Cultural development

Documentary dossier 24

Arts Education for Children in the Nordic and other Regions

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Unesco

The aim of these booklets is to make available documentation and data assembled on certain aspects of cultural development pursuant to resolution 3.321 (c) of the General Conference (seventeenth session).

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INTRODUCTION

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International Society for Education through Art

The International Year of the Child, declared by the United Nations Organization in 1979, gave the world the opportunity of considering the various aspects of the development of those innocent and creative human beings whom we also refer to as future adults.

The International Society for Education through Art (INSEA) welcomed the initiative taken by the United Nations and found it appropriate to collaborate with Unesco in preparing this study on the creativity and arts education of the child. The document attempts to look at the arts taught to children in a number of different countries and in a variety of educational institutions.

The task was approached by seeking the support of a number of experts throughout the world. The response was encouraging, and this dossier includes material primarily from the Nordic region, and also from Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Hungary, Japan, U.S.A.

Arts education taught to children varies from country to country in style, prestige, purpose and acceptance. A wider knowledge is developing of the value of such education throughout the world. Teachers, whether specialists or not, are teaching children to value the culture of their society, past and present, through the arts. Moreover, children are being helped to learn about other cultures, thus leading to better international understanding. Through the arts, children and adults are being taught to use their imagination, to profit from the technology and resources available to them, and to develop their abilities so as to resolve problems presented in a new format.

As the South Australian Education Department stated in their document "Into the 80's", "The Arts assist us to understand ourselves and others, and help to make meaning of life and the world. They are powerful tools of learning, and have always been among the richest sources of satisfaction for human beings. They transmit, reinforce or question a culture. They can be enjoyed for their own sake, but can also be used to support and enrich learning generally.

"Through school programmes in music, dance, visual arts, drama, film and other art forms, children can be introduced to a wide range of media, and a range of models of excellence. They can be encouraged to participate in pleasurable and enriching

experiences, and develop their own talents. They may be assisted to use more profitably the increased leisure time which is becoming available to them."

I. ARTS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN THE NORDIC REGION

(Nordic Section of INSEA)

1. The Nordic Region

The Nordic region comprises Denmark, the Faroe Islands and Greenland, Finland with Aland, and Iceland, Norway and Sweden. It stretches from Greenland in the west to the Soviet frontier in the east, and has a total population of almost 23 million people. The Faroes and Greenland are self-governing territories under the Danish crown. Aland has the same independent status in relation to Finland.

The Nordic region covers a total of 1.6m km2: 43,000 km2 in metropolitan Denmark, 1,400 km2 in the Faroes, 341,000 km2 in the ice-free part of Greenland, 337,000 km2 in Finland (including Aland's 1,400 km2), 103,000 km2 in Iceland, 324,000 km2 in Norway and 449,000 km2 in Sweden. Population figures for the various countries and territories in the stated order are 5,100,000; 41,000; 50,000; 4,700,000; 22,000; 219,000; 4,000,000; and 8,200,000.

Over the past thirty years, the Nordic population has grown statistically older. One could almost describe the situation as an 'old-age explosion'. From 1950 to 1978, the percentage of persons over 65 years in the respective national populations rose as follows: Denmark, from 9 to 14.1%; Finland, 6.6-11.5%; Norway, 9.8-14.4%; and Sweden, 9.2-15.9%. Only Iceland continues to have a relatively young population, with only 9.8% of its people over the age of 65 years. There are 3.4m people in the Nordic region in this age category.

During the same period the total number of live births fell in all Nordic countries except Iceland. The number of children aged 0-6 years declined correspondingly. The 7-15 age group remained constant (except in Finland, where the relative size of this age group diminished). Today there is a total of 4.8m children in the 0-14 age group in the Nordic region.

Materially, and as regards health, the Nordic countries enjoy a high standard. Life expectancy is the highest in the world. The infant mortality rate is the lowest and children in the Nordic region are privileged in comparison with those in other countries. No child suffers from starvation, malnutrition is non-existent,

illiteracy was wiped out in the early 20th century, every citizen is entitled to free education and vocational training, the legal status of the child is better than in most societies, and national subsidy schemes for families with children are varied and extensive. Yet there is no hiding the fact that in recent years, with the spread of international recession, the Nordic countries have been hit by unemployment, which has taken its toll especially among young people. At the same time, industrial development - as we shall see below - has brought in its wake a wave of psychological, social and cultural problems that have thrown artistic policy for children into sharp relief.

2. Nordic co-operation

Nordic co-operation today is based on two fundamental factors: one is the close affiliation between the respective Nordic populations in culture, laws and social attitude; the other is the practical and economic benefit the Nordic nations derive from an appropriate division of labour and efficient application of joint resources.

We co-operate and consult in virtually every sphere of life and at many levels - within our companies and associations, organizations, local and central government. Co-operation was originally initiated by private individuals more than 100 years ago; today it is widespread. Co-operation at government level has been expanded over several decades. Development has moved particularly rapidly in the years following World War II. A notable feature of Nordic co-operation is that it is conducted largely without any formal agreement. It has been an important factor that our authorities have been tacitly given the right to establish direct contact with other bodies and matters relating to their activities.

Official co-operation had already come a long way by 1952, when the five countries signed a general 'framework' agreement in Helsinki. The 1952 Helsinki Agreement expressed the intent of the signatories to further the already close community relationship. The agreement aims at harmonizing rules and regulations on as many fronts as possible. It was agreed to preserve and develop further co-operation in the judicial, cultural, social and economic spheres, and in intra-Nordic relations and environmental protection.

To help achieve these goals, appropriate co-operative bodies have been set up, the two most important of which are the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers. Both are designed to provide a basis for a policy which will benefit our peoples in cultural, social and economic affairs.

Matters relating to our respective national foreign and security policies are dealt with by unofficial co-operative bodies.

3. Cultural community

The profound sense of community that permeates our cultural tradition and social system has provided a basis for cultural co-operation that has a long history. Private individuals and organizations have maintained contact across Nordic borders and in the post-World War II era the national ministers of culture in the Nordic region have repeatedly taken steps to bring their countries even closer together. The Nordic Cultural Commission was established in 1947.

Cultural co-operation at an official level was given a new look in 1971, when the Nordic countries signed an agreement undertaking to co-operate and consult in a number of specific spheres.

At the same time, a joint cultural-affairs budget was set up, which finances several Nordic institutions. One of these, the Secretariat for Nordic Cultural Co-operation (the Nordic Cultural Secretariat) has its office in Copenhagen.

Official co-operation in the cultural field covers three main areas: education, research and general cultural activities. All three areas come under the Nordic Cultural Secretariat.

In the educational sector, work has concentrated primarily on co-ordinating the curriculum for school subjects. Permanent educational institutions include the Nordic Folk Academy and the Nordic Institute of Social Planning, both in Sweden.

Co-operation in the field of research affords the Nordic countries a better opportunity to make themselves heard in an international context. It has also led to more efficient application of resources, in both economic and manpower terms. Much of the value of shared research lies in the continuous process of co-operation between research institutions and in joint research projects initiated by bodies representing the whole Nordic region. Joint research institutions include the Nordic Institute of Theoretical Nuclear Physics in Denmark and the Nordic Vulcanological Institute in Iceland.

Co-operation on general cultural activities involves special subsidy arrangements for such fields as general education, Nordic youth co-operation, sports activities, literature, theatre (guest performances), amateur theatricals, music composition and performance, Nordic-Lapp cultural co-operation, and activities in the field of children's culture. Special subsidy schemes for the latter area were introduced with effect from 1980.

In addition, the Nordic Council awards its literature prize annually and its music prize every two years. The Nordic Cultural Fund grants financial assistance to projects of a non-recurring nature. Permanent joint institutions serving the interests of general culture include Nordic House in Reykjavik and Nordic-Lapp

Institute in Kautokeino. The latest permanent institutions are Nordic House, Thorshavn, Faroe Islands, and a Nordic art centre at Hanaholmen, Helsinki.

Artistic activities for children in the context of Nordic cultural co-operation are thus catered for primarily within the field of general culture, although the great majority of activities are organized nationally by central or local government, associations and other organizations.

The aim of Nordic cultural co-operation is to develop a joint cultural policy. This is not synonymous, however, with a policy of cultural uniformity. On the contrary. In the field of Nordic cultural policy variety is seen as something positive.

4. A policy for children's culture in the Nordic countries

In the mid-1970's it was resolved at Nordic level to initiate a study of the status of children's culture and of current problems in this connection in the Nordic region. A working party of five members (one from each participating country) met in 1975 to establish principles for national and joint Nordic efforts in the field of children's culture.

The task was approached from the angle of 'an extended concept of culture' (occasionally referred to as 'the sociocultural concept', of Augustin Girard, "Cultural Development: Experience and Policies", Unesco, 1972): 'The extended concept of culture requires that one works on the basis of the close relationship between cultural policy and other political fields within society'. (1)

'Obviously children's culture includes the cinema, theatre, music, books, magazines, radio and TV for children. It is also libraries, schools, museums and other places where children come and make use of books, pictures, etc.'

'But children's sporting activities are another example of children's culture. And the concept of children's culture extends even further: children's play, their consumption, leisure hours, dress, the scraps and stickers they collect, their toys, parties and fun.' (2)

This attitude heralded a new cultural policy - for adults and children - which began to take shape in the 1970's and was reflected in parliamentary innovations. The new aims were debated within the Nordic region and in the framework of European co-operation

1. Nordic Report on Children's Culture.
2. Danish Minister of Culture, Mr. Niels Matthiasen in "Ny Politik", April, 1979.

and represented a substantial widening of the field of interest of cultural policy, breaking away from earlier generations' concentration on elitist culture and tradition, but constituting also what was tantamount to new political goals for the share and place of cultural life in social development. We find the new attitude well represented in the cultural-policy goal adopted by the Swedish Riksdag (parliament) in conjunction with the legislating of a new cultural policy in 1974:

'Cultural policy shall:

- help safeguard freedom of speech and create real opportunities for exercising this freedom,
- afford people the chance of engaging in their own creative activities and promote inter-personal contact,
- counteract the negative effects of commercialism on culture,
- encourage decentralization of enterprise and decision-making in the cultural field,
- accommodate by its form the experience and needs of neglected social groups,
- permit artistic and cultural renewal,
- guarantee the existence and vigour of the culture of earlier times,
- further an exchange of experience and ideas in the cultural field across language and national boundaries.'

Or in the words of Denmark's then Minister of Culture in a report to Folketing (parliament) in November 1977:

'Our progression toward a cultural policy ... should be guided by four basic principles. Those of freedom of expression, cultural democracy, quality and decentralization'.

The concept of 'cultural democracy' can serve to illustrate the political difference. Earlier declarations had spoken instead of 'democratization of culture', operating with the idea of a fixed 'cultural mass' (of products created by tradition and modern creative art) that should be 'made available to the people.' 'Cultural democracy' stresses the reverse process: the right of all population groups to influence the production, decisions and realization of cultural life. It has given new meaning to such terms as 'quality' (shifting the emphasis from the formally aesthetic criterion as the only acceptable one, towards the social, utility value of art), 'freedom of expression' (more in the direction of something to be actively exercised, the right to be heard in the contemporary society of the mass media), and, of course, 'decentralization'; influence upon decisions and realization is something obtained primarily when these processes take place at the local, grass-roots level.

The special needs of children are heard everywhere; their geographical transport-related radius of action is smaller than that of

adults, their political influence infinitely less, their psychological and experimental preparedness less developed, but their imagination is perhaps much richer and more receptive. And so it goes on . . . . .

This indicates, on the one hand, a need for a special cultural policy for children - particularly in view of the fact that for decades the special needs of children have been badly neglected in official cultural policy. On the other hand, it is stressed sharply that it is an integral part of children's cultural need that they should not always be kept outside the adult world but should experience it together with adults - a need in fact for a cultural policy to be shared by different generations. Efforts in the Nordic countries will be concentrated on not allowing a clash to occur between these two sets of needs, developing instead new ways and means of experiencing life's facets, accommodating both needs, sometimes separately, sometimes together.

Debate and political decisions in the field of children's culture in the Nordic countries have invariably pointed to two grave threats to the cultural needs of children. On the one hand there is the commerical culture industry, in the broadest sense, comprising internationally standardized products which eliminate or ignore local and national individuality and create mental uniformity instead of stimulating reflection based upon the individual experiences and interests of each group of children. Television, films, toys, music and fashion are particularly suspect as channels along which minds are internationally, commercially manipulated. On the other hand, there is technological development of electronic media, which goes hand in hand with commercialization - the veritable explosion that is taking place in the video/music cassette industry. A report by the Danish Ministry of Culture says of present-day Danish children that in their culture and leisure, 'they have been exposed to the most staggering cultural shock in history. They are bombarded with the products of mass culture - especially from the video and audio industries - at a time when there is no 'common language', no underlying cultural awareness to nourish the wishes and needs that the mass products are so quick to accommodate. Developments in technology and communication are accelerating so rapidly that a generation of parents finds itself with experience, customs and patterns that are virtually useless to the next, growing generation.'(1)

In the face of this development, we have the efforts of cultural policy to strengthen the national, the local, to support the child's own self-expression and self-formulation and back up those artists who are working on behalf of children in accordance with the same aims and principles.

1. "Children of Our Culture", Copenhagen, 1980.

Children, too, are subject to the thesis expressed by Augustin Girard in his report on cultural policy: Culture is conflict. In the Nordic countries, as we embark upon the last two decades of the century, children's culture is indeed an area ripe for conflict, transition, change, confrontation. Public projects and support schemes aim increasingly clearly at stimulating this battle in order to promote the democratic process - a clash of contrasts.

It is a new cultural policy - the old one attempted rather to smooth over the contrasts and build upon the idea of one culture 'for all', removed from the rest of the political battlefield. It is also a new situation for children and for those who work with children and for their interests; children's culture has become an area of general political conflict. Children themselves have begun to formulate political and cultural demands and wishes.

In the Nordic countries, preparation of a cultural policy for children that aims increasingly at general political goals for advancement and change of society is under way. The examples that follow, illustrate this situation.

5. Social development in the Nordic countries

Art and culture for/with children

Radical changes occurred in the cultural life of children in the Nordic countries in the decade from 1970 to 1980. Indeed there were fundamental changes in their lives generally.

Something approaching transformation occurred in the form, substance, market conditions and political treatment of children's culture. It attracted immense interest - and sparked off an open political discussion. On the one hand, there is a critical attitude to society and the child's standing in it, an attitude represented by all the traditional forms of children's culture (drama, films, literature, etc.). On the other, there is the industrial culture market, expanding at a greater rate than at any other time in its history.

These changes are linked with - and are indeed part of - the changing face of the child's world, changes in family, employment and upbringing patterns in all Nordic countries during the period after World War II, especially during the 1960's and 1970's.

The Nordic countries are industrially highly developed communities, and in an international context, they are undoubtedly affluent. They have undergone a period of rapid industrial and economic expansion since World War II, an economic development that has been called the Second Industrial Revolution. Inevitably there have been profound social and cultural changes, which have to be taken into account in order to understand how living conditions have altered for the Nordic populations, and in an assessment of which cultural

activities are relevant in relation to social reality. This is also true of children's culture and of the relationship between artistic activity and the child's development. For an appreciation of the child's situation and living conditions in contemporary Nordic society, we must look at some of the historical changes that have taken place - and at the effect they have had on children and their lives.

6. Work and leisure in the Nordic countries

Economically, the various Nordic peoples have had widely differing backgrounds. There have also been major ethnic differences in culture. The Eskimo population of Greenland lived for centuries by hunting seal and whale and catching fish, notwithstanding the fact that culturally the Greenland people since the 15th and 16th centuries had had contact with the commercial fleets of continental Europe, which conducted whaling expeditions up and down the coast of the world's largest island. But it was not until the post-World War II period particularly the 1960's - that a real start was made to Greenland's economic development based on intensification of the cod-fishing industry. Cast headlong into the process of industrialization and urbanization, the Greenlanders have found themselves breaking away from their former Eskimo ways.

Similarly, the Lapp (Samelat) hunting population of the Arctic regions of northern Finland, Norway and Sweden have undergone an immense social and cultural transformation that has cut across the earlier way of life and identity of these people.

The Second Industrial Revolution has thus brought about a change in the social and cultural horizons of the Nordic peoples, varying in degree from the industrial conurbations of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden to the former fishing and hunting communities in the ethnic perimeter of Arctic Scandinavia and Greenland. But both the Greenland fishing population and the Lapp hunters are now under the influence of industrial development and social and cultural pressure. Their way of life and cultural identity must therefore be seen in conjunction with the general forward movement of the Nordic region. Social and ethnic minorities in the Nordic countries, having to fight against the cultural pressure of more powerful, neighbouring communities, have been particularly determined over the past fifteen years to uphold the qualities of their own culture, in its own right.

In the days of cottage industries and