

LIST OF FILMS USED ON THE AUDIENCE RESEARCH SCHEME:—

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Health Films	Public Relations
Smallpox	Cattle Thieves
Amenu's Child	Nigerian Cinemagazine No.2
Clean Cooking	Instruction and Information
Tapeworm	25 Secondary Modern School
5 Dysentery	A Village School
Mr Wise and Mr Foolish go to Town	Take Time, Take Time
Farming Films	Mosquito
Mixed Farming	Making Books
The Two Farmers	30 Basic Woodwork—Saws
10 Pamba	Circulation of the Blood
Animal Manure	Entertainment Films
Good Business	The Hare and the Tortoise
Village Development Films	Three Fox Fables
Daybreak in Udi	Traditional Dances of Sukumaland
Village Development	35 Ewe Acrobatic Dances
Development—Awgu	Cossack Horsemen
15 Wives of Nendi	Sam the Cyclist
Miscellaneous Films :	On Patrol
Geographical	Champion Charlie
Beadmakers of Ilorin	40 Charlie the Tramp
Ei Dorado	Charlie the Rascal
Caribbean	Football
Plainsmen of Barotseland	
20 Tree of Wealth	
Game Patrol	
Kano City	

LOG OF FILM SHOWS

H—health films; F—farming films; D—village development films; G—geographical films; E—entertainment films; M—other miscellaneous films.

1. EGAN—YORUBA (PILOT STUDY)

9 January 1952	21 January	G
Beadmakers of Ilorin	Tree of Wealth	D
Secondary Modern School	Village Development	E
Cattle Thieves	Champion Charlie	
Sam the cyclist		
11 January	24 January	M
Amenu's Child	Cattle Thieves	F
On Patrol	Good Business	E
Cossack Horsemen	Charlie the Tramp	E

10,291

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47
1043.8

3. VWANG—BIROM

14 January Village Development Daybreak in Udi (This show was worthless, because no p.a. set was brought and the films had to be shown with their English sound track).	D D	H H E E
16 January Amenu's Child Clean Cooking Daybreak in Udi	H H E E	D M E E
18 January A Village School Smallpox The Hare and the Tortoise Plainsmen of Barotseiland	M H E G	M G H E
2. SOBA—HAUSA		
15 March Mixed Farming Beadmakers of Ilorin Basic Woodwork—the Saw Traditional Dances of Sukumaland	F G M E	H M G
17 March Pamba Mr Wise and Mr Foolish go to Town Cattle Thieves	F H M	F D D
22 March The Hare and the Tortoise The Two Farmers Amenu's Child	E F H	M G
24 March Kano City Daybreak in Udi Cattle Thieves	G D M	M H F
29 March Tapeworm Three Fox Fables El Dorado	H E G	H F
29 January Clean Cooking Amenu's Child Charlie the Tramp The Hare and the Tortoise	H H E E	D M E E
25 February Wives of Nendi Mosquito Three Fox Fables Traditional Dances of Sukumaland	D M E E	D M E E
28 February Making Books Game Patrol Smallpox Traditional Dances of Sukumaland	M G H E	M G H E
1 April Dysentery Secondary Modern School Caribbean	H M G	H M G
3 April Mixed Farming Village Development Wives of Nendi	F D D	F D D
5 April Mosquito Amenu's Child The Circulation of the Blood Caribbean	M H M G	M H M G
7 April A Village School Smallpox Animal Manure	M H F	M H F
29 January Clean Cooking Amenu's Child Charlie the Tramp The Hare and the Tortoise	H H E E	D M E E
25 February Wives of Nendi Mosquito Three Fox Fables Traditional Dances of Sukumaland	D M E E	D M E E
28 February Making Books Game Patrol Smallpox Traditional Dances of Sukumaland	M G H E	M G H E
1 April Dysentery Secondary Modern School Caribbean	H M G	H M G
3 April Mixed Farming Village Development Wives of Nendi	F D D	F D D
5 April Mosquito Amenu's Child The Circulation of the Blood Caribbean	M H M G	M H M G
7 April A Village School Smallpox Animal Manure	M H F	M H F
14 January Village Development Daybreak in Udi (This show was worthless, because no p.a. set was brought and the films had to be shown with their English sound track).	D D	H H E E
16 January Amenu's Child Clean Cooking Daybreak in Udi	H H E E	D M E E
18 January A Village School Smallpox The Hare and the Tortoise Plainsmen of Barotseiland	M H E G	M G H E
2. SOBA—HAUSA		
15 March Mixed Farming Beadmakers of Ilorin Basic Woodwork—the Saw Traditional Dances of Sukumaland	F G M E	H M G
17 March Pamba Mr Wise and Mr Foolish go to Town Cattle Thieves	F H M	F D D
22 March The Hare and the Tortoise The Two Farmers Amenu's Child	E F H	M G
24 March Kano City Daybreak in Udi Cattle Thieves	G D M	M H F
29 March Tapeworm Three Fox Fables El Dorado	H E G	H F
16 May Beadmakers of Ilorin Tapeworm A Village School	G H M	G H M
19 May Wives of Nendi Kano City Smallpox	D G H	D G H
21 May Amenu's Child Mixed Farming Nigerian Cinemazine No.2	H F M	H F M
23 May Nigerian Cinemazine No.2 Cattle Thieves Caribbean	M M G	M M G
26 May—in Chugi The Two Farmers Dysentery Daybreak in Udi	F H D	F H D
29 May Wives of Nendi El Dorado Three Fox Fables	D G E	D G E
26 April Mixed Farming The Hare and the Tortoise Traditional Dances of Sukumaland	F E E	F E E
28 April The Two Farmers Traditional Dances of Sukumaland Caribbean	F E G	F E G
2 May Amenu's Child Dysentery Cattle Thieves	H H M	H H M
8 May Mixed Farming Daybreak in Udi Traditional Dances of Sukumaland	F D E	F D E
10 May Daybreak in Udi Amenu's Child	D H	D H
12 May Village Development El Dorado	D G	D G
15 May Mr Wise and Mr Foolish go to Town Animal Manure Three Fox Fables	H F E	H F E

