ARAMCO WORLD magazine

MAY-JUNE 1972

FESTIVAL AT BAALBEK

The incomparable Ella Fitzgerald brought jazz to Lebanon's Baalbek International Festival for the first time last summer, totally captivating a cosmopolitan audience of 4,000 packed into the courtyard of the Temple of Jupiter. Ella is scheduled to return to Baalbek this July.

ARAMCO WORLD magazine

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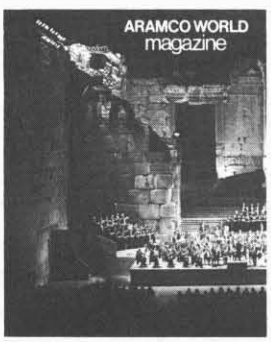


Cover: Against the magnificence of Baalbek's great Roman temples, the 250-man Krakow Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir offered to a capacity audience one of the most memorable events of the 1971 season, and to photographer Robert Azzi the chance to capture this sweeping view of the festival at its visual best.

KNIGHT OF THE DEAD STONES

BY HELEN GIBSON

Vault, column buttress, pierced walls
Massed tower and cloud-encircled spire:
Up from the street and market stalls
Flames motionless the quarried fire.

Man sets dead stones in counterpoise,
By thrust and pressure marshals strife:
Wrestling, grim-silent they rejoice:
Thus to brute matter God gives life.

— G. G. Williams

Perhaps these lines express better than anything what Sir Archibald Creswell is all about. They represent a distillation of this man's lifework, and as such, of his life.

He used them to inscribe his book in 1932. But for 20 years before that, and for nearly 40 years afterwards, this professor has served those "dead stones" with an unswerving devotion that has left him little time for anything else—not even marriage.

Today Creswell is a word that is part of the vocabulary of the students of Islamic architecture, as familiar to them as Shakespeare is to aspiring actors. He is their Bible, their standard reference book that can be relied upon never to fail in the minutest of details.

For minaret, mosaic, arch, column and courtyard have filled every part of Professor Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell's life. From the time he set foot in Egypt, this 92-year-old son of an English insurance underwriter has catalogued, drawn, photographed and researched every mosque and monument in the Middle East and Spain within his reach.

Most mornings of the school year will find the professor in two stuffy rooms of the American University in Cairo, where he is still on the staff as Distinguished Professor of Muslim Art and Architecture. The university's main building was originally constructed as a palace in the 19th century, a fitting background to Creswell's work. (*Aramco World* March-April 1972)

In June, a Cairo sun can nearly bake bread, but the slight professor might have stepped straight out of the pages of a tailor's advertisement. He sits, surrounded by his leather-bound library, a dapper figure, uncompromisingly immaculate and bolt upright in his cream-colored linen suit. The striped red-and-white shirt and starched white collar are set off by a purple tie. His pink and white complexion and white hair give the aura of long hours spent in steaming baths.

Soon you realize that his dress is only an extension of a life committed to law and order of a most meticulous nature. You see it not only in his intricately executed plans of buildings, but also in small details—the notebook that lists the price of every book he has bought for his collection since 1910.

We sit on a hard little sofa. The smell of leather permeates even the glass-enclosed shelves. The cupboard housing the complete set of Roberts' prints, now selling for 50 Egyptian pounds each, is pointed out as "the elephant house." The books range from five feet upwards in height. The office is scrupulously neat.

"What attracted me to the East?" the professor asks. "Why, I suppose it was reading *Arabian Nights* as a little boy."

But it was not until 1910 that he seriously began the study of Muslim art.

Archibald Creswell was born in London on September 13, 1879, and eventually trained as an engineer at the City and Guilds Technical College in that city. His first job was with Siemens Brothers, the electrical-manufacturing firm. "My father had no use for my interest in the East. He thought I was wasting my time," the professor says crisply.

But the young man paid little attention to his father and three years after he took up his interest in earnest, he gave a lecture before London's Royal Asiatic Society. He was not to know that 46 years later this same society would award him its rare Triennial Gold Medal, that the president would tell members, "Professor Creswell has not only got to the head of his profession; he has created it."

At this point, in 1913, Creswell was an engineer who simply wanted to go east. But he had no money. Then war broke out and Creswell joined the Royal Flying Corps. He had only to wait two more years for his dream to come true. "I kept putting in a word to friends and acquaintances that I wanted to go to the East. I was transferred at the end of November, in 1916. It was the chance of a lifetime," Professor Creswell

PHOTOGRAPHED BY BURNETT H. MOODY

says. Then he sits even straighter on the stiff little couch and eyes the visitor sternly.

"They *knew* I had to come to the East to be able to get on with my work."

At that time, Professor Creswell recalls, "The Turks were only 20 miles from the Suez Canal. We gradually pushed them back. I was there right at the front when we broke through their lines. I can remember it was three o'clock in the morning and all the lights went off one by one along the Turkish encampments, which meant they were retreating. In two days we took 70,000 prisoners. We didn't know what to do with them."

Before that, however, he had been making use of his spare time to "get on with his work." It is said, in fact, that the moment he hit Cairo station he enlisted a guide and dragged the man around all the monuments and buildings he could get to. Creswell had prepared a chronological list and, characteristically, insisted on conducting his survey in the correct time sequence, refusing to take the easy way out by visiting all the monuments in the same neighborhood.

Six months after the war ended, Captain Creswell published his *Brief Chronology of the Muhammedan Monuments of Egypt.*

The professor looks surprised when you interrupt him with: "Why did you choose Muslim architecture? Why not the ever-popular Egyptology?"

"Egyptology?" he repeats testily, as though he has not heard correctly, "Egyptology never interested me in the *least*. I wanted to come to the East. Muslim architecture *is* the architecture of the East."

Perhaps it was the publication of *Brief Chronology* that really started Creswell's career. At any rate, only a few weeks later he was chosen as an inspector of monuments in Syria.

"The Allies felt guilty at being responsible for damage to monuments and decided to make an inventory in Syria and Palestine," the professor explains in precise, clipped, English tones. "The territory was divided into zones—the whole was under the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration. I was given the eastern half of Syria along a line drawn through Aleppo, Hama, Homs and Damascus.

"We started cataloguing the monuments, giving notes of what was needed in the way of repairs," Sir Archibald says. He extracts four red leather-bound notebooks full of his tiny neat handwriting setting out observations and relevant reference sources, displays them briefly and replaces them immediately in their correct niches.

In another cupboard, row upon row of massive red folders hold about 8,000 photographs taken by the professor during these and subsequent travels, but largely catalogued by his German assistant, Associate Professor Christel Kessler, an "absolutely invaluable, devoted person with a brilliant academic brain." Professor Kessler, a tall, attractive woman with gray hair urchin-cut, a faraway look and complete absorption in her work, explains in a soft voice that the professor had never trusted new cameras, preferring two heavy box cameras, complete with tripods and hoods. Sometimes these have taken a little longer than methods used today. The professor spent four weeks photographing the mosaics in Jerusalem's Dome of the Rock. "I would stand the camera on a painter's shelf across a scaffolding they had built me and leave it pointing at the mosaics. Each exposure took 20 minutes," the professor says. "And I'm still not satisfied with the results."

We turn from the mosaics to the great mosque in Aleppo, and the professor gives his whole-hearted approval to that city. "Best built stone city in Syria," he says firmly.

In Aleppo, he goes on, the highlights are the beautiful stone-built khans—the olden-time inns for the use of caravans. "What is so satisfactory is to find that a commercial building need not be ugly," he says. "They are most attractive places, with all the caravansary animals in the courtyards." *Are?* Yes, are. Professor Creswell was surprised to learn that the khans are mostly warehouses today.

The idea of encountering any danger from bandits or hostile elements—Syria was, after all, occupied territory—did not seem to bother Professor Creswell. For the most part he has always worked alone except for a man "to hold the end of my tape measure." He smilingly pantomimes an exaggerated tremble at the question.

"Danger? No. They once insisted that I take fourteen Mysore Lancers to go with me into the interior of northern Syria. I didn't think it necessary."

After three months in Syria, Creswell was posted to Amman and then Haifa on the same job, that of Inspector of Monuments. Then, realizing that the military administration in Palestine would soon be replaced by a civil one, he started to look for some financing to back what had become a consuming aim: the preparation of a history of Muslim architecture in the East.

He found such a backer in Egypt's King Fouad and, impatient to go to England, get his books and return to Egypt, went to a friend and said, "Can't you get me home as a King's Messenger with a dispatch?" With ships full of demobilized soldiers, the friend in the embassy naturally said, "Impossible." But a few days later Creswell arrived in Constantinople with the diplomatic bag. "When I went to the embassy they said, 'you don't belong to us, you're in the military,' and military headquarters told the embassy I was their responsibility. While they argued about it I went and took a couple of hundred photographs."

