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Audio-visual aids in peripheral European countries

Supplement: Malta and Cyprus

by
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AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS IN PERIPHERAL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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This report on several aspects of the educational situation in Malta and Cyprus is a supplement of the author's survey "Audio-visual aids in peripheral European countries" written under contract for the Council of Europe and published as a companion volume in the series "Education in Europe". The author visited Malta and Cyprus in the Spring of 1967 under the same conditions as indicated in the foreword of the above-mentioned survey, his thanks are due to the authorities in Malta and Nicosia and to the representatives of MBA and CBC for their friendliness, advice and co-operation.

Edmund Luft

M A L T A

There is no official audio visual aids centre and no filmstrips and slides lending library in Malta. Several years ago the governmental educational budget showed an amount of nearly 2000 L annually for audio visual equipment but later the sum was cancelled. Today the school funds, consisting chiefly of contributions of the parents' associations, are the main source of revenue itself for buying audio visual material. In primary schools (120 with 45,000 pupils) film or filmstrip-projectors are rarely found, secondary schools (28 with 9,000 pupils) are provided at least with one tape recorder, one projector and some series of filmstrips or slides covering mainly subjects in the field of geography, religion, art and general science. Nearly all primary schools and all secondary schools are equipped with rediffusion or radio receivers. Secondary schools are moreover equipped with sets.

The most important educational assistance comes indeed from the Malta Broadcasting Authority. Since many years MBA organises and produces sound broadcasts to schools. Out of 10.000 L available for sound broadcasting nearly 7.000 is spent for educational sound broadcasts. In 1966, for example, 202 programmes will be made available to 112 primary schools. A School Broadcasting Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of the Director of Education gives advice to the programme department. The latter unit provides furthermore the governmental and private secondary schools with taped programmes prepared by BBC. The service of some 300 tapes is free of charge, one-third of the schools in Malta and Gozo take advantage of the offer.

The series of the sound programmes - 33 per cent in Maltese language - are dealing with general science, history, language, geography, civics and religion. Special feature programmes are designed to arouse the interest in current affairs, general knowledge and music. The language-training in English ("Let's find out", "What happens next" etc.) and in Maltese ("Bil-Fomm u l-Kitba"), which encourages the pupils to make full use of their powers of observation and expression is of great educational and practical value. Recording experiments of school-discussions were made to produce programmes on the art of speaking in public.

A school reporter's questionnaire scheme provides the broadcasting unit with classroom reactions to the programme. The co-operation coming from headmasters and teachers is very satisfactory. A lively monthly entitled "The Young Listener" is published by MBA. This magazine is closely linked to school broadcasting, it is sold at 2d and each issue has a circulation of approximately 18,000 copies.

With the assistance of the British Council the MBA started in January 1966 an educational television service provided for secondary schools and aimed at senior classes preparing for their G.C.E. The basic material on the subject "Magnetism and Electricity" was obtained from the Centre for Educational Television Overseas (CETO); a special MBA team drew up the programme in the light of Maltese conditions. Twenty-three secondary schools as well as two teacher training colleges viewed the programme, the reactions were very encouraging. MBA is broadening considerably the activity in this field. - Since there is the possibility to receive the Italian TV programme (distance to Sicily 100 Km) "Telescuola" has met with some interest.

Several governmental or private institutions, such as: Civil Defence, Emergency Service, Medical and Health Department with a mobile unit, the Information Department with special documentary material and M.U.S.E.U.M., a club organisation of public welfare and religious teaching character, use audio-visual material, especially 16mm films.

Malta, in view of its important role in world-traffic and of its situation in the mediterranean area, is by tradition open to international exchanges and in favour of strengthening its links with other countries. Cultural and community life is

active, and youth takes a keen interest in contacts with the outside world. There is an always increasing interest in technology, engineering and commercial management. With communication and emigration playing an important role in the life and economy of these islands the accent of the basis educational work lies on geography, mathematics and language teaching. The teachers ask for more material and equipment to ameliorate especially the primary schools' conditions. Their demand for audio-visual material is linked with the wish to have a better knowledge of the principles and results of modern audio-visual methods.

