁹ Aimee Kettaneh, *Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue*, 1968.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴¹ May Arida, *Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue*, 1972.

⁴⁴² Aimee Kettaneh, *Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue*, 1959.

⁴⁴³ Salwa Es-Said, *Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue*, 1970.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

standards based on practice. Practice brought the vision of President Chamoun into light and fed in turn national and regional cultural agenda setting and paving the foundations of a cultural policy to be endorsed within related institutions in the country. The offerings of the whole festival may differ in expression but converge in essence whether in a “Roman Temple, a classical symphony or theater”⁴⁴⁵. The sub-committee’s approach like those of its counterparts in the Baalbeck International Festival in varying extents functioned as vehicles for knowledge transfer and the flow of ideas and practices amongst each other and with other countries as they regularly invited representatives from international festivals, professionals and critics to provide their expertise. In this sense, it is worth exploring the practices of the folklore subcommittee in comparison to the Arab Theater subcommittee as both were preoccupied with local culture. A quick impression reveals the resiliency of the latter in assimilating local responses voiced to earlier Lebanese Nights. The Arab Theater performances travelled throughout Lebanon’s historic sites as in Byblos, Tripoli and Deir El-Qamar and across rural areas while reaching out to Arab audiences in Morocco, Cairo, Damascus, Amman and Baghdad⁴⁴⁶. Moreover, the Arab Theater subcommittee established its own theater in Beirut allowing performance to run throughout the year while building local alliances from the public and private sectors. Taking this comparison to another level, benchmarking practices with other festivals emerging since the 1960s in the region and throughout Arab countries may offer additional insights on cultural and heritage policies. It is important to note the changing regulatory and administrative environment of festivals and the increasing complexity of regional and international policy frameworks as well as the legal requirements of the creative industries since the abrupt

⁴⁴⁵ Salwa Es-Said, Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1971.

⁴⁴⁶ Baalbeck International Festival catalogue, 1967.

ending of the Baalbeck International Festival in 1975. Last but not least, the Folklore and other subcommittees of the festival are a testimony for the vibrant role of women curators and entrepreneurs beyond class labels and dominant educational systems of the time. The ladies of the committees do still set an inspiring model to current cultural practitioners and newer generations of passionate, engaged and proactive leaders that sought new frontiers and attaining international standards while reaching out to a local belonging constituting of a cultural mosaic of ancient and postcolonial legacies in a politically unstable region.

C. The State: Policies of Inbetweenness and Compromise

The life span of the prewar Baalbeck International Festival extended through the mandates of four presidents: Camille Chamoun (1952-1958), Fouad Chehab (1958-1964), Charles Helou (1964-1970) and Suleiman Frangieh (1970-1976). This is period that witnessed Lebanon's prosperity as well as initiatives of public sector reform and a series of social changes and upheavals. Since its formal inception, the association of the Baalbeck International Festival maintained its distinctive standing of combining a unique link with the Presidency of the Republic as an honorary president of the association while maintaining significant independence from bureaucratic hierarchy and political competition. The festival institution was affiliated with the General Directorate of Tourism (superseded by the National Council for the Development of Tourism and Ministry of Tourism). It also worked closely with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Education, the Directorate of Antiquities, the Middle East Airlines and the Ministry of External Affairs. The scope of collaboration includes finances, logistics, security, publicity, management of the citadel

site and advocacy in Arab, European and American countries. Contributions of the state were both financial and in kind. No other prewar festival had attained a similar standing.

The role of the state had a dual function. On one hand, it provided the Baalbeck International Festival the “space to develop themselves in a way that they can create culture”⁴⁴⁷ in the absence of a Ministry of Culture. This is a method of implicit cultural policy as proposed by Nadia Von Maltzahn based on the works of Jeremy Aheame and Jim McGuigan. Cultural policies are implicit when they “prescribe or shape cultural attitudes and habits over given territories with an effective impact on the nation’s culture as a whole”⁴⁴⁸ rather than through specific governmental actions through official administrations as in explicit cultural policies. It may also be viewed within the wider context of the strategies and policies of state institution building and their role in providing the private sector an analogous enabling space to steer an open, laissez-faire, service-based economy particularly in the early years after independence⁴⁴⁹. Khalida Said observes that President Chehab was inclined to establish autonomous institutions for the custody and provision of vital services as a method to bypass further heavy bureaucracy and sectarian competition which echoes to some extent the status of the

⁴⁴⁷ Nadia Von Maltzahn, “What Cultural Policies?” *Explicit and Implicit Cultural Policies in Lebanon*, Focus, No. 7, 2017.

⁴⁴⁸ Von Maltzahn presents cultural policies as the intersection or collision of values and action through struggles and power relations of multiple actors from the state, the market and civil society in the production and circulation of symbolic meaning.

Jeremy Aheame, *Cultural Policy Explicit and Implicit: A Distinction and Some Uses*, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol 15, No.2, 2009; quoted from: Nadia Von Maltzahn, “What Cultural Policies?” *Explicit and Implicit Cultural Policies in Lebanon*, Focus, No. 7, 2017.