The embassy lost the argument. Creswell was sent to London by train and three months later was on his way back by ship with 23 cases of books. "It was sink or swim with my library," the professor remembers with a chuckle.

Once in Cairo, Creswell set up house near the museum, today an impoverished district of the city. From that time onwards his life revolved around a rigid work pattern that changed very little over the years. From October to June he would travel, measuring and photographing. Very often he spent, and still spends, the three summer months working in the great museums and libraries of Europe, one of his favorites being the Victoria and Albert in London.

"I once asked the professor if he had ever taken a holiday," Dr. Kessler says later. "He thought for a long time, then said, 'That's right, I have—I went away with my sister when we were little.'

"Then I asked if I could have three days off to go to the Red Sea for snorkelling. I had to explain what snorkelling was, and the professor looked at me and said slowly, 'You are an *astonishing* woman.' He thought me amazingly diverse to do anything outside Islamic monuments."

Not that Creswell has gone unnoticed in the ordinary world outside those monuments, or that he has not followed world events. He had a sheaf of copies of letters addressed to English Members of Parliament protesting their dreadful administration of the country, and he clipped articles from newspapers about the United States, of which he did not always approve either.

He ruled the street where he lived with a firm, no-nonsense hand. Radios had to be tuned down to reasonable volumes, the street always came to him for permission to hold local weddings and funerals, and those who mistreated their horses or donkeys were not likely to forget it. And once he nearly caused a rift in American and British relations in Egypt. The U.S. Embassy had purchased a block of flats in which the professor was living. As it was planned for embassy personnel, the professor was asked to leave. His fury knew no bounds and he had the whole diplomatic corps in an uproar before he was forced to yield.

In the meantime, Creswell had discovered that before he could write his history of Egyptian Muslim architecture he would have to compile a book of basic research on Islamic architecture as a whole. There was no source material detailed enough for his purpose. Twenty years later, by 1940, he finished his two exhaustive treaties on *Early Muslim Architecture*—tomes, as one authority puts it, that are monuments in themselves. These tomes, now out of print, are unmanageable except in a library, but Penguin Books has published condensed versions which have sold 25,000 copies to date.

"I once looked up the price of four volumes of *Early Muslim Architecture* in one of those *Book Prices, Current*. I found them listed at 240 pounds sterling. Not bad during the author's lifetime, eh?" the professor says.

The work delighted the scholars. "Here is an example of clarity and perfected method ... the single-handed author of a definitive work on the grandest scale ... work of this quality is an inspiration to us all and of it the world cannot have enough," they wrote.

King Fouad was equally delighted. "The King had always seen the French productions and when he saw my book he cried, '*La presentation! Impossible être mieux!*' " the professor says.

In 1931, when the first volume of *Early Muslim Architecture* was completed, the Egyptian Government appointed Creswell as professor in Fouad I University (now Cairo University). He remained Director of the Institute of Muslim Art and Archeology he formed until 1951. During that time honors were heaped upon him, including honorary doctorates from Oxford University and from Princeton in the United States.

"I enjoyed teaching," he says. "I had good students, anxious to learn and willing. They have done well—one is Director of Antiquities here and another Director of Arabic Monuments."

At the same time the professor was teaching and writing his histories, he was also compiling a *Bibliography of the Architecture, Arts and Crafts of Islam.* It was published in 1961, a 40-year project which involved the study of 15,850 items from books and articles, and 11,749 periodicals.

The professor is still working on supplements, when he is not attending meetings of the governing bodies of various museums. One German professor who reads Turkish has given him 800 new items and another scholar has made Russian contributions. "But he is not really happy with this," Dr. Kessler says. "He feels upset, unclean, not to have read the items himself. But he cannot read Turkish or Russian."

Two years ago, Professor Creswell was knighted by the Queen, but of his work, Sir Archibald says simply, "I thought I would begin at the beginning and make it as complete as possible."

Then he adds with a twinkle, "I suppose I more or less scooped it, didn't I?"

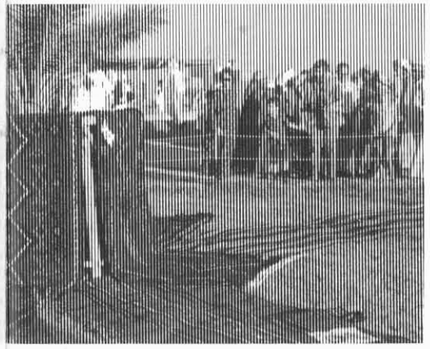
Helen Gibson covered the war in Vietnam for UPI and spent last year in the Middle East as a free-lance contributor to newspapers and magazines.

AL-JAWF HOLDS A FAIR

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KHALIL ABOU EL-NASR

There aren't many places in the world where you can still see 100 camels thundering across the desert at full gallop. Al-Jawf, a prosperous oasis north of the Great Nafud Desert in Saudi Arabia, is one. Here each year, during the 'Id al-Adha holidays of Islam, the amir of the area sponsors the Middle Eastern equivalent of an old-fashioned U.S.-style county fair, with a 9.3-mile camel race as the high point in secular observances of the two-day festival. Last fall the occasion drew about 7,000 people from all over northern Arabia, who used every mode of transportation from camels to tank trucks to get there. The environs of al-Jawf briefly took on the appearance of the parking lots at Le Mans, with more than 550 vehicles jammed into what is normally a peaceful desert oasis.

To merchants, of course, this invading horde was a windfall, since the visitors had ample opportunity to compare and acquire handloomed fabrics and rugs, long, cloak-like abas, camel harnesses, and metal and marble work assembled into an immense temporary bazaar. But it was also for Amir 'Abd ar-Rahman as-Sudayri and his son, Deputy Amir Faysal as-Sudayri, a graduate of the University of Arizona, a chance to demonstrate the redevelopment now underway in an area whose original importance goes way back to pre-Islamic times. Then al-Jawf, known as Dumat al-Jandal, was a converging point of three important caravan routes, which automatically made it a vital mercantile center. There are still ruins there of Marid Fortress, which tradition says was built by Duma, son of Ishmael and grandson of Abraham, but the changes are impressive. The as-Sudayris have established a large chicken and egg cooperative, a dairy farm stocked with cows from Holland, a program of orphan care, an extension to the area's previously existing road network, and a sports club which has taken on many community beautification projects.



The camel race was scheduled for 4:30 in the afternoon, way out in the desert between al-Jawf town and Sakaka, the administrative center of the entire oasis region. Shortly before the starting gun was due to be fired the amir and his retinue and throngs of ordinary spectators assembled at the finish line to await the man who, out of 129 camel-owners representing most of the Bedouin tribes of northern Arabia, would make it across the finish line first. He turned out to be young Salfiq ibn Jalbakh ibn Hadrus, a member of the Shammar tribe. He covered the distance in precisely 30 minutes. ■

A YELLOW SUBMARINE

PHOTOGRAPHED BY BURNETT H. MOODY

No fish in the Arabian Gulf had ever seen an underwater creature quite like it before. It was long and bulky. Its skin was bright yellow. Its eyes were enormous and there seemed to be at least four of them, set around a red protuberance on top of its body. And as it glided over the seabed it gave off a brilliant, eerie glare.

The fish had a right to be puzzled. They had never seen a submarine before. And they had no way of knowing that it was there to inspect a sizable network of undersea pipelines which links Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco) offshore oil fields with facilities on shore. They're only fish, after all.

Unlike surface pipelines, where problems can be spotted with relative ease, underwater pipelines are out of sight, if not out of mind. And as ecology-conscious Aramco is perpetually concerned about leaks, it must frequently inspect the condition of the cement coating that helps hold the pipeline on the bottom and, along with humps of non-ferrous metal called anodes, helps protect the pipeline against corrosion.

In shallow waters, crews in appropriate diving gear can inspect the pipelines by walking. But in deep water it was necessary to use professional divers with a support barge and great lengths of lines for air and safety, an enormously inefficient and time-consuming process. There had to be a better way, Aramco figured, and started wondering if a miniature submarine could be the answer.

The idea was not as far out as if might seem. Small submersibles had been used in other parts ot the world to check the condition of pipelines and telephone cables that run underwater so why not in the Arabian Gulf? Aramco contacted Brown and Root, International, a big construction contractor based in Houston, Texas.

Brown and Root, it turned out, had available **Survey Sub I,** a 20-foot-long submersible eight feet in the beam and just as high, able to function well below the 160-feet pipeline depths and big enough to carry three men: a pilot, a cameraman-observer and a navigator. Aramco decided to try it and signed a contract.

The contract gave Aramco quite a package: altogether some 20 people representing Holland, Norway, Spain, Pakistan, India and the United States; a 100-by-50-foot barge to pick up and move the sub from one operating location to another; a 150-foot mother ship and the 20-foot **Topside I,** equipped with underwater radio and sonar in case voice contact was lost.

