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Audiovisual Archives of Hellenism Two Research Projects**

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The audiovisual memory of the Greek diaspora (press, radio, television, cinema, photography) is such a vitally important part of the social, cultural, economic and political history of the Greeks abroad that priority must be given to the preservation and utilization of that heritage for research. An integrated preservation policy involves not only restoring and cataloguing the material, but also making it available to the public and therefore more visible and accessible to researchers and producers of audiovisual works.

Over the last decade, interest in the preservation and exploitation of written archives, especially audiovisual archives, has grown. In fact A/V archives have become the theme of many EU-subsidized projects. The poor condition of written and audiovisual archives in Greece recently led to the recognition of an urgent need to preserve the national heritage of Greece and its diaspora. Two research projects: *Encyclopaedia of the Greek Press, 1784-1996* and the thematic proposal *Mediterranean Diaspora: Visions of Multicultural and Multilingual Encounter through the Audiovisual Archives*, which is part of the CapMed project for the preservation and exploitation of the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual memory, focus on the audiovisual archives of Hellenism.

These two projects are run by the Institute for Neohellenic Research/The National Hellenic Research Foundation (KNE/EIE) and the Hellenic Audiovisual Institute (IOM) of the Greek Ministry for the Press and Mass Media respectively.

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The press, as an expression of the intellectual, social and economic life of those societies, is one of the most interesting and significant phenomena of modern societies. However, in order for there to be a press, there first has to be an organized society with its own particular national lifestyle. In Greece, at least during the period before such a thing as a Greek state existed, the press occupied a rather special position. Indeed, the very fact that it existed in the Greek diaspora goes to show that, although Hellenism did not constitute a specific national framework in any concrete form during the years prior to the revolution, the diaspora was nevertheless made up of a number of social groups, living within an organized social structure.

By the term *Greek* press we mean the newspapers and magazines published in Greece and the diaspora by Greeks for a Greek audience, as well as newspapers and magazines written in Greek or in two languages or even in a foreign language only. The term also refers to the writings of persons of Greek nationality but of foreign origin, e.g. Jewish or Turkish.

The problem facing any student or researcher of the Greek press is that the material is dispersed in various different sources, in libraries, archives and private collections throughout Greece and the diaspora. We therefore need to codify this wealth of dispersed material in order

- to study the history of the creation and development of the modern Greek press,
- to examine the conditions that led to its existence, the circles from which it emerged and the profile of its readers
- to determine its role in portraying but also shaping modern Greek society
- and in order to discover the people and organisations that pioneered in the field.

To address this need, we believe that what is required initially is an easily accessible, user-friendly, reliable guide, an encyclopaedia which will provide users with detailed information about the major events in the history of the Greek press and at the same time allow them to focus on specific problems and issues so that they can get a full pic-

ture of the subject and its development over the years. This encyclopaedia will cover newspapers, magazines, publishers, journalists in Greece and the diaspora, as well as various other sources of information (trade unions, legislation referring to the press, almanacs of the Greek press, etc.). The first edition is expected to cover a cross-section of 3,000 entries which, on the basis of agreed criteria, were selected as being the most significant.

The material collected will also constitute the contents of an open horizon data base, which will be as exhaustive as possible and will be constantly up-dated. The data base will be set up at the Athens News Agency and will be directly accessible to anyone interested.. The whole data base is also due to be issued on CD-ROM.

This is the first time the project has been set up in Greece and it is an important contribution to the study of the history of the Greek press. The programme is being run by the KNE/EIE in the framework of European programs co-financed by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology.

The research team is made up of press researchers and journalists, and has developed an extensive cooperation network with over one hundred external experts in the field, colleagues from Greece and the diaspora. Also working on the project are university undergraduates and postgraduate students, who get an opportunity to take a close look at the material and familiarize themselves with the research project.

The project has completed its first phase, which involved:

- preparing special inventory forms a) for the newspaper/magazine and b) for the journalist/personality from the Greek press, in order to make out a list of entries and enter the material into the data base. Wherever possible inventory forms are inspected as they are filled in to assist in
- drafting instructions for filling in the forms,
- setting selection criteria for newspapers/magazines and personalities in order to write out the Encyclopaedia entries,

- determining the specifications for writing the entries,
- designing the data base,
- tracking down material from indexes of bibliographies, biographies, obituaries and finding other material dispersed in books, periodicals, pamphlets and newspapers,
- compiling four lists of newspaper/magazine titles and lists of names of journalists/press celebrities a) in full detail, ready for entry into the data base and b) in the form in which they will be printed in the Encyclopaedia.