⁴⁴⁹ Ziad Abu-Rish, *Then and Now: Lebanese State Institutions during the Early Years of Independence*, The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, 12.5.2015 (<http://www.lcps-lebanon.org/agendaArticle.php?id=49> accessed on 1.2.2021).

Abu-Rish finds that during early independence period “specific state policies that made possible many of the economic dynamics that observers consider to be features of market- or private sector-led development”. They included interventions in developing a national road infrastructure, airport, ports and public finance.

festival institution. Among these institutions were: the Directorate of Social Welfare, the National Council for the Development of Tourism, the Litani River Authority and Electricité du Liban⁴⁵⁰. In our case, the prewar Baalbeck International Festival benefited from financial and in kind state support in addition to the governance space for discursive creative and curatorial action. The latter are managed by implicit cultural policies which in turn steer explicit censorship laws and practices influenced by religious groups, class struggles and dominant political agenda and interests. Taboos of religious sects, war politics and sex are powerful boundaries that restrict freedom of expression in favor of protecting the so-called civic order⁴⁵¹. The case of the play “The Last Days of Fakhreddine” is one example.

The second role of the state was channeled through the President of the Republic. The 18 Presidential statements published in the official festival catalogues constituted a hegemonic enframing of the festival’s discursive space and practices. The Presidential statements highlight how the Baalbeck International Festival is an embodiment of the mission of Lebanon, the values of this mission and the recognition of role of the Committee of the festival. The emergence of the Baalbeck International Festival is an actualization of the immortal mission of Lebanon⁴⁵² in the development of culture⁴⁵³ and in the following years as a hub of tourism⁴⁵⁴. It is a testimony of Lebanon’s role on all levels as an encounter between East and West⁴⁵⁵, in Arab Renaissance⁴⁵⁶, and in

⁴⁵⁰ خالدة سعيد، الحركة المسرحية في لبنان 1960-1975: تجارب وأبعاد، بيروت: لجنة المسرح العربي في مهرجانات بعلبك الدولية، 1998 .

⁴⁵¹ Freemuse/PEN International, Universal Periodic Review (UPR) submission: Lebanon, 23.3.2015.

⁴⁵² Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1956

⁴⁵³ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1955

⁴⁵⁴ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogues, 1957;1964; 1965

⁴⁵⁵ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1964

⁴⁵⁶ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1959

reaching out to others⁴⁵⁷ to be the world's blossoming spring⁴⁵⁸ and in bringing forth better relations among nations, tolerance among different beliefs and peace instead of conflict⁴⁵⁹. It is a passage to beauty⁴⁶⁰ and a faithfulness to ancestral values⁴⁶¹ of an exceptional past⁴⁶² with an openness towards the present and an awakening call of confidence, faith, hope⁴⁶³ and unity in truth⁴⁶⁴ for future generations⁴⁶⁵ and for the future of the nation⁴⁶⁶. One of the meanings of the festival is a synergy of the material and the spiritual⁴⁶⁷ realms realized through injecting life in the temple⁴⁶⁸ and the continual rebirth⁴⁶⁹, resurrection⁴⁷⁰ and reconstruction⁴⁷¹ of life to bestow a new character to these sites. Accordingly, the Presidents of the Republic recognize and endorse the persistent efforts of the festival's committee⁴⁷² not only as a model institution of an elite group⁴⁷³ but also as a voluntary missionary service of elegance, will and energy⁴⁷⁴ against obstacles, disappointments and loss⁴⁷⁵. The continuity of the festival is a miracle of imagination and reality⁴⁷⁶, a witness⁴⁷⁷ of the renewal of the

⁴⁵⁷ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1965

⁴⁵⁸ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1968

⁴⁵⁹ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1957

⁴⁶⁰ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1966

⁴⁶¹ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1974

⁴⁶² Baalbeck International Festival Catalogues, 1960; 1967; 1971;1972.

⁴⁶³ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1966

⁴⁶⁴ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1970

⁴⁶⁵ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1968

⁴⁶⁶ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1970

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1972

⁴⁶⁹ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1970

⁴⁷⁰ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1965

⁴⁷¹ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1966

⁴⁷² Baalbeck International Festival Catalogues, 1970;1972;1973

⁴⁷³ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1966

⁴⁷⁴ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1970

⁴⁷⁵ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1966

⁴⁷⁶ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1968

⁴⁷⁷ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1970

mission⁴⁷⁸, continuity of life and the values of dignity and freedom which are also the basis of existence and nation⁴⁷⁹.

The preceding thematic synthesis aims to provide a concise overview of the presidential discourse while keeping in mind variances in points of emphasis or ambiance among the four presidents. They reflect a consistent link between the arts, culture, tourism, social goals and the uniqueness of the “Lebanese mission” in Lebanon, the region and the world. It is an anthropocentric and capitalist outlook that excludes nature and non-Lebanese constituents while reaching out to the Mahjar and the world. Although reference is repeatedly made to the past, it conveys a selective endorsement of this past, particularly the era of the Ottoman rule. Moreover, it is a discourse that gives preference to cultural diplomacy over development. The presidential statements distance itself from the discontented voices of local development, increasing rural abandonment and peasant uprisings.