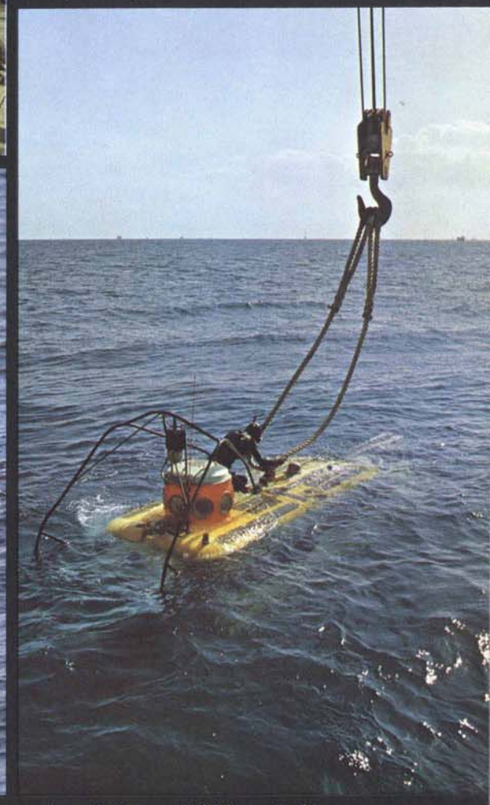
Survey Sub I came to the Gulf last June and immediately encountered two main problems: high temperatures in the submarine's interior, and poor visibility.

Modification of the craft's ventilating apparatus and the insertion of ice at a judicious spot in the system lowered the temperature in the cabin to a more reasonable range, but not much could be done about poor visibility. In Gulf waters there is a high density of plankton and fine sediment such as marl and clay. Stirred up by tides and turbulence these minuscule particles reflected the submarine's powerful searchlights the way fog reflects an automobile's high beams.

Despite the problems, the mini-sub did the job. The cameraman got 20 hours of video tape which were filed for reference in case of problems later; 18 Aramco engineers got a chance to get a first-hand look at the pipeline while underwater, and the pipeline got a clean bill of health.

And incidentally, the yellow paint job was to give the craft maximum visibility when submerged. The fact that its coloration jibed with the title of a popular cartoon feature which also dealt with a submersible, and starred the Beatles, can be said on good authority to be sheer coincidence. ■

On the deck of a barge—one of three support craft used in the operation—the bright-yellow 20-foot submersible Survey Sub I (left) stands ready ...



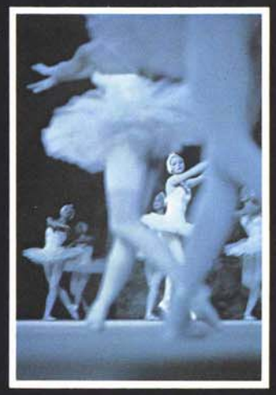
... before being hoisted overboard (above right) and lowered carefully into the Arabian Gulf ...

... where it plunges (left) beneath the murky waters to inspect and photograph the network of undersea pipelines leading from Aramco's offshore oil fields.

"A dialogue between ... the ruins of sculptured stone and the heart of modern man."

FESTIVAL AT BAALBEK

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ROBERT AZZI



The 4,000 persons packed into the forecourt of the Temple of Jupiter filled the flood-lit ruins with their applause and Ella—the incomparable Ella Fitzgerald—responded. Microphone in hand, gown blowing in the breeze, she looked down at the glittering international audience and said softly, "I don't know... I thought I'd been around, sung a lot, seen most everything... but just look at me now." She swept an expressive hand toward the vast Roman ruins around her. "Tonight, I joined the classics!"

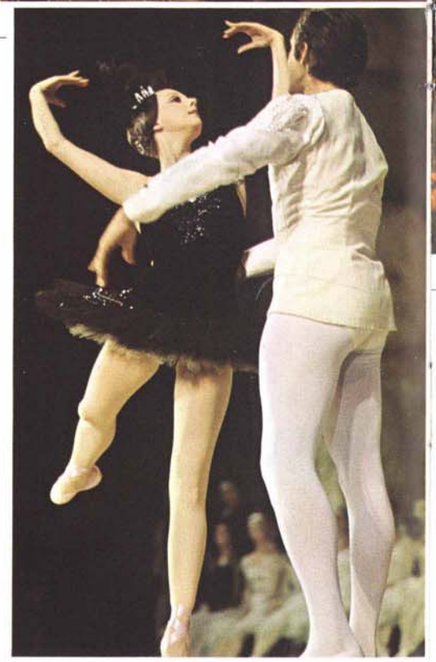
The audience roared its agreement and Ella, with an easy snap of her fingers, swung into her encore.

Ella Fitzgerald is not the first great performer to be awed by the setting of the Baalbek International Festival. Just the first jazz singer. Founded in 1955, this festival of music, dance, and theater held each summer in Roman temples high in Lebanon's fertile Bekaa Valley has, for 16 years, been presenting some of the world's greatest dancers, actors, singers and musicians to ever-growing audiences. The Pittsburgh and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestras, the New York Philharmonic and the Berlin Philharmonic (conducted by Herbert von Karajan) have given concerts for up to 2,000 people from the steps of the Temple of Bacchus. The Australian Ballet, the Paul Taylor Dance Company and the Royal Ballet, with Dame Margot Fonteyn, have danced there, the Royal Ballet twice—once with Rudolf Nureyev. Maurice Béjart presented the world premier of his avant-garde ballet *Prometheus* there. Inside the temple—in the third and more intimate festival "theater"—London's Old Vic and France's Comédie Française have presented plays, and quartets and quintets from Moscow, Stuttgart and Varsovia have offered chamber music.

The festival has featured a recital by renowned pianist Sviatoslav Richter. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf has sung there, and so have the Amherst Glee Club, Rosalind Elias and hefty Oum Koulsoum, the grande dame of Arabic music, "singing the moon out of the sky" for Arab audiences just as hypnotized by her as Americans are by Ella Fitzgerald.

"In the beginning," says festival president Salwa Es-Said, "we used to have to beg performers to come. We had to explain even where Baalbek was. Now it is almost as difficult for us because we receive so many offers we have a hard time choosing which artists to invite. When she accepted last year, for example, Ella Fitzgerald had little idea of where or what Baalbek was. But this year, when her eye doctor advised her to cut back her schedule, she said, 'One place I'm *not* going to cut out is Baalbek.' "

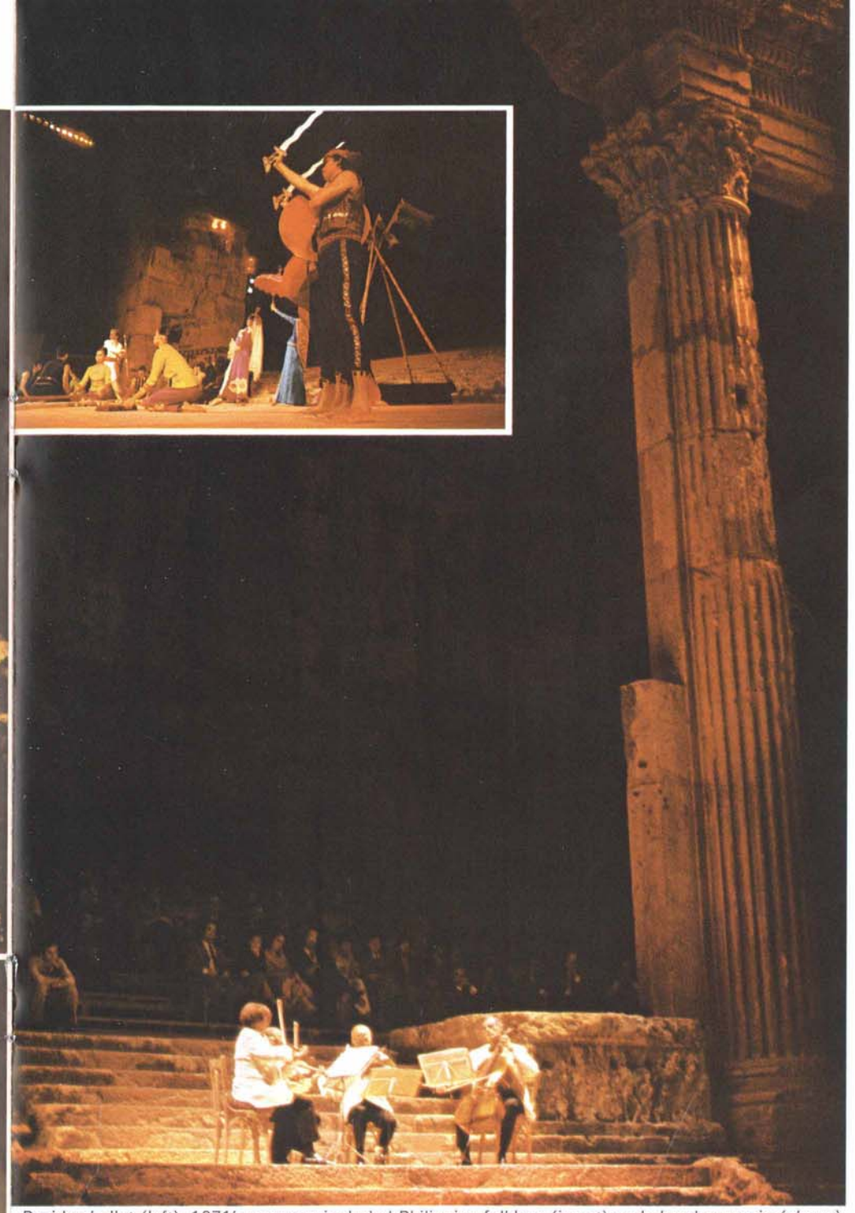
The Temple of Bacchus is floodlit at intermission.