We also cooperated with the following organisations/individuals, who have access to relevant material:

- archives of journalists' associations and other similar organisations,
- private archives and collections,
- central public libraries in Athens and the regions,
- General State Archives,
- journalists' unions,
- publishers of newspapers /magazines. In some cases the newspapers/magazines themselves are invited to help write the entries for their own papers and journalists. In the case of journalists who are alive, we ask them in person, wherever possible, for their biographies.

So far over seven thousand (7,000) inventory forms have been entered into the data base, while work continues on writing the corresponding entries, which is the main objective of the second phase of the program.

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The research proposal of the IOM for the 'Mediterranean Diaspora: Visions of Multicultural and Multilingual Encounter through the Audiovisual Archives', which has been incorporated into the 'CapMed' program, is especially relevant in the context of establishing a permanent record of the audiovisual memory of Hellenism.

A number of European and international audiovisual organisations realised that the preservation and exploitation of the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual heritage was becoming a necessity.

These organisations include Audiovisual EUREKA, a pan-European audiovisual organisation with 34 member-states, the Permanent Conference for Audiovisual Cooperation in the Mediterranean (Conférence Permanente de l'Audiovisuel Méditerranéen, CoPeAM), the largest professional organisation for audiovisual cooperation with 27 member-states, the International Federation of Television Archives (IFTA/FIAT), the International Federation of Film Archives (IFFA/FIAF), the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (INA), (France).

These organisations joined their efforts and organized the First Conference on the Euro-Mediterranean Audiovisual Memory in Sitges, Spain, 10-11 October 1997. This conference was supported by the European Commission, mainly by the Unit: Measures for the Development of the Audiovisual Industry, UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

The conference unanimously acknowledged the social and economic importance of archives and the need for economic measures enabling the creation of programmes, restoration of archival material and easy access to researchers and professionals. The conference resulted in a proposal for a pilot program, entitled 'CapMed', for the Euro-Mediterranean television archives. Another issue raised was the possibility of expanding the pilot program so as to include the countries of southern and eastern Europe.

The plan for the CapMed programme was introduced as one of the key projects for the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual archives at the 'Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Audiovisual and TV Cooperation' in Thessaloniki on 14-15 November 1997.

The CapMed programme, finally, was submitted as an INA project, along the lines of the call for proposals by EuroMed Audiovisual of the European Commission, General Directorate 1B(DG1B). The pro-

gram is fully consistent with the conclusions of the European Conference in Sitges, Spain and the conclusions of Thessaloniki.

INA is managing the project, which began in January 2000 and will continue for a duration of forty-two (42) months.

CapMed's object and goal, as mentioned, is the preservation of the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual memory. To attain this goal the requirements of the program are to design a thematic data base, in order to enable easy and direct access to Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual archives and provide access through the CapMed website. Users of the data base will be able to select information according to subject, place, name of producer, etc. They will also be able to obtain information about the conditions and procedures for acquisition of the archive material entered in the data base.

In order for the data base to function successfully, it is estimated that a critical mass of approximately 5,000 documents, amounting to 3,000 hours, will be necessary.

Audiovisual archives from eleven Mediterranean countries are working together in the program. These are: the Egyptian Radio-Television Union (ERTU), Jordan Radio and Television Corporation (JRTC), Teleliban, Palestine Broadcasting Corporation (PBC), Greek Radio-Television (ERT), Public Broadcasting Services (PBS) Malta, Television Catalina (TVC), RAI of Italy, Morocco Television (2M), Cypriot Radio-Television, Algerian Television. Two research institutes are also participating: the Hellenic Audiovisual Institute (IOM) of the Ministry for the Press & Mass Media and the Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme (MMSH), Marseilles, France. IOM's participation in the program focuses on two axes:

The scientific coordination of the partners in the CapMed project, Research on the Mediterranean Diaspora through audiovisual archive records.

The proposal on the Mediterranean Diaspora has been included in the thematic classification categories of the archive material that will

be entered in the CapMed data base. The IOM will observe the phenomenon of the Greek diaspora through the audiovisual archive of ERT and the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual archives. It will also coordinate the other partners in the program as regards the theme of the diaspora of their respective countries. The Institute has undertaken to set up a team of historians from the eleven countries concerned.