Since the second Lebanese Nights the government was addressed publicly to recognize pressing needs of communities in remote areas across Lebanon. An address calls the Minister of Health to visit Jabal ‘Amel in Southern Lebanon, Akkar in the North and villages in the Bekaa’ to witness the dramatic poverty prevailing in these areas beyond the priority given to tourist destinations in the mountains, ski resorts and the casino⁴⁸⁰. Tourism eventually pushed these destinations into further urbanization; thus becoming extensions of Beirut instead of reinforcing rural life and empowering villagers to lead a sustainable livelihood. Another memo submitted by Shafik Murtada, a member of the Parliament representing Hermel and Baalbeck proposes 22

⁴⁷⁸ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1968

⁴⁷⁹ Baalbeck International Festival Catalogue, 1973

⁴⁸⁰ Sawt Al-‘ourouba, 12.6.1959.

development projects in agriculture, power, water and roads infrastructure, education and health services. This memo is published in newspapers to push for more attention in the official agenda⁴⁸¹. The claims for development continue to circulate. Similar news appear in subsequent years about governmental neglect that is leaving the city of Baalbeck with a closed hospital and non-functional vocational school⁴⁸². Opponent discourses find that Lebanon's national cause is not folklore revival. It is rather the tragedies of deprivation, civil disobedience and hunger subsisting around the lavish folklore enchantments at the Baalbeck citadel⁴⁸³.

The widening gap between official and opponent discourses challenged the claims of social cohesion of the folklore project of the Baalbeck International Festival. It signaled the inability of the state to provide the minimal infrastructure needed to sustain the legitimacy of its suprastructures of revival and prosperity and their attached hegemonic discourses of a secular national identity following Gramsci's theory. A functioning state becomes a "necessary precondition for identity-building because it allows for the development of a civic identity that can incorporate group identities and create a shared sense of community"⁴⁸⁴. This in turn threatens nation-building and promotes fragmentation and conflict that may escalate into violence against state institutions⁴⁸⁵. The haunting realities of rural community development within prewar

⁴⁸¹ Assiyasa, 21.5.1960.

⁴⁸² Shams, 31.3.1969.

⁴⁸³ Al-Kifah Al-Arabi, 6.9.1969.

⁴⁸⁴ Andrea Kathryn Talentino, *The Two Faces of Nation-Building: Developing Function and Identity*, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Volume 17, Number 3, October 2004.

⁴⁸⁵ State-building refers to "interventionist strategies to restore and rebuild the institutions and apparatus of the state, for example the bureaucracy" implemented by external actors. Nation-building refers to the "creation of a cultural identity that relates to the particular territory of the state". Most theorists agree that a "well-functioning state is a requirement of the development of a nation, and therefore most would also agree that state-building is a necessary component of nation-building". Source: Zoe Scott, *Literature Review on State-Building, Governance and Social Development Resource Centre Framework*, DIFD, University of Birmingham: International Development Department, May 2007.

nation and state building policies were also in contradiction with the promises of the discourses of the Baalbeck folklore project.

Ziad Abu-Rish observes that not all rural areas were equally neglected just as it was selective within Beirut⁴⁸⁶. The Beqaa, Akkar and Jabal ‘Amel represent three different forms of rural development. The scope of interventions include varying extents and systems of land registry, irrigation, electrification, road infrastructure, health and educational services as well as military recruitment. Abu-Rish highlights the centrality of municipalities and the emerging network of power relations with mukhtar, muhafiz, nationally elected officers and ministries during early independence. This is a resultant of regulatory reform pertains to the role of municipalities and access to funds. An example was offered in the paper about new municipal laws set by the Chehab administration. The laws empowered municipal agents to implement local festivals in villages throughout the nation that function as vehicles for projecting a sense of openness and justice. However, these events and other national initiatives did not ease peasant protest during the mandate of President Charles Helou. Continuing marginalization of rural Lebanon resulted in increasing levels of migration to the cities in Lebanon and to other countries at the verge of the civil war in light of the contradictions between elite discourses of even sectarian representation and unbalanced local development.

It is ironic that the country’s Bedouin community resides mostly in the Beqaa Valley surrounding immediately the festival site. They experienced successive waves of

⁴⁸⁶ Ziad Abu-Rish, Then and Now: Lebanese State Institutions during the Early Years of Independence, The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, 12.5.2015 (<http://www.lcps-lebanon.org/agendaArticle.php?id=49> accessed on 1.2.2021).

For unbalanced developed within Beirut please check: Mona Fawaz, Notes on Beirut’s Historiography: Towards a People’s History of the City, in Des Banlieues À La Ville, Élisabeth Longuenesse and Caecilia Pieri (editors), Beirut: IFPO, 2013.

fragmentation due to shifting geo-political borders, changes in land tenure systems, development of new infrastructure and expansion of industrial agriculture. As a result, Bedouin tribes became further confined within shrinking grazing landscapes in the Beqaa, thus alienating them from their indigenous spatiality and temporality⁴⁸⁷, disrupting their traditional practice of seasonal migrations back and forth into Syria and restricting both their livelihood options and access to natural resources. Although the Lebanese government granted registered Bedouins full citizenship in 1958, a significant majority did not still have full citizenship unlike other countries in the region⁴⁸⁸. The combined effects of fragmentation and lack of state recognition while having to deal with the challenges of socioeconomic rivalry with the already marginalized peasants made Lebanon's pastoral community locked in a cage and more vulnerable to extreme poverty and food insecurity with no access to basic education, health services and employment in the public sector⁴⁸⁹. They became also more prone to violence.