Baalbek today is by no means the great city that its history would indicate. Standing at the northern tip of a high, agriculturally rich plateau separating Lebanon and Syria, it is little more than a small, nondescript Arab town. Shortly after the birth of Christ, however, various Roman emperors began to build at Baalbek some of the mightiest temples in the empire. And some of those temples, the work of centuries, survive to this day, relatively intact. The massive Temple of Bacchus, for example, is one of the most perfectly preserved Roman structures in the world, including Rome itself, and the remaining six grand columns of the Temple of Jupiter are the world's largest.

Despite this, Baalbek was still one of the world's lesser known wonders until, in 1955, Zalfa Chamoun, wife of then President of Lebanon Camille Chamoun, gave her active support to a proposal to capitalize on Baalbek's magnificent ruins and perfect summer nights by presenting concerts there. Since then some 400,000 people have swarmed into the now flood-lit ruins to attend concerts, ballets and plays under the stars in what Mrs. Es-Said calls "a dialogue between the past and the present, between the ruins of sculptured stone and the heart of modern man."

Last year alone, an estimated 40,000 attended such varied presentations as Ella, the Amadeus Quartet of England, the 250-member Orchestra and Choruses of the Krakow (Poland) Philharmonic, the Philippine National Ballet, "Bayanihan," the magnificent Bolshoi Ballet, and nine days devoted to local star Sabah and a Lebanese folklore troupe in an original operetta. This year's tentative schedule is equally impressive: Ella, back for a return engagement in July; Lebanese singing star Feyrouz; the Prague Chamber Orchestra; Maurice Béjart's Ballet of the 22nd Century; the Spanish harpist Zabalata; and, again, pianist Richter.

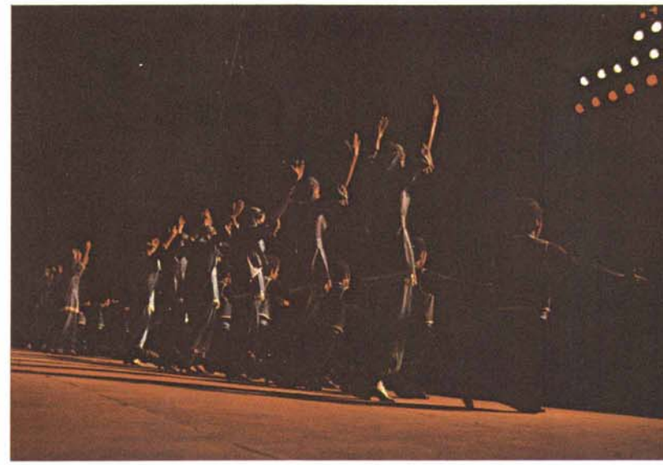


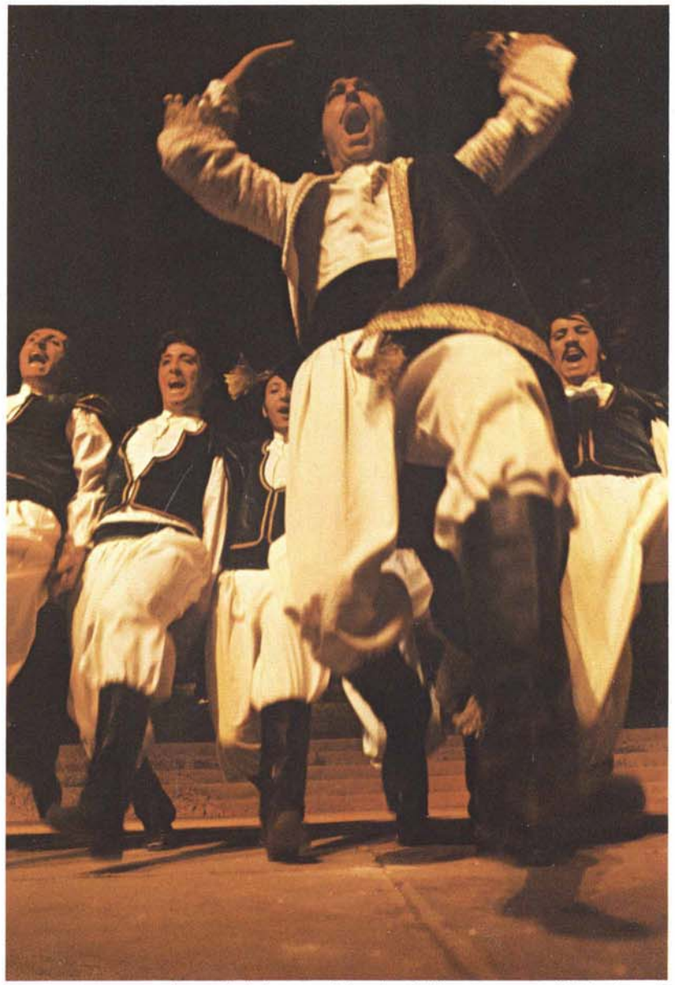
Besides ballet (left), 1971's program included Philippine folklore (insert) and chamber music (above).

Success has forced changes in the festival. Once a relatively simple, if striking production, the festival is now a closely organized operation which provides ample parking, automobile club assistance, a trained corps of volunteer ushers, Red Cross emergency help, and food and beverages at intermissions. The festival committee has even seen to the issuance of commemorative stamps and has its own official symbol, a modern adaptation of a Phoenician design depicting the sun surrounded by four planets—Jupiter included, of course.

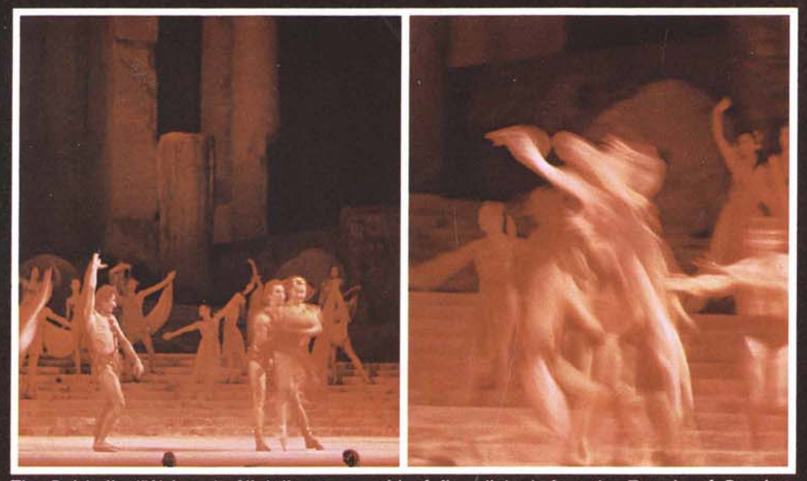
To get to Baalbek from Beirut requires an hour and a half of hair-raising driving through Lebanon's mountains, and the ribbon of tail lights on concert nights is almost as colorful as the lighted temples across the flat Bekaa Valley. Audiences enter the temple complex through a dramatic, vaulted Roman passageway 130 yards long, emerging at the base of the 70-foot-high platform of the Temple of Jupiter, surmounted by 65-foot columns—to a fanfare of stirring trumpets announcing curtain time. Elegant ladies in Paris fashions mix easily with girls in hot pants and handfuls of bearded, patched hippies as they move toward their seats on the lawn in front of the broad stone steps leading up to the giant 42-foot portal of the Temple of Bacchus. In the aisles Lebanese debutantes sell handsome souvenir programs, until, as the fanfare plays for the third time, the ancient walls and columns fade into the cool night, the conductor raises his baton, the diva clears her throat, the ballerina steps into the spotlight or Ella, incomparable Ella, joins the classics.

On the steps of a floodlit Roman temple, Ella Fitzgerald's comment, "Tonight, I joined the classics!" brought a glittering international audience to its feet cheering.