NOTE.—Vwang consists of the four hamlets Dashit, Turu, Chugi and Ful. Each of the first three was about two miles from the others, and on a motorable road. Film shows were given in all three, but many in the audiences went to watch wherever the films were being shown.

4. MAKU—IBO

28 June
Secondary Modern School M
Smallpox H
Take Time, Take Time M
Traditional Dances of Sukumaland E

30 June
Clean Cooking H
Village Development—Awgu D
Caribbean G

4 July
The Hare and the Tortoise E
Amenu's Child H
Mosquito M
Cattle Thieves M

9 July—At Lengwe
Daybreak in Udi

5. ILARO—YORUBA

6 August
Butchery M
Amenu's Child H
Cattle Thieves M

8 August
Wives of Nendi D
Good Business F
Three Fox Fables E
The Hare and the Tortoise E

11 August
The Two Farmers F
Mosquito M
El Dorado G

13 August—At Idogo
Smallpox H
Daybreak in Udi D
Piki the Champion E

15 August
Smallpox H
Amenu's Child H
Champion Charlie E

12 July
Three Fox Fables E
The Two Farmers (part only shown) F

14 July
Beadmakers of Ilorin G
The Two Farmers F
Daybreak in Udi D

16 July
Smallpox H
Mixed Farming F
El Dorado G

18 July
Wives of Nendi D
Village Development (part only shown) D

18 August
Beadmakers of Ilorin G
Dysentery H
Mr Wise and Mr Foolish go to Town H
Champion Charlie E

19 August—At Igan Alade
Football E
Daybreak in Udi D
Ewe Acrobatic Dancing E

20 August
Animal Manure F
Pamba F
Football E

22 August
Making Books M
Amenu's Child H
Traditional Dances of Sukumaland E
Charlie the Rascal E

INTRODUCTION

The Scope of the Inquiry

This is an account of research carried out in Nigeria in 1952, to discover the reactions of rural audiences to films intended for their fundamental education. The circumstances which led to the research were these:—

The Public Relations Departments in the British Colonies and Protectorates had, soon after the Second World War, acquired from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds a number of mobile cinema vans, and were exhibiting films which had been distributed from London by the Colonial Film Unit. Some of the films had been bought from commercial companies, some from the Crown Film Unit; but most of them had been made in the dependent territories, some of these by parties sent out by the Colonial Film Unit, others by film units, such as the Nigerian Film Unit and the Gold Coast Film Unit, established in the territories. It became evident that to derive the greatest return for the money invested in the film units and the mobile cinemas, research into the impact of the films on their audiences was necessary. The problems which it was hoped could be solved by research were set out in the Colonial Film Unit's memorandum 96307A/51, from which the following notes have been abstracted:

"The Colonial Film Unit has been financed from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds since 1st. April 1947. A free grant of £18,150 has been approved for systematic research into audience reactions in the Colonies."

Para 6: "As a medium of education and entertainment, the cinema in African society is known to be effective, but the modes of its effectiveness are still largely unknown . . . systematic investigation into audience reactions should enable reliable techniques (for making films) to be developed much more rapidly than under present conditions."