⁴⁸⁷ Dawn Chatty, *From Camel to Truck: The Bedouin in the Modern World* (Revised second edition), Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 2013.

⁴⁸⁸ Suzanne E. Joseph, *Fertile Bonds: Bedouin Class, Kinship and Gender in the Bekaa Valley*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013.

⁴⁸⁹ Dawn Chatty, Nisrine Mansour and Nasser Yassin, *Bedouin in Lebanon: Social Discrimination, Political Exclusion and Compromised Health Care*, *Social Science & Medicine*, Volume 82, 2013.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUDING REMARKS

4.8 *Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, Come with me from Lebanon.*

4.15 *You are a garden fountain; Water so fresh never came; Flowing down from Lebanon*⁴⁹⁰.
(*The Song of Songs*)⁴⁹¹

*Still are the courtyard, the brinks and the lanes / And things are still as I remember them / As if no years had passed nor wars / They did not change things / It is people who had changed*⁴⁹².
(*Rahbani Brothers, The Bridge of the Moon, 1962*)

*“This is a country, no it’s not a country, this is a bunch of people put together: consolidated? Subtracted? Multiplied? They are divided”*⁴⁹³ (*Ziad Rahbani, 1980*).

Since our childhood, classical Arabic language had been the dominant yet ambiguous carrier of higher values and truths. It is the language of the powerful elite, whereas colloquial languages are those of children, women, the poor and the general public. Thus, the classical Arab language embodies a deep psychological dissociation and social conflict. They are reflected at both levels of self-awareness and social class through forms of ideological and material control mechanisms. The first is manifested in concepts, expressions, values, terminologies and methods, while the latter functions by means of repression and physical violence. If social change assumes an intellectual change (change of perception) as one of its central preconditions, in its turn every intellectual, scientific, literary and artistic change requires a transformation in the ideological mechanisms of dominant linguistic forms. That is why our social structures has remained the same for the last 100 years with changes that are only artificial and transient. As such, we can no longer approach heritage and future through vague metaphysical discourses of ancient pasts and prophecies of unknown future, but rather focus our efforts on our lived historical reality, starting with this rotten, unpleasant present moment (*Hisham Sharabi*)⁴⁹⁴.

⁴⁹⁰ The original text in Arabic is:

هلمي معي من لبنان يا عروس / معي من لبنان
ينبوع جناتٍ وبئر ماء حية / وأنهار من لبنان
(نشيد الاناشيد، وزعه وترجمه أنسي الحاج، اصدار دار النهار)

⁴⁹¹ Mahmoud Chreih argues in his book entitled “The Song of Songs and its relation to Palestinian Wedding Lyrics in Ancient Syria” that the character of the male lover in the plot of the poem is Tammuz.

⁴⁹² The original text in Arabic is:

بعدا الساحة والحفافي والدروب / وكل شي بعدو مثل ما بنكرو / كنو لا مرقت لا سنين و لا حروب / ما تغيروا الاشيا الناس تغيرو

⁴⁹³ The original text in Arabic is:

هاي بلد، لأ مش بلد/ هاي قرطة عالم مجموعين / مجموعين ... لأ / مطروحين ... لأ / مضروبين ... لأ / مقسومين (زياد الرحباني، قوم فوت نام).

⁴⁹⁴ Translated selection from Arabic, pages 20, 22 and 30. Source:

. هشام شرابي، النقد الحضاري للمجتمع العربي في نهاية القرن العشرين، بيروت: مركز دراسات الوحدة العربية، 1990.

A. Folklore and Locally Relevant Policy Research

This policy research project is the product of an aspiration of local engagement and relevance. For this purpose, discursive institutionalism served as the building block for a contextualized interdisciplinarity. As a study of folklore, it carried concerns of making inclusive propositions that negotiate elitist folklore appropriations. It also provided inquiries into nation building, modernity, development, cultural diplomacy and social change. A ‘long-view’ of folklore required discovering possible genealogies and starting points. Changing economic and educational systems since the Tanzimat period provided anchors to trace evolving scales of an awareness of loss that triggered interest in the lore of “olden times”. They were manifested by local and international actors through nationalisms and enframed representations which were the building blocks of the folklore project of the Baalbeck International Festival contrary to selective historical ruptures claimed by artists, intellectuals and other agents of nation building. Instead, folklore is a terrain of multiple contingent and discursive constructions colored by the interplay of hegemonic systems of values, interests and thoughts. The terrain defines the shifting boundaries of a dynamic arena of inclusion and exclusion in a country that was subject to successive historic internal and external migrations and is the homeland of a multitude of religious and ethnic groups. In doing so, it is comparable to the trajectory of pendulum swinging between dynamic conceptions of East and West; past and future; imagination and ideology; rural and urban; center(s) and urban/rural/pastoral peripheries; collective refuge and Lebanese exceptionalism; citizens and the mahjar; citizens and the ‘others’; the material and the spiritual ethos; compliance and revolt.