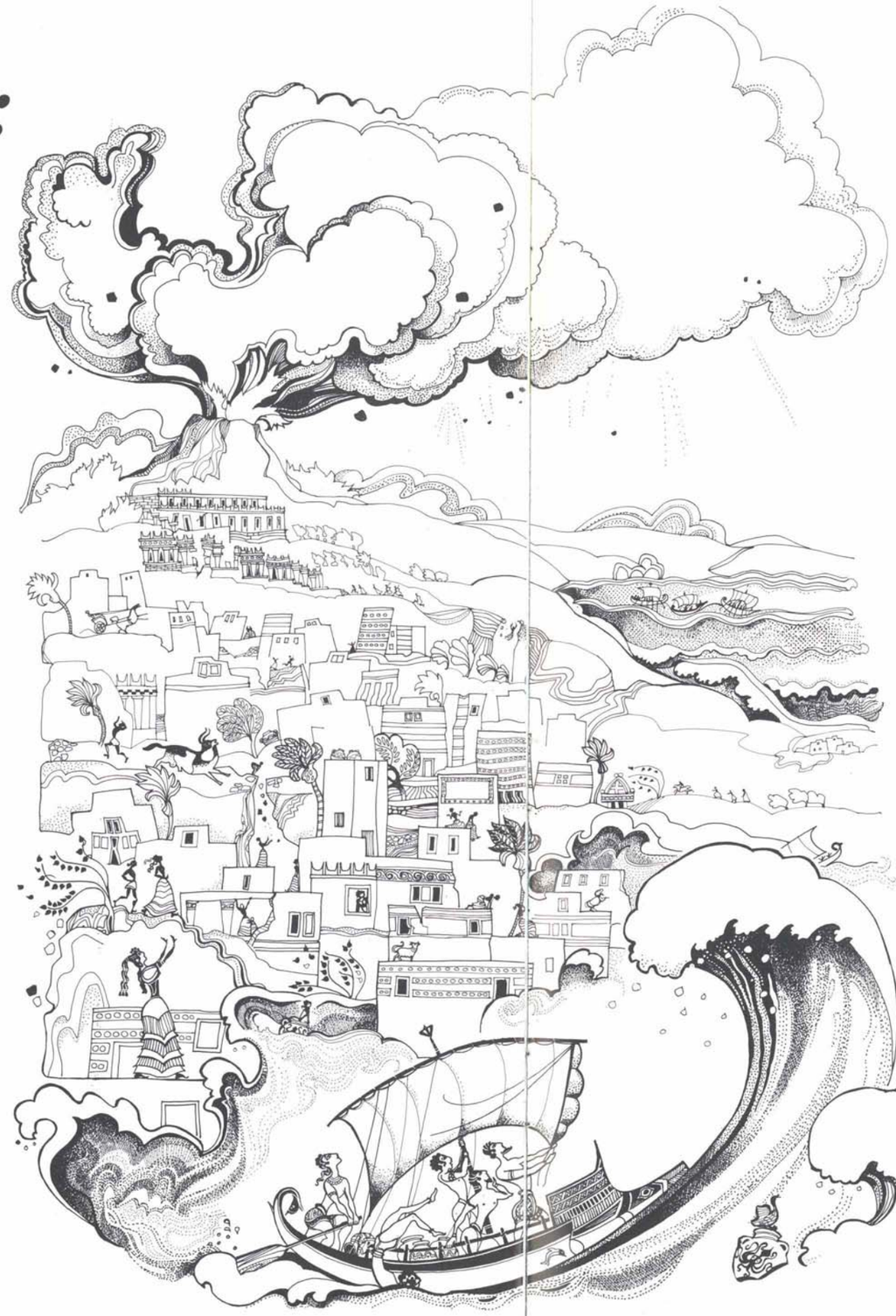
Popular Lebanese singer Sabah starred in the folklore operetta "Mahrajane."



The Bolshoi's "Walpurgis Night" was a swirl of firey light before the Temple of Bacchus.

Atlantis: legend lives on

BY ARTURO GONZALEZ



ILLUSTRATIONS BY PENNY WILLIAMS

"...There occurred violent earthquakes and floods, and in a single day and night of misfortune, all your warlike men in a body sank into the earth, and the island of Atlantis in like manner disappeared in the depths of the sea. For which reason the sea in those parts is impassable and impenetrable because there is a shoal of mud..."

Plato-"Timaeus"

These words, written centuries ago, have sent expedition after expedition chasing down the world's most fascinating and intellectual archeological detective story—what is the precise location of the lost land of Atlantis?

More than 5,000 books, and tens of thousands of magazine and newspaper articles have been written on the subject. At least one scientific party, headed 30 years ago by a certain Colonel Fawcett from Britain, went deep into the Amazon jungle in search of Atlantis and has never been heard from again.

Atlantis is a legend which dies far more slowly than the mythical country itself expired. A convention of British journalists recently ranked a verifiable re-emergence of Atlantis as one of the most important front-page stories newsmen could ever hope to write—far more compelling, in their professional opinion, than even the Second Coming of Christ. Such is the fascination of the unknown that in an era when hitting the moon with a manned expedition is a fait accompli, the thought of finding this lost land somewhere beneath the earth's endless ocean surface still captures our imagination with an intensity that few other concepts can match.

To study the alleged history of Atlantis is to journey back in time onto a magnificent continent of antiquity... to hear the cry of vendors in the crowded markets of the capital city... to listen to the clang of armor and weapons as imperial guards troop by... to see the glitter of royal crowns amidst thousands of cheering subjects. This is the vision of bygone beauty which has impelled countless scholars and scientists to turn their backs on the magnificence of their labs in modern New York, their libraries in Paris or colonnaded museums in Rome to devote a lifetime to the search for the dead, seaweed-encrusted remains of a lost, centuries-old continent—which indeed may never have existed.

These honest scientists are perhaps not the most fascinating Atlantis-seekers. Far more amusing are the theories of the many charlatans, cosmologists, faith healers and crackpots who over the years have seen Atlantis as a non-debatable historical proof for every variety of strange philosophy they may espouse. Atlantis attracts the kind of fanatics who spend their entire lives trying to prove that Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays. The Atlantis theme has, over the years, been tied variously to romanticism, racism, pacifism, theosophy, socialism, communism, and spiritualism. Crackpots have linked it with cannibalism, the Cyclops and flying saucers as well.

A Russian cosmologist named Velikovsky insisted that Jupiter erupted millennia ago and spewed up a fiery comet which sped past the earth in 1600 or 1500 B.C., swamping Atlantis in the same roaring tide which parted the Red Sea and conveniently allowed the children of Israel to pass into the Promised Land. He explains that historians make no record of this event with the convenient rationale that the human race suffers from "collective amnesia."

The most monumental Atlantis hoax was perpetrated by Herman Schleimann who, in 1912, conned the New York American into running a lengthy feature story entitled "How I Discovered Atlantis, the Source of All Civilization." This not only sold newspapers to impressed New Yorkers by the thousands, but so befuddled the academic world that many texts and source books on the Atlantis legend still list facts and figures from Schleimann's daring piece of science fiction.

Atlantis has never yet been absolutely identified or pinpointed on the earth's surface. Numerous scientists have periodically amassed mounds of conflicting evidence to "definitely and indisputably" locate the mysterious continent variously in South, West and North Africa, the Azores, the Canary Islands, the Caucasus, Ceylon, Spitsbergen, 13,000 feet up in the Andes and in the Baltic Sea. Racial experts have credited Atlantis with fathering both

the Spanish and the Italian races, and one of Hitler's hack philosophers in the 30's actually tried to trace Aryan supremacy back to the glorious Atlantans, locating the island just a few miles off the Nazi coastline.

A few years ago no less than three costly expeditions were simultaneously exploring different world sites in a futile search for the remains of Atlantis. Depth charges and sonar were being bounced off the ocean bottom near the Azores; a descendant of Leon Trotsky was skin-diving off Bermuda in search of the lost country, while the Discovery II, a British research ship, charted the Galicia Bank, a steep-sided, 20-mile-long protruberance in the seabed 2,400-feet under the Atlantic's surface 30 miles off the coast of Spain, another alleged site of the lost continent.