Para. 8: "The Fifth Report from the Select Committee on Estimates (1950) recommends 'that in view of the expensiveness of the film as medium of publicity, the Colonial Office should without delay conduct a proper research into the suitability of the film as a method of educating backward peoples'."

Para. 10: ". . . it is considered that enquiry should be carried out by a special unit, which would be self-contained, mobile and capable of projecting its own films . . . The Unit would be in charge of a European technician experienced in the existing techniques of film production, who would be assisted by a European research worker trained in anthropological or sociological method. A trained African commentator and interpreter and a trained African projectionist would also be required. The unit would operate for the most

part in rural areas where the unsophisticated audiences are found, but would also carry out some research in urban areas and schools in order to establish data for comparison . . .”

Para. 11 : “. . . Among the problems urgently demanding attention are the following :—

(a) **Vision.** Many primitive people are unable to identify two-dimensional pictures with the originals and few tribes have evolved a two-dimensional representational art. Their vision has perhaps not the same depth of focus as that of Europeans or the problem may simply be one of habits of vision which could easily be acquired. Some tribes appear to be less sensitive to colour than others, as suggested by lack of colour adjectives in their languages. Important information is therefore to be sought here.

(b) **Mental reactions.** It is important to discover the degrees and processes of comprehension of different kinds of films by people of varying . . . culture. Experiments need to be carried out with all types of films, the introduction of the cartoon film making special demand for research of this kind.

(c) **Psychological reactions.** The habitual associations of ideas of African peoples are very different from those of Europeans and the study of audience reactions can provide . . . information about the kinds of associations that arouse the different emotions. In particular, research into the causes of laughter is necessary.

(d) **Social reactions.** The primary function of the films . . . is to act as a stimulant to social and material progress. What the effects of films have been so far is still largely unknown, and the long term effectiveness of films as propaganda can be estimated only after the careful observation of the results of showing films which are intended to produce a specific reaction within a short period.

(e) **General.** . . . The relationship between types of films and types of audiences should be studied. A comparison of the reactions of audiences of similar cultural and social background in different places to the same films, whether films made primarily for Colonial or Western audiences, should yield valuable results. The effects of sound and of African and European music on urban and rural audiences is also a matter for investigation. Tests with film strips should also be conducted.”

Para. 12 : “. . . A research unit should be sent to Africa at the earliest opportunity, preferably to Nigeria, . . . which has been the field of much experimental work in the production and use of films.”

Para. 14 : “For the investigation to be really successful, it is considered that it should be pursued for more than two years ; but in the first place, a scheme covering 15 months is proposed, to begin as soon as possible.”

Para. 15 : “. . . Since the greater part of the investigation is to be carried out in rural areas, it is necessary to ensure that the period of the visit would coincide with the dry season, which begins in October. . . Suggested time table. . . :

1951 : June to August
September and October

Preparation in the U.K. . . .
Journey to Lagos, and
audience research in towns
and schools in Nigeria.
Research in rural areas in
Nigeria.

51/52 : November to May

1952 : June

Return to U.K., leave to
research officers at the
rate 2 days/month in
Nigeria.
Compilation of report.”

July and August

Para. 16 : “. . . A brief interim report would be furnished on which a decision could be made concerning the continuance of the research for a further period.”

In the summer of 1951, a film technician, Mr. R. W. Gamble, was appointed to be in charge of the Unit. He had previously made films for the Colonial Film Unit, in Tanganyika and Zanzibar. He was joined in London on the 1st September by an anthropologist, the writer of this report, who was seconded from the West African Institute of Social and Economic Research, and had lately been engaged on a field study of part of Yoruba people in south-west Nigeria. They flew to Lagos in mid-November. Their mobile cinema was not landed until the end of February, 1952, owing to a number of unavoidable delays arising partly from a rearrangement of priorities at home and shipping difficulties. However, through the kindness of the Public Relations Officer in Lagos, who lent a cinema van and films, a pilot study was made during January in the Awori Yoruba village of Egan, some thirty miles by road from Lagos. The anthropologist lived in the village, lodging in a room in one of the houses, and the technician visited with the mobile cinema, giving filmshows two or three times a week. A first field report was written after four weeks in the village. Some of the material amassed during this study is used in those sections of this report which refer to reactions of the Yoruba people.

During the last week in February, a trial was made of the newly arrived equipment, shows being given on two evenings in Egan, the village where the first experiment had been made. At the beginning of March, the Audience Research Unit set off for the North—the two Europeans, and two African Driver-projectionists, seconded from the Cinema Section of the Public Relations Department. Research was interrupted in April, for the anthropologist to write his second field report, and to attend the annual conference of his Institute.