The folklore project is as such a trajectory of euphoria of a national and secular “paradise found” that was soon sunk in a labyrinth of consumption, paving the way to a

Lebanese crisis of folklore that preceded the civil war. It is also the path of the “traveling shrine” of the legacy of the Lebanese Nights through ongoing conceptual imports of nationalisms and intangible heritage from Euro-America, contesting ideological lenses of Lebanism, Arabism and Syrianism and across physical and discursive intergenerational ruins, scattered written, visual and audio archives and oral histories. At another level, it is a trajectory of the agencies of the state, the festival committee and the artists. For the state, “the traveling shrine” is a tragic “carnival of exclusion” of pastoral and rural communities among other socially vulnerable groups as a national core of development while peasantry is evoked as a muse of national identity, and for the committee it is a body of practices marked with passion, learning and persistence as much as it was tainted with accusations of lack of folklore expertise, extravagance and monopoly, while for artists and intellectuals it is a project of disruptive modernity and an enabler of an acclaimed though an incomplete professionalization of the arts. The following diagram is a simplified summary of the trajectory of the folklore project while recognizing that the relationship between four identified milestones may be temporally overlapping and is not necessarily linear.

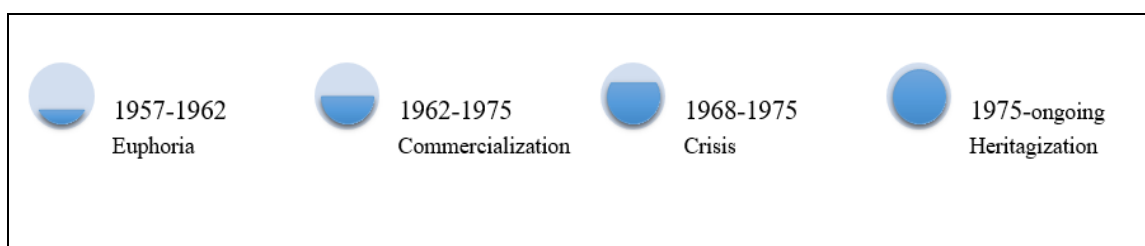


Figure 57: The Trajectory of the Folklore Project

B. Theaters of Intergenerational Ruins

The civil war that marked the collapse of the state triggered also a larger scale societal collapse. It brought forward long-term demographic, socioeconomic and ideological changes. Stephan Lubkemann argues that war is a transformative social and cultural condition. It is not simply as an armed political struggle producing hegemonic and reductionist discursive constructions of refugees, victims and warriors⁴⁹⁵. As such, the civil war in conjunction with other multidimensional social struggles destroyed not only the country's economic and political infrastructure, but it also evaded the fading ideological suprastructure and offered an upward mobility of a new elite network. The novelist Elias Khoury finds that the war condition amplified the contradiction among elements of opponent ideologies in the eclectic the musical plays of the Rahbani Brothers⁴⁹⁶. The compromise between Lebanism and social criticism became less compatible. Divergent critical discourses with a new vocabulary emerged in the radio works and plays of Ziad Rahbani among other play writers and the writings of an aspiring group of novelists prevailed as the state collapsed.

The illusion of postwar reconstruction soon transformed into a trajectory of decay and dependency. It is also rooted in the history of the social processes evolving during the war and the preceding period. The bridge connecting East and West turned into a battlefield; the laboratory of ideas is now a desert dump; and the house with many mansions⁴⁹⁷ shrunk into a congested room⁴⁹⁸ of decadence and amnesia that pumps

⁴⁹⁵ Stephen Lubkemann, *Culture in Chaos: An Anthropology of the Social Condition in War*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.

⁴⁹⁶ 22.1.2006، ملحق النهار، الرواية والروائي والحرب، ملحق النهار،

⁴⁹⁷ The title of a book by historian Kamal Salibi about Lebanon.

⁴⁹⁸ سامر فرنجية، عندما تعب المجتمع وضافت المسافات، جريدة الحياة، 9 تموز 2017.

chaos into a thriving world order⁴⁹⁹. The history of the nation is metaphorically represented by that of a hospital that became a “centre of demonstration, experiment, and training for work in mental diseases in the Middle East”⁵⁰⁰. Children and grandchildren of “citizens” emigrating from rural Lebanon have been to a large extent alienated from the values of village life and the ethos of peasantry. Likewise for Bedouins, indigenous ecological knowledge remains highly threatened since they have brutally detached from their livelihood practices, landscapes and ecosystems and challenged by “rapid socio-economic and environmental changes”⁵⁰¹. Both Bedouins and immigrating rural community members are no longer able to sustain the role of folklore knowledge holders while trapped within neo-patrimonial and sectarian reproductive constellations of corruption, censorship and consumption marking the demise of middle classes. Consequently, the traces of rural life that constituted a central element of Lebanon’s prewar national identity exist more in the festivalized folklore constructions of Baalbeck’s folklore project rather than in reality. Many of these representations composed by Zaki Nassif, the Rahbani Brothers, Walid Gholmieh, Wadih Assafi and other musicians and poets have gradually transformed into a utopic realm of nostalgia for Lebanese expatriates and landmarks of a wounded memory and changing communal identities and citizenships for those who survived the violent divisions of the civil war and lived its subsequent fragile reconstruction.