The Mediterranean region is the meeting point of many cultures and civilisations. Its Diaspora constitutes not only a fundamental part of Mediterranean history but also an integral part of European culture as a whole. The archives therefore, and in this case the audiovisual archives, that exist in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean perimeter are of vital importance as a contribution towards the construction of Europe, which makes it imperative that they be preserved and developed for research.

The Mediterranean, as a geographical area with large movements of populations, was an important centre for the social and economic development of ethnic minorities. The presence of immigrants and their societies played a decisive role in shaping the cosmopolitan image of the Mediterranean. Greece is one Mediterranean country with a long history in the migration of peoples. Greek immigrants were extremely enterprising in Egypt, Malta, the Middle East, Italy, France and elsewhere. A major part of a wealth of archive material remains, however, unexplored, and in many instances hidden in basements or warehouses.

The IOM's thematic proposal on the Mediterranean Diaspora seeks to outline the images of the Diaspora as presented a) in documentaries, b) in television series, c) on the news. It examines the following aspects of the Diaspora phenomenon:

- the integration of the Diaspora communities into the social, economic and cultural life of the host countries
- the presence and contribution of these communities within their new-found countries.

This research is expected to result in

- a) the creation of a data base for local images, to complement the central data base of the CapMed programme. This is felt to be useful because it will make it possible to collect thematic images of the local history of those countries taking part;
- b) the promotion of productions/co-productions related to the presence of the Mediterranean Diaspora in the host countries, socially, economically and culturally, its integration into those countries and its contribution to Mediterranean history and culture;
- c) a presentation of the research findings at international conferences;
- d) publication (in edited and electronic form) of the results and their evaluation.

Although visual memory began to be recorded systematically in the 1950s, the research proposed by IOM will cover the chronological period from the beginning of the 20th century up to the present day, so as to enable a better understanding of the phenomenon of the Mediterranean Diaspora.

Apart from its research work, the Institute is the scientific coordinator of the CapMed project. This involves creating a communication network with the other partners in the programme and designing the methodology to be used in the broader data base design of the programme. IOM will also establish a network of historians from each participant country. It will organise regular meetings for cooperation among the operators of the countries involved and will oversee the progress of the work and the results of the research up to the final evaluation phase.

The team will determine collectively the theoretical and historical

boundaries of the research and the main topics of interest (key words) in the classification of the archive material.

As key topics, to study the audiovisual heritage of the Mediterranean Diaspora, the Institute proposes the following:

- The population of the Mediterranean immigrants (total geographical population grouped according to region, age apportionment, time spent in the host country, etc.),
- Professional activities,
- Education,
- Linguistic characteristics (level of knowledge of the mother tongue),
- Religion,
- Information (about the printed and electronic press),
- Immigrant organisations (unions, councils, social groups, etc.)

IOM's research interest in the audiovisual memory of the Mediterranean Diaspora is related to a broader interest in the audiovisual archive sector. It is trying to create a central information system for all Greek audiovisual (especially electronic) archives, starting with those in Greece and, at a later stage, extending its cooperation to the audiovisual archives of the Greek Diaspora.

The CapMed programme can serve as an essential tool in preserving the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual memory. Its potential is obvious as an aid in the recording and thematic classifying of Mediterranean archival treasures. It facilitates cooperation among a considerable number of audiovisual archives in the Mediterranean and provides networking with a view to the conservation and utilization of the Euro-Mediterranean audiovisual heritage. It supports the creation of new audiovisual productions/co-productions and the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between audiovisual stations and archives. It also contributes towards a better knowledge of the cultural activities of the peoples of the Mediterranean, whose diachronic dimension is enhanced by the Institute's thematic proposal for the Mediterranean Diaspora.

Research into the Greek diaspora, Greeks abroad, emigration and repatriation — a phenomenon of huge significance in the history of Greek emigration — has long been a subject of interest for experienced observers and academics. Important, ground-breaking research has focused on the great centres of the Greek diaspora (Egypt, Vienna, Australia, etc.). Scientific research, however, which mainly stems from individual initiative on the part of researchers, is fragmented and a cohesive research policy is lacking. Thematically, it is dominated by the fields of economics, sociology and education/linguistics, and recently there has been a greater show of interest from the fields of history and political science.

Historical research through audiovisual archives, a fairly recent primary source of research, offers a new approach to studying the phenomenon of the Greek diaspora and lends a new dimension to the pursuit of history.

The two above-mentioned research projects are a contribution towards providing this new dimension since they attempt to record and codify the wealth of existing audiovisual archive material, preserving it in easy-to-use data bases, and thus helping to ensure that it can continue to be used for research and production.