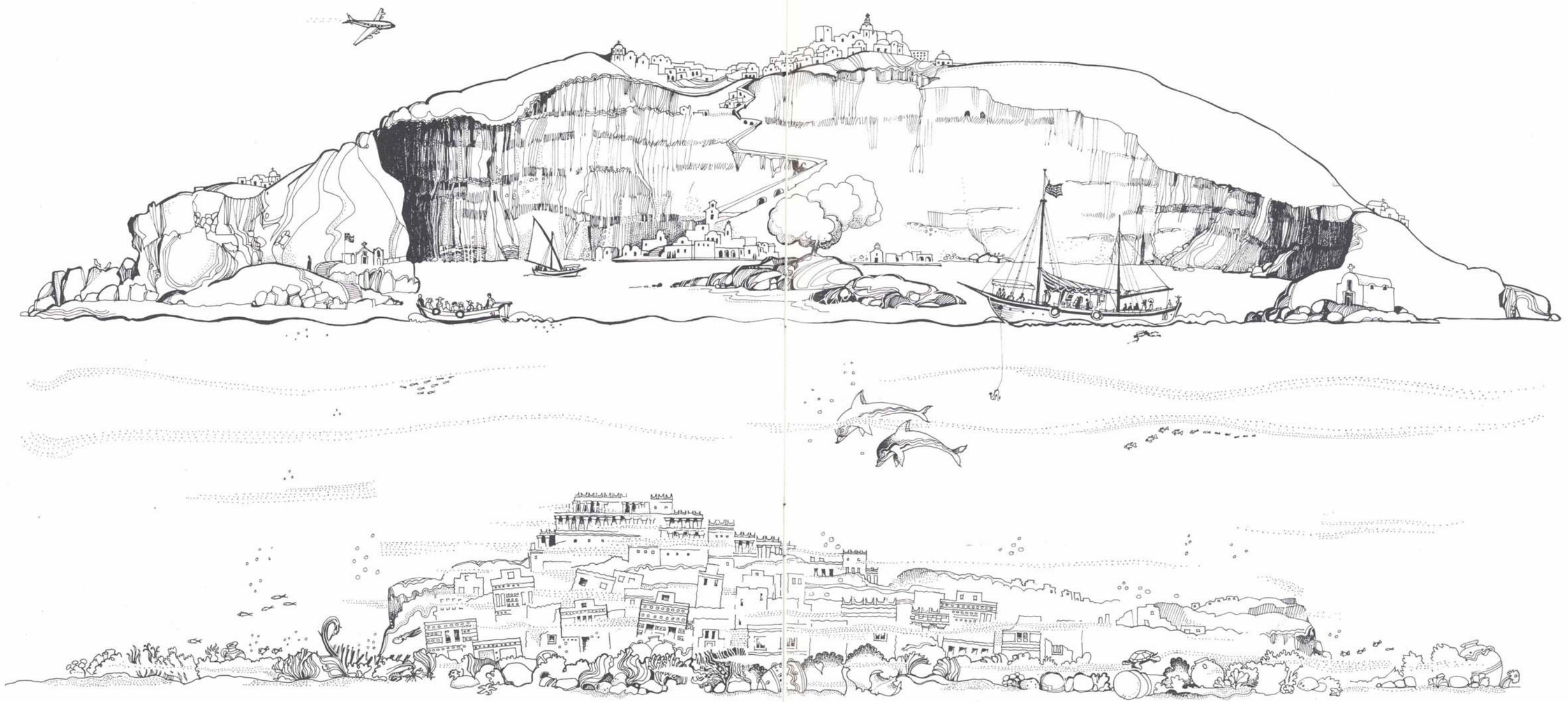
Many experts insist on placing Atlantis midway in the Atlantic Ocean, claiming this location makes it a bridge between the Old World and the New and helps to explain some striking similarities between early Egyptian and American Indian cultures, as shown, for example, by the fondness each civilization had for pyramid-like structures.

But now, two scientists persuasively argue that Atlantis was not in the Atlantic at all, but was a Mediterranean island off the coast of Greece. In their new book "Atlantis, the Truth Behind the Legend," A.G. Galanopoulos and Edward Bacon present convincing evidence that the original Atlantis is really the Island of Santorini, 78 miles northeast of Crete. Atlantis, they insist, was really a Mediterranean/Middle Eastern civilization—a culture mysteriously destroyed around 1500 B.C. They think they have even found a reason for its destruction: a massive volcanic eruption similar to the explosion which destroyed Krakatoa in Indonesia in 1883, which sent most of Santorini plunging under the sea and triggered huge tidal waves that swept up against Middle Eastern shorelines and through the Mediterranean, washing away life in the Minoan city of Knossos on Crete, just a little under 100 miles away.

There can be no doubt that Santorini was destroyed by a huge volcanic eruption in approximately 1450 B.C. Today, it remains as five islands, clearly composing the nearly perfectly circular walls and central cone of a volcano which has exploded and collapsed in on itself.

To understand how a single volcanic eruption could completely destroy a multi-island culture one has only to look at Krakatoa. When this volcano exploded in 1883, the explosion was heard 1,900 miles away and the sea was covered in pumice for more than 100 miles. So much ash went into the sky that sunsets around the world were extremely red for more than a year. It sent out tidal waves so large that ships at anchor in South America broke their mooring chains.

Using this as a yard stick, it's interesting to note that the Santorini



explosion would have been three times as large. The Krakatoa blast destroyed only nine square miles of land; the Santorini explosion would have blown up more than 31 square miles.

The huge tidal waves it caused started floods as far away as Egypt, according to the legends of Manetho, and may have been the reason why Noah took to his ark. Its waves could have even been the reason the Red Sea opened up for Moses, and the iron oxide fallout from its smoke might have been the reason that the Bible says the Nile ran red. The tidal wave it caused definitely dropped pumice on the Jaffa shoreline 562 miles away, some $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet above sea level.

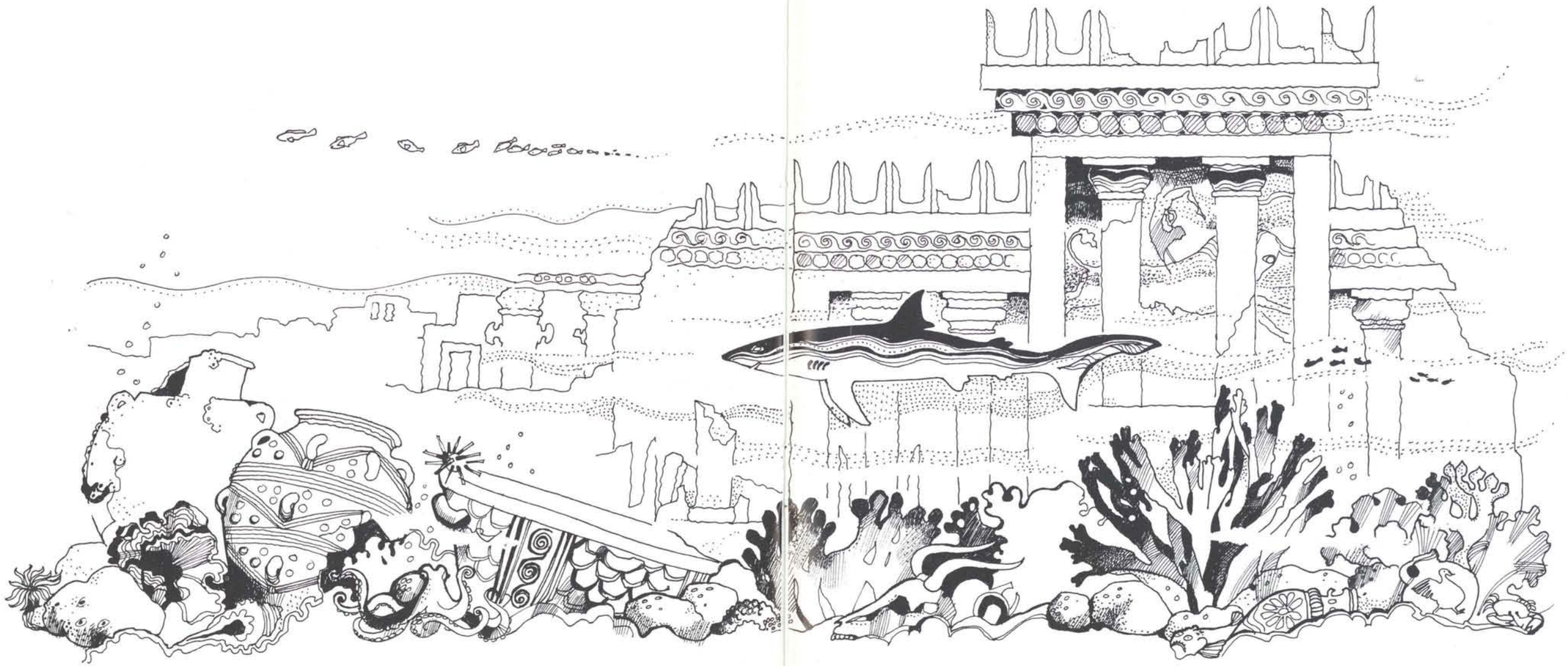
One definite result of the eruption: it buried sections of Santorini beneath 100 feet of ash. And under this ash has recently been discovered a buried Minoan town, similar to the sophisticated civilization found on Crete, and quite probably the remains of the city of Atlantis which so fascinated the Greeks because it was so civilized and then disappeared so completely. The city—called Thera—was found by an American, James W. Mavor Jr. of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. He helped build the Alvin, the mini-sub that recovered the lost H-bomb off Spain, and several years ago cruised Santorini's central bay in the research ship Chain, using sonar to map the bottom and bringing up evidence that there was a major community destroyed by the volcanic explosion below. Actually, researchers have known that there was a community under both the bay and the shoreline for more than a century; during the construction of the Suez Canal, builders found that the ash from Thera made a high-quality, waterproof cement and in digging it up, first evidences of a city under it all came to light.