The vibrant attractiveness of a good part of the repertoire of the Lebanese Nights stems from within its creative attributes. A test of time is the power to transcend the

⁴⁹⁹ جورج قرم، الأعمار والمصلحة العامة: في اقتصاد ما بعد الحرب وسياسته، بيروت: مؤسسة الأبحاث المدنية، 1996.
جورج قرم، الفوضى الاقتصادية العالمية الجديدة: جذور اخفاق التنمية، ترجمة خليل احمد خليل، بيروت: دار الطليعة، 1994.

⁵⁰⁰ Albert Hourani, Lebanon Hospital for Mental Diseases, British Medical Journal, 9.7.1949.

⁵⁰¹ Piers Blaikie et al, Knowledge in Action: Local Knowledge as a Development Resource and Barriers to its Incorporation in Natural Resource Research and Development, Agricultural Systems, Volume 55, No. 2, 1997.

ideologies dominant at the period of production and uphold potential promises to alternative futures⁵⁰² of current regional political crises and national socio-economic and ecological self-destruction. It is an invitation to perceive these works produced between 1957 and 1974 within a reflexive and inclusive epistemic genealogy of folklore in the region, in post-colonial countries and other parts of the world. In parallel, this legacy calls for further retrospective reconstruction of multiple representations of memory in negotiating the nation's past and its geo-cultural present. It offers changing intergenerational manifestations of previously "festivalized folklore" in Lebanon and future alternatives. They are shaped by the struggles and activism of folk-citizens and communities that remain as well as by shifting power relations and underlying ideological and material control mechanisms locally, regionally and transnationally in an increasingly interconnected world order. This interplay will determine practices by the Baalbeck International Festival and other individual and institutional agencies, define political and social boundaries for emerging discourses, and provide an enabling environment for creative freedom of expression of a communal ethos and its tolerant variations. It is also an interplay between intangible and tangible ruins and spectacles of demolition to come. Such representations may evolve through a diversity of polyphonic soundscapes, aesthetic configurations, performance spheres, digital webs, cultural forms, institutions and regulatory frameworks.

C. Future Research

The study was conducted in exceptionally challenging national and individual circumstances that left a major impact on its scope and access to resources. Several


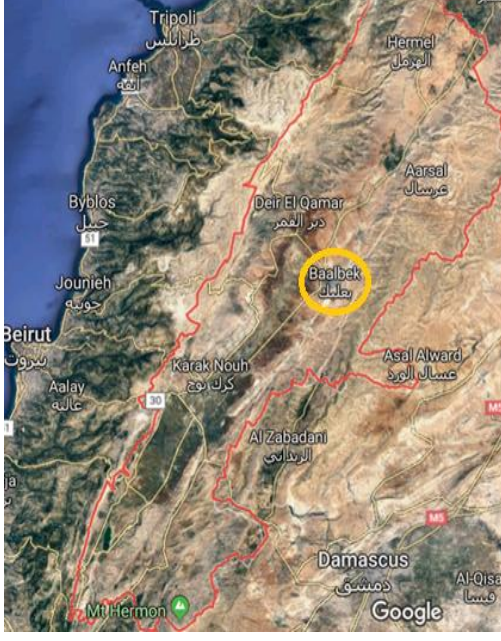
⁵⁰² Andreas Huyssen, *Nostalgia for Ruins*, Grey Room, MIT Press, No. 23, 2006.

amendments in research methods were introduced as an adaptive response to lockdowns and restrictions pertaining to political and economic collapse. Access to archives was hampered either by lockdown or short working hours. It is also quite surreal how they swept off planned centennial celebrations of the establishment of the Republic of Lebanon. Instead, they became themselves the spectacles. These circumstances reminded me at some instances of the war situation prevailing 25 years when I was an undergraduate student at the American University of Beirut. Beyond these limitations, transnational cultural elite networks as well as comparative nation building⁵⁰³ and folklore studies particularly from the Global South await further exploration and research. Likewise, the examination of endangered heritages and assemblages of natural and cultural heritage provide insight into hidden narratives by diverse social agents in terms age, gender, profession and extent of marginalization. Additionally, they invite multidisciplinary contributions into human-nature interactions pertaining to biodiversity conservation, the preservation of natural and cultural landscapes and their role in national development agendas.