In summing up, it should be stated that there is:

- 1) no official audio-visual aids centre,
- 2) no filmstrip and film lending library,
- 3) important educational assistance of the Maltese Broadcasting Authority amounting to approximately 200 sound programmes annually and to an expanding TV education programme,
- 4) shortage of projectors and audio-visual material in primary schools,
- 5) little experience among teachers with modern audio-visual methods,
- 6) scarce knowledge of the volume and variety of foreign filmstrip slides and documentary films stock,
- 7) great interest in contacts and co-operation with other countries and their audio-visual experts.

C Y P R U S

There is, so far, no governmental educational film library or central filmstrip and slides collection in Nicosia but the Ministry of Education has a very active department (inspectorate) for audio-visual aids and schools' television.

The school funds are the main source of revenue for buying audio-visual material. They are composed as follows:

- money made available annually through the local Education Committee;
- annual subsidy at the rate of two schillings per pupil coming from the Ministry of Education;
- contribution by the parents' association.

Funds thus collected for each school range between 40 and 150£ annually. Headmasters of schools are annually supplied with lists giving all available audio-visual materials. These lists are drawn up by a committee composed of teachers and inspectors and list the material according to availability and priority needs. The headmasters put in their orders according to the needs of their schools and the money available. The orders are collected at the Ministry which in turn asks for tenders and supplies the schools.

The equipment of the primary schools with audio-visual material is as follows:

Almost all the 542 primary schools (with its 72 500 pupils) use basic visual material for teaching in the elementary school curriculum, but only 15% of these schools have a filmstrip projector and approximately 5% of them possess a tape-recorder. Schools with filmstrip-projectors are also equipped with about 15 series of 20 slides each for the teaching of history and geography; this material was designed by the Ministry of Education.

The 52 secondary and vocational schools (with 28 000 pupils) have filmstrip projectors, tape recorders, record-players and some of them possess 16 mm film projectors. Recently there has been an attempt to establish a Mobile Film Unit, but financial difficulties and the absence of a well equipped central film library caused the adjournment of the plan.

The Ministry is also considering the establishment of a filmstrip-and slides-lending library.

The Turkish schools are in a similar state. In primary schools (277 totalling 16 500 pupils) equipment and use of modern audio visual material is limited. The equipment of the secondary and vocational schools (21 totalling 6 000 students) is much better but neither sufficient nor satisfactory having regard to modern standards. There are radio sets, tape recorders, filmstrip - projectors and tapes and filmstrip-series on subjects in the field of religion, geography, folklore as well as on general subjects.

The Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation is expanding considerably its educational activity. As of now there were no sound transmissions to schools. A committee consisting of the Director for Elementary Education, the Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools, the Inspector for audio visual aids, the head of Greek programmes and a representative of the elementary school teachers organisation have worked on the project of introducing radio transmissions in elementary schools during the scholastic year 1967-68.

The total Greek Radio programmes cover 137 hours weekly. The volume of educational, informational and cultural programmes is 39 hours. Hitherto in the section for adult education were offered programmes on the English, French, and modern Greek language, a weekly programme of the "University of the Air" kind which was taped before an audience and contained lectures by distinguished men of letters, science and education and a question and answer period for the benefit of the audience at large, various cultural programmes on literature, history, art etc. that amount to about 11 hours weekly. A second channel broadcasts classical music and cultural programmes on a higher level; these transmissions amount to 18 hours per week.

Regular television broadcasts by the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation cover 15 hours weekly. During the scholastic year 1966-67 CBC had weekly programmes of biology and geography of 20 minutes duration each. The programmes served as a complement to instruction provided by the teacher in the classroom, but they could provide complete instruction by themselves when there was no specialist teacher available. TV lessons on the direct teaching method were used for these.

These two programmes with which the educational television was launched had been transmitted for the pupils in their first year of secondary education. In the second semester a series of programmes on physics was broadcast for the pupils of the third grade of the Gymnasium.

The expansion of this educational activity consists of a series of 15 programmes on Greek culture, lessons in English and French and a series of programmes on anthropology for pupils in the second grade of secondary education.

The programmes are broadcast through the CBC channels during the morning. Effective and total reception is guaranteed by the fact that the Ministry of Education has full power over syllabi, methodology and equipment. Therefore the educational transmissions are fully incorporated into the school programme. The schools' television organiser supervises reception by frequent visits to the schools and has discussions with the headmasters and the specialist teachers. The organiser checks the distribution of pupils' workbooks and teachers' notes before the transmission begins.