Now the village looks very much as if it is becoming an Eastern Mediterranean Pompeii, an intact city of two- and three-story houses apparently still standing under the ash. As one researcher summed it up, "We had expected to find the ruins of a prehistoric town. What surprised us was that it was three-dimensional. In most finds, the ruins don't come up to your knee..." Even the frescoes, usually just piles of plaster on the floor by the time the archeologists get to them, are beautifully preserved. The first nine trenches that were dug, yielded enough artifacts to load down 35 donkeys. The absence of skeletons and gold suggests that the ancient inhabitants had some disaster warning, escaping in their boats and leaving houses and furniture sealed under the preserving ash for the scientists to find. A volcano which smoked for a few days before blowing up would have been enough to drive the frightened citizens away. Some refugees almost certainly went to Lebanon and Syria; some of today's Middle Easterners are thus Atlantans by heritage.

Where precise details on the Plato story of Atlantis and the current Cretan theory don't match exactly, there is also an explanation. Plato, after all, picked up the story, second hand, from Solon who, in turn, got it from Egyptian priests, who had been handing it down verbally for a thousand years. Possible translations and misinterpretations of the legend help to explain away the few incongruities and even the incongruities are under investigation. A small team of researchers sponsored by the government of Greece and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts is working steadily away and as recently as December a Professor Marinatos discovered some frescoes suggesting that the remains of a royal palace are not far off.

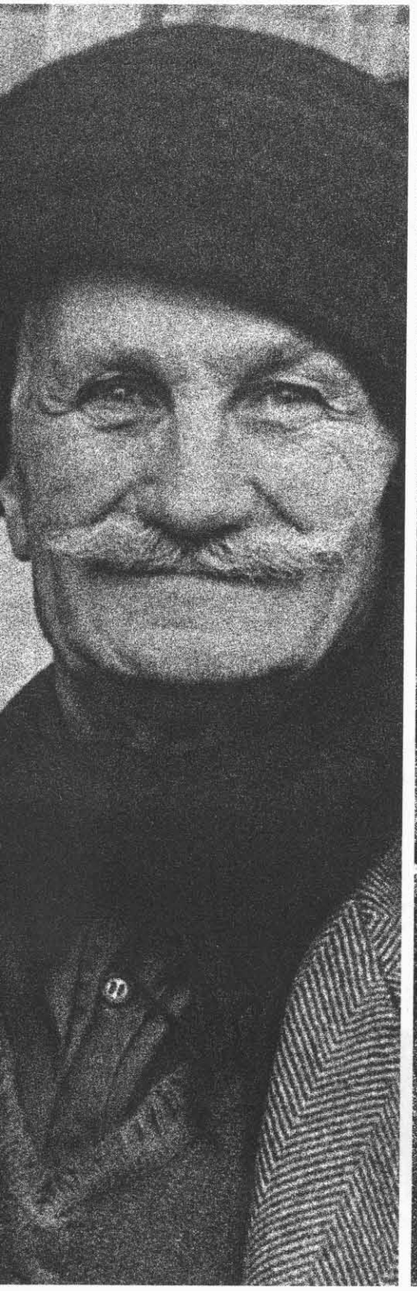
And so, the legend of Atlantis is moving from mystery to an Eastern Mediterranean fact. Now the big remaining, unsolved mystery is: what ever happened to Colonel Fawcett?

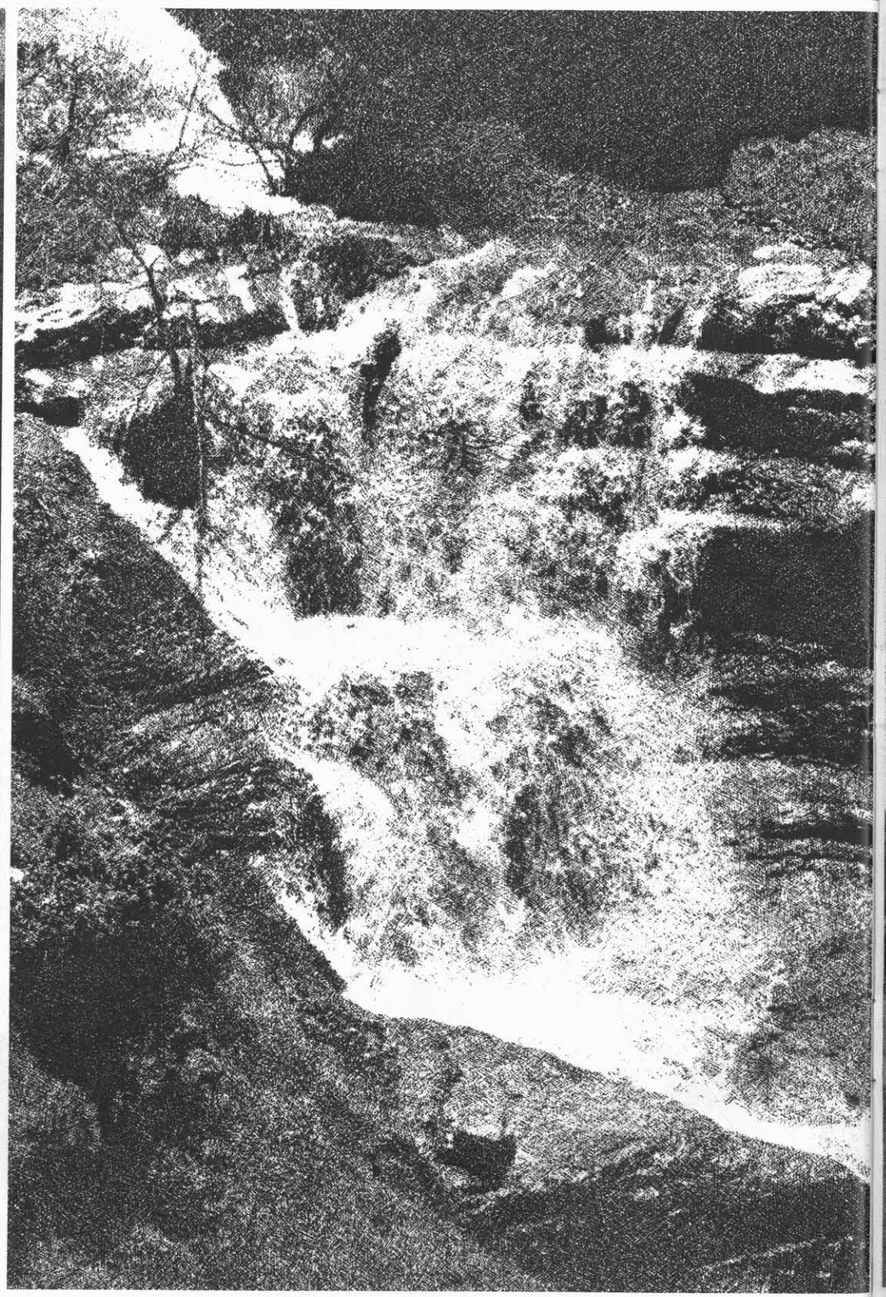
Arturo Gonzalez, formerly of Time *and McGraw-Hill International Publications, is the author of more than 900 magazine and newspaper articles.*