⁵⁰³ John Hutchinson, Cultural Nationalism, Elite Mobility and Nation-Building: Communitarian Politics in: *Modern Ireland*, *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Dec., 1987.
Stojan Slaveski and Biljana Popovska, Culture as a resource in nation-building: the case of Macedonia. *European Quarterly of Political Attitudes and Mentalities*, Vol. 5, No. 2, 2016.
Williams A. Ahmed-Gamgum, Nigeria at 100 Years: The Process and Challenges of Nation Building, *Public Policy and Administration Research*, Vol.4, No.8, 2014.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Maps of the Beqaa Region and the Governorate and City of Baalbeck

 <p>LEBANON</p>	
<p>Political map of Lebanon. Source: Vectorstock.com/23930419</p>	<p>The borders of the Beqaa region are colored in red. Baalbeck as shown in a yellow circle. Source: Google Maps, 15.12.2020.</p>

Appendix 2: Repertoire of the Lebanese Nights⁵⁰⁴

Year	Title	Form	Authors	Director	Performers
1957	Coutumes et Traditions	2- Act Varieties	Zaki Nassif Rahbani Brothers Toufic el-Bacha	Sabri Sherif	Fairuz and a group of dancers and singers
1959	Le Mariage Au Village	2-Act Varieties	Zaki Nassif Rahbani Brothers Toufic el-Bacha Philemon Wehbe	Sabri Sherif	Fairuz Wadih Assafi
1960	Season of Glory	2 -Act Play	Rahbani Brothers Philemon Wehbe	Sabri Sherif	Sabah Wadih Assafi Nasri Chamseddine Lebanese Popular Troupe
1961	Baalbakiya	2- Act Thematic Varieties	Rahbani Brothers Philemon Wehbe	Sabri Sherif	Fairuz Nasri Chamseddine Lebanese Popular Troupe
1962	Le Pont de La Lune	2-Act Play	Rahbani Brothers Philemon Wehbe	Sabri Sherif	Fairuz Nasri Chamseddine Lebanese Popular Troupe
1963	La Cascade	2-Act Play	Walid Gholmieh Zaki Nassif Aline Lahhoud	Romeo Lahhoud	Sabah Joseph Azar
1964	Terre de Jadis, Terre de Demain	3-Act Play	Zaki Nassif Toufic el Bacha Nizar Mikati	Nizar Mikati	Sabah Wadih Assafi Al-Anwar Troop
1965	Les Moulinets A Vent	2-Act Play	Rahbani Brothers Philemon Wehbe	Sabri Sherif	Sabah Nasri Chamseddine Lebanese Popular Troupe
1966	Du Temps De L'Emir Fakhreddine	2-Act Play	Rahbani Brothers	Sabri Sherif	Fairuz Nasri Chamseddine Lebanese Popular Troupe
1967	Nuits Libanaises	Varieties	Walid Gholmieh Boghos Gelalian Philemon Wehbe Maurice Awwad	Romeo Lahhoud	Sabah Nadia Jamal
1968	La Citadelle	2-Art Play	Walid Gholmieh Boghos Gelalian Philemon Wehbe	Romeo Lahhoud	Sabah Nadia Jamal Samir Yazbeck

⁵⁰⁴ Source: Baalbeck International Festival Catalogues (1957-1974). Festival was cancelled due to armed conflict in 1958. The act planned for 1975 was Elissa by Rahbani Brother and Fairuz. It was halted due to the start of the Civil War.

Year	Title	Form	Authors	Director	Performers
			Aline Lahhoud Maurice Awwad		
1969	Jibal Assawan	2-Act Play	Rahbani Brothers Philemon Wehbe	Sabri Sherif	Fairuz Nasri Chamseddine Lebanese Popular Troupe
1970	Faramane	2-Act Play	Zaki Nassif Romeo Lahhoud Boghos Gelalian Talal Haidar Nadia Tueini	Romeo Lahhoud	Majdala Chouchou Joseph Azar Issam Rajji
1971	Mahrajane	2-Act Play	Romeo Lahhoud Issam Rajji	Romeo Lahhoud	Sabah ChouChou
1972	Les Gardienne Des Cles	2-Act Play	Rahbani Brothers	Sabri Sherif	Fairuz Nasri Chamseddine Lebanese Popular Troupe
1973	Poeme D'Amour	Varieties	Rahbani Brothers Philemon Wehbe Elias Rahbani Ziad Rahbani	Berdj Fasilian	Fairuz Wadih Assafi Nasri Chamseddine Lebanese Popular Troupe
1974	Lebanese Nights	2- Act Play	Zaki Nassif Toufic el Bacha and others	Sabri Sherif	Sabah Wadih Assafi Caracalla

Appendix 3: Folklore Subcommittee Timeline (1956-1975)

Year	Activity	Description
1956	Institutional Set up	Establishing the Folklore Subcommittee President: Habib Abou Chahla
1956	Outsourcing experts	Commissioned Igor Mosieyev to provide recommendations about folkdance revival
1956	Study tour in Moscow	Dance choreographers Marwan and Wadi'a Jarrar were delegated to Moscow
1956	Institutional Set up	Expanding the Folklore Subcommittee membership President: Khalil El-Hibri Under the direct supervision of the first lady Zalfa Chamoun
1957	First Lebanese Nights	The number of performances was two ⁵⁰⁵
1959	Institutional Setup	New president: Salwa Es-Said
1960	Arab Theater	Initiated as part of the scope of work of the Folklore Subcommittee until it became an independent subcommittee chaired by Suad Najjar in 1962
1960	Theater School	Established the Modern Theater School (Director: Mounir Abou Debs)- Bliss Street The school also offered folkdance workshops.
1961	Export (Cultural Diplomacy)	Latin America Tour in Brazil and Argentine

⁵⁰⁵ The number of performances increased to 5 in 1959 and 10 in 1965.
(Source: Baalbeck International Festival Catalogues, 1957, 1959 and 1965).

Year	Activity	Description
1961	Competition organized to empower local play writers	Best Play in Arabic
1962	Export (Cultural Diplomacy)	England Tour (in Birmingham and London)
1962	Genre Established	Musical Play Form
1963	Outsourcing experts	Commissioned dance expert Franz B. Pantoulier (Germany)
1963	Outsourcing Experts	Commissioned dance expert Bert Stimmel (USA)
1963	Folk Dance Troop	Established its own folk-dance troop- Trainers: Nouhad Chehab, Sarkis Pascalian
1964	Cooperation with the National Council for Tourism	Organize folk dance and songs shows
1967	Export (Cultural Diplomacy)	Performance in Iran
1969	Institutional Setup	New president: Jean Skaff
1973	Institutional Setup	New president: Jean Farah

Appendix 4: Executive Committee Members and Subcommittee Leaders (1956-1975)⁵⁰⁶

Title	Years of Service	Name
President	1956-1968	Aimee Kettaneh ⁵⁰⁷
	1969-1972	Salwa Es-Said ⁵⁰⁸
	1973-1975	May Arida
Vice Presidents ⁵⁰⁹	1956-1958	Salim Haidar
	1956-1958	Khalil Hibri
	1959-1968	Salwa Es-Said
	1959-1968	Fouad Sarrouf ⁵¹⁰
	1969-1975	Fouad Bizri
	1969-1972	May Arida
	1973-1974	Ghida Khalidy
	1974-1975	Suad Najjar
General Secretariat	1956-1962	Jean Fattal
	1963-1970	Suad Najjar
	1973-1974	
	1971-1972	Nicole Andraous
	1975	Madeleine Helou
Representative of the Ministry of Tourism ⁵¹¹	1967-1968	Said El-Assaad
	1969-1974	Hassan El-Hassan
	1975	Mitri Nammar
Administration	1959-1966	Olga Arsanios
	1967-1968	Marcelle Hochar
	1969-1970	Chafica Diab
	1971-1972	Eliane Schoucair
	1973-1975	Mona Joreige
Coordinator	1956-1958	Jean Skaff
Director		Wagih Ghossoub
Secretary		Jeanne Sabbagh

⁵⁰⁶ The list is based on the information provided in the following book with modifications and additions extracted from internal festival archive and the annual official catalogues: Comite du festival international de Baalbeck Baalbeck: les riches heures du festival, Beirut: Dar Annahar, 1994.

⁵⁰⁷ Kettaneh became an honorary member in 1969.

⁵⁰⁸ Es-Said became an honorary member in 1973.

⁵⁰⁹ The Baalbeck International Festival Executive Committee had two Vice Presidents.

⁵¹⁰ Sarrouf became an honorary member in 1969.

⁵¹¹ Names of the representatives of the National Commission for Tourism and its subsequent organizations were not specified in the official festival catalogues prior to 1967.

Title	Years of Service	Name
Collaborators in Baalbeck		George Bechwati Ibrahim Farah Mustafa Sarout Toufic Sarout Lebanese Red Cross
Treasurers and Finance	1956-1958	Elia Abou Jaoude
	1959-1960	Ralph Fakhri
	1961-1962	Jean Skaff
	1963-1966	Michel Doumet
	1967-1968	Paul Klat
	1969-1975	George Assaily

Technical Subcommittees and Functions

Title	Years of Service	Name
Lebanese Folklore	1956	Habib Abou Chahla
	1957-1958	Khalil Hibri
	1959-1968	Salwa Es-Said
	1969-1970 ⁵¹²	Jean Skaff ⁵¹³
	1973-1975	Jean Farah
International Folklore	1969-1972	Marcel Hochar
	1973-1975	Hyam Ghandour
Son et Lumiere	1967-1975	Aimee Kettaneh
Arab Theater	1962-1975	Suad Najjar
French Theater	1959-1960	Aimee Kettaneh
	1961-1962	Sonia Abou-Adal
English Theater	1956-1968	Salwa Es-Said
	1969-1974	Nina Jidejian
	1975	Eliane Schoucair
Ballet	1956-1970	May Arida
	1971-1972	Antoine Medawar
	1973-1975	Nicole Andraos
Classical Music	1956-1972	May Arida
	1973-1975	Antoine Medawar

⁵¹² No names have been listed as the head of the Folklore subcommittee in the official festival catalogues in 1971 and 1972.

⁵¹³ Skaff became an honorary member in 1971.

Title	Years of Service	Name
Jazz and Pop Music	1973-1975	Michel de Bustros
Publicity	1956-1960	Samir Souki
	1961-1966	Alexandra Issa El-Khoury
	1967-1974	Madeleine Helou
	1975	Ghida Khalidy
Program	1973-1975	David Corm
Public Relations	1973-1974	Ghida Khalidy
European Representative based in Paris		Thomas Erdos

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