It had been planned to stay at least a month with each of five different peoples, representative of the diversity of those from whom rural audiences might be drawn. These were to have been the Yoruba in Ilaro (Abeokuta Province), whom the anthropologist had already studied, the Hausa in Soba (Zaria Province), the Birom on the Jos Plateau, the Nupe in Bida Emirate and an Ibo community in the

Eastern Provinces. It was thought that one month would be the least time needed for the people of a selected community to see a large sample of the various kinds of film which were currently being distributed to Colonial territories, and for gathering the minimum of ethnographic material to enable the reactions to the films to be related to variations in the characteristics of audiences drawn from different peoples. Owing to the delay in starting, and because the field work had necessarily to be ended by the beginning of September, this programme had to be reduced, and work among the Nupe was omitted. The onset of the wet season in April further hampered proceedings, not only because rain spoiled many film shows and reduced the size of audiences, but also because it was a time of intensive agriculture. Day-long work on their farms made it more difficult to interview farmers, and resulted in many being very tired when they saw the films. These factors were least important in Ilaro, which was visited in August, a dry month between two periods of rain.

"Fundamental education" is a term that, in the context of British Colonial Administration, denotes attempts to instil motives and the requisite technical skills to improve the material conditions of life, and to make it possible to apprehend, in some degree, the relationship of the rural community to the rest of the territory and to the world. Most effort has been directed towards village development, improved health, and better farming.

In Nigeria, although Government Departments—Agriculture, Social Welfare, Medical, for example—have often initiated development schemes, there have scarcely been any campaigns making use of more than one means of communication. Sometimes film has been used, sometimes demonstration, sometimes public address systems. One of the few exceptions has been the Village Development programme in the Eastern Region, where, under the direction of Mr. E. R. Chadwick, O.B.E., a Senior Administrative Officer on special duty as Village Development Secretary, films were used to supplement personal interaction at Council meetings and village meetings, and material assistance. To suggest that any of the other schemes might have been more effectual had they used a combination of means of publicity and instruction would be out of place here (few had money for publicity); what is significant is that the circumstances under which this research was carried out were fairly representative of the use which had been made of film as an isolated form of communication, being unusual only in the large number of films shown over a short period.

The pages which follow are substantially the same as the final report on the research, which was submitted to the Producer, the Colonial Film Unit, in May 1953. Chapter 4, *The Impact of the Films*, and chapter 5, *Conclusions*, contain very general statements, the evidence for which may be found in the Appendices. Each of the first four Appendices contains a record of the observations made on each audience for a particular film in one of the four general series, followed by an analysis of the reactions to that film.

CHAPTER 1

ASSESSING THE REACTIONS TO FILMS

Much work has been done, particularly in the United States, on assessing the effects of propaganda films, both instructional films intended only to communicate information, and what have been called 'orientation films', which are designed to modify opinions, attitudes, and values. The accounts of research methods that were found most helpful in planning this inquiry were those by Merton and Lazarsfeld (10) * of the Columbia University Bureau of Applied Sociology; and by Hovland, Lumsdaine and Sheffield in their Volume "Studies in Mass Communication" (6).

In general, analysis of the impact of propaganda ('mass communication' is the more usual term nowadays, the word 'propaganda' having acquired undesirable connotations) is made in three stages: firstly, the contents of the communication, i.e. of the film, broadcast, or whatever, are analysed; secondly, the response of the audience is analysed, and thirdly, the attempt is made to discover relationships between the contents of the communication and the response to it. Merton and Lazarsfeld recommend that the analysis of the contents proceed in this way:

- (i) **A list is made of the symbols employed.** This indicates in a restricted fashion the symbols which have been placed at the forefront of the attention of the audience. The frequency with which the symbols recur is counted.
- (ii) **The symbols are classified,** by the contexts in which they are employed; whether they are in favourable or in unfavourable contexts.
- (iii) **Item analysis** in which the scenes of the film are classified. This is a selection of what are presented as significant and insignificant items. The judgment of what items are significant is subjective, but need not be refined; it is necessarily subjective, for it is not enough to reckon the footage allocated to each item.
- (iv) **Classification of themes,** into those which are presented directly and those which are implicit; this seems to be a matter of tracing levels of symbolism. It raises lines of inquiry—which will not be examined here—about the supposed cumulative effect of a series of items or sets of symbols.
- (v) Finally, there is an **analysis of the structure** of the film, presented

* Figures in parentheses, e.g. (10), refer to the item number of publication listed, at the end of this report.