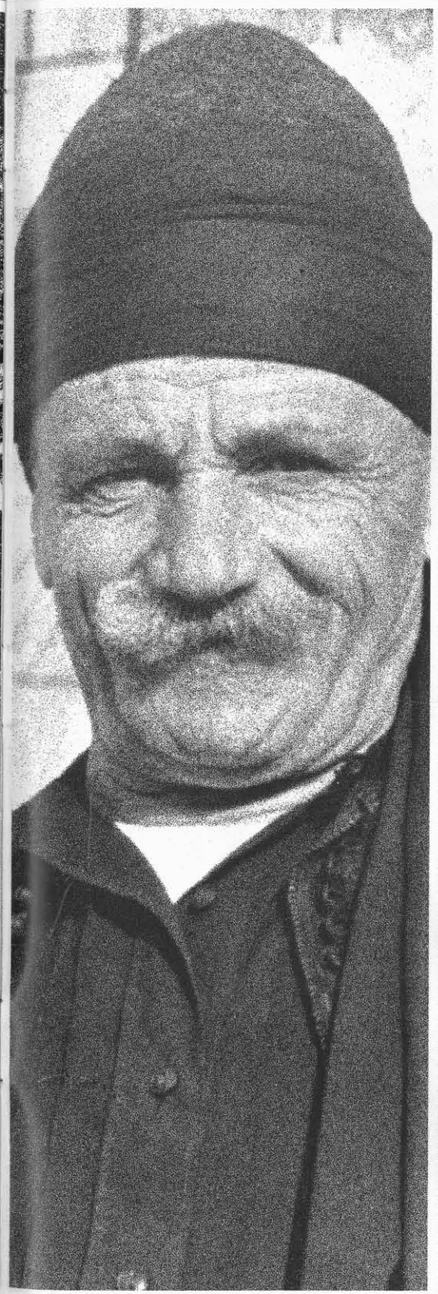


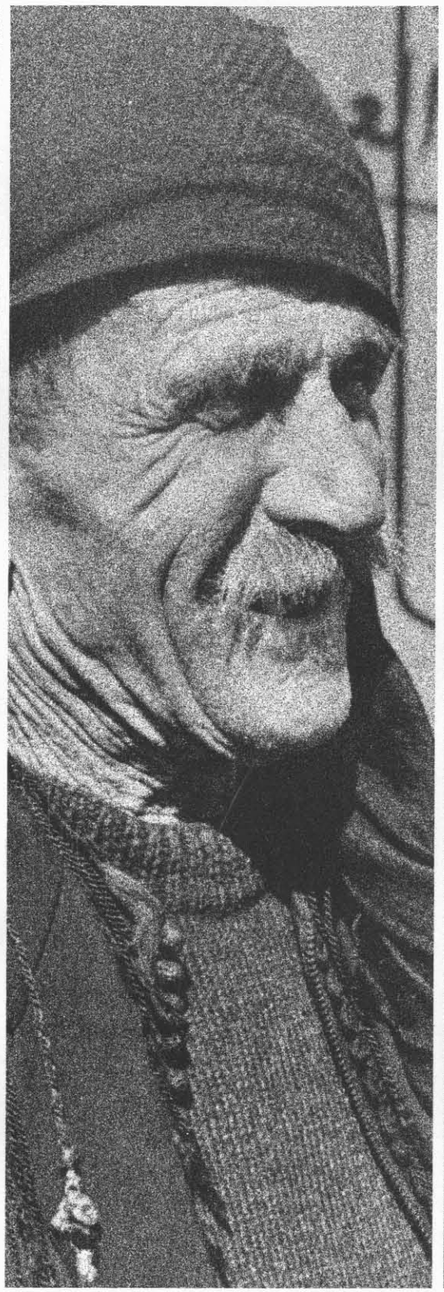
The Old Men of the Mountain

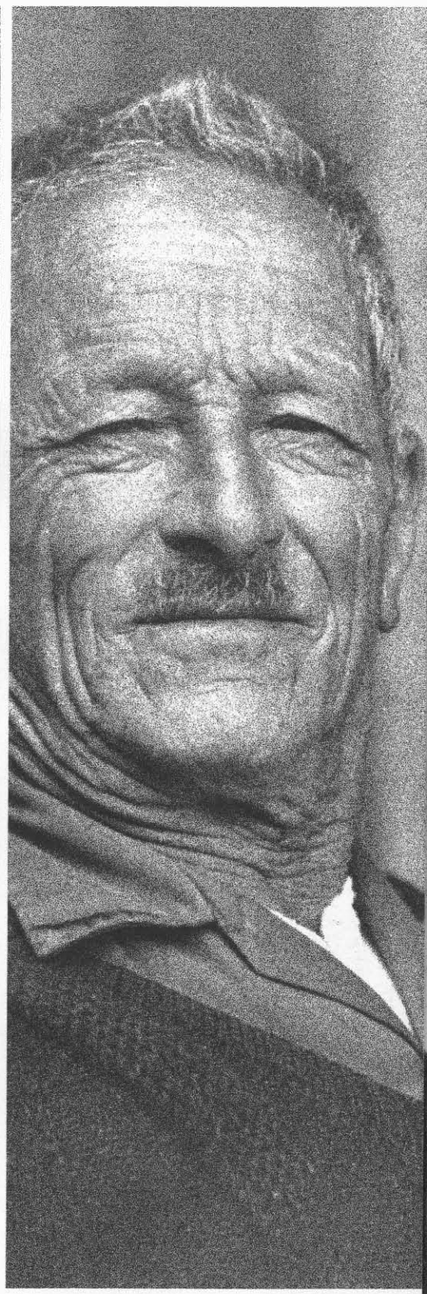
PHOTOGRAPHED BY NICHOLAS KOURIDES

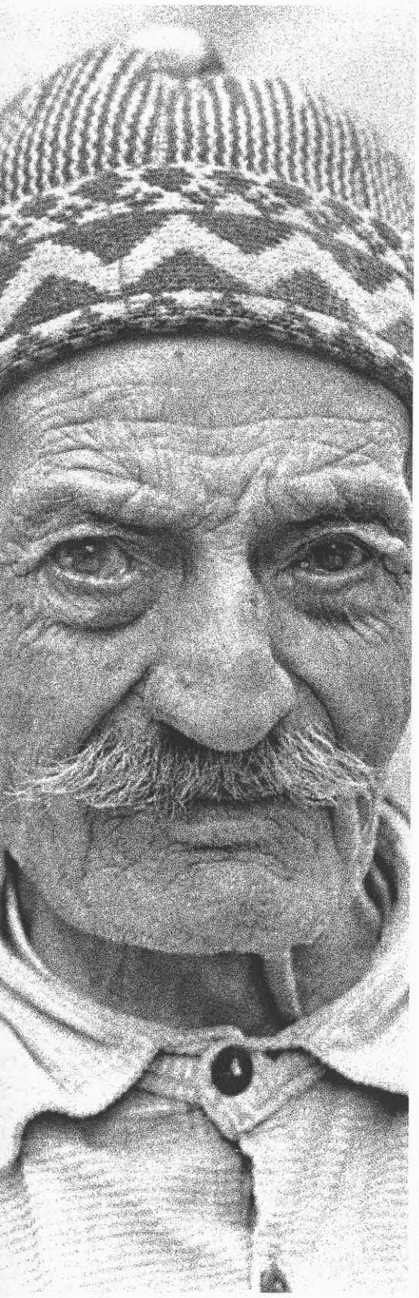


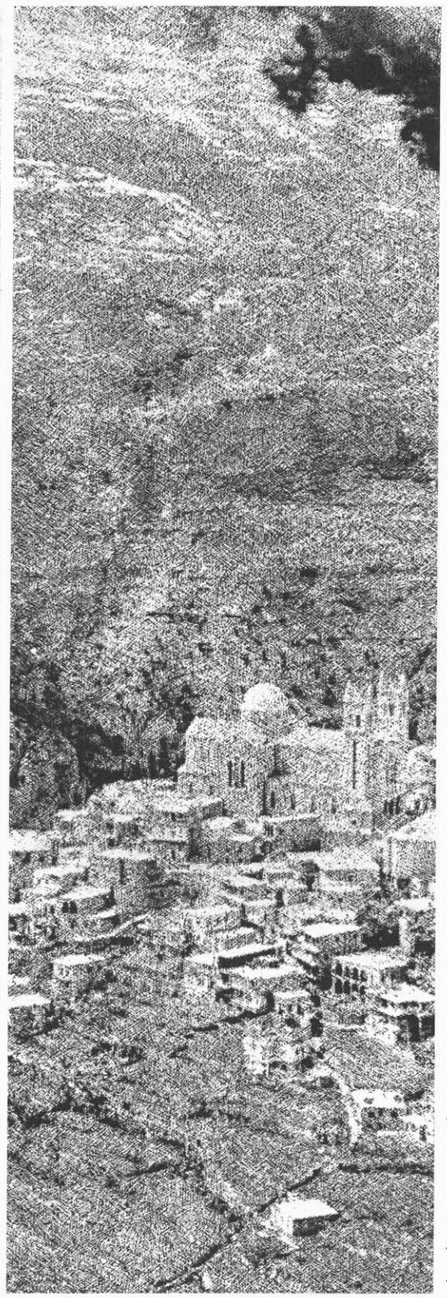












While teaching English in Beirut, photographer Nicholas Kourides developed a strong interest in Lebanon's "Gibran Country," the remote and rugged mountain valleys which inspired much of the work of his favorite poet, Kahlil Gibran.

As his interest deepened, so did his determination to capture on film the flavor of Becharri, a village perched on a fertile ledge between the deep Kadisha Gorge and the country's famous grove of cedars. To do so he focused first on the rosy, glowing children of the mountain (**Aramco World,** July-August, 1969), and then on the men of the mountain, men whose faces had been molded and weathered into seamed, strong reflections of the mountains that had nourished Gibran's writing.

Nicholas Kourides has long since returned to the United States where he now practices law in New York, but his photographs of these proud, dignified mountain men are as enduring as the terraces hacked from the mountain sides by men just like them years ago and as rugged as the gorges carved from the mountains by endless torrents of rushing water.

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