Questionnaires are completed by teachers and tabulated under the supervision of the school television organiser. The analysis of the questionnaire is the only research carried out systematically by the educational television staff.

The basic material for the initial educational programmes was made available by the Centre for Educational Television Overseas (CETO) in London. No exchanges with other organisations have, as yet, taken place.

The organisational structure of CBC's Educational Television may be of some interest. A Schools' Television Advisory Committee was set up, with the Minister of Education as president and with the Chairman of the Board of CBC as Vice-President. The committee which advises the Ministry and the Broadcasting Company on problems related to educational television, includes heads of departments in the Ministry of Education (7) and the CBC (5), representatives of the Elementary, Secondary and Technical Teachers Associations (3), a representative of the Central Committee of Parents' Associations (1) and of the Town School Committees (1), Head teachers (2), an Assistant Head teacher (1) and representatives of cultural associations (3).

Since the large Advisory Committee cannot deal efficiently with all details, a smaller Schools' TV Committee was set up. It consists of the Directors of Higher and Secondary, Primary and Technical Education, the Schools' TV organiser, an Assistant Head of a Secondary School, the Assistant Head of Television and the Director of Greek programmes, who is the chairman of the committee. It is the task of this committee to study the possibilities of educational TV, to prepare the budget, to set goals, to give priorities and organise the entire scheme, acting as the over-all producer for the programmes.

Under the responsibility of this committee a CBC production manager, who supervises the actual production, and the schools' TV organiser, who heads the Ministry of Education team for educational TV carry out their duties. Generally speaking the former is responsible for matters of form whereas the latter is responsible for the contents of the programmes.

There are several basic problems in the educational structure of the island: only (compulsory) education on elementary level is free of charge; there is a shortage of specialized secondary schools teachers and a shortage of technical schools to meet the demand of skilled workers; there is the question of a reform of the curriculum of the gymnasium and the demand to intensify the knowledge of modern educational (audio visual) methods among the teachers.

To ameliorate first of all the basic conditions it would be advisable

- to establish a filmstrip- slides- and 16 mm film Library,
- to organise with the assistance of international experts a teacher seminar on the modern use of audio visual material,
- to examine all possibilities to establish and run a Mobile Film Unit.

In spite of the urgency of the basic problems on various aspects of education, the all-over school life of the Island has a very lively character. We observed great personal activity in order to ameliorate all branches of teaching, a remarkable openness for new ideas and a reasonable approach to go ahead using ones own invention and help from outside. We found headmasters and teachers of both schooltypes who accept any offer from the various embassies, the British Council or the US Information Service to lend filmmaterial and projectors. We had the impression that the instruction was of high quality. The teachers, especially of the elementary schools, everywhere pointed out that they would like to enlarge their work by the use of audio visual material, in particular slides or filmstrip-projection. In primary schools of the rural areas we found that projection is often difficult because of the lack of curtains in the classrooms. It is likely that parents' organisations will help out if they become aware of need.

- In summing up :
- 1) no official Lending Library of slides, filmstrips and films
 - 2) increasing activity of CBC with educational sound and television broadcasts
 - 3) officials, teachers and pupils open to modern audio visual instruction
 - 4) demand for international assistance and for a teachers' seminar on audio visual methods.

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Results

Malta and Cyprus are different in many ways but some details concerning our subject are similar if not equal. There is in both countries

- no audio visual lending library
- not enough facilities for technical education and audio visual material for technical demonstration
- a shortage of specialized teachers on secondary level (Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry)
- a demand for teacher - training in the right use of all kinds of modern audio visual material
- a demand for an intensified information of the international material available in the field of filmstrips, slides and 16 mm films
- a demand for consultation, assistance, cooperation and permanent contacts with organisations abroad.

(please see report "Audio visual aids in peripheral European countries "Page 25-26)

Recommendations

Please see report "Audio-visual aids in peripheral European countries" page 29-30 and add:

It is proposed that the CCC forms a team of international audio visual aids-experts and organises in connection with the Ministries of Education in peripheral countries teachers' Seminars on the technical and theoretical aspects and practical use of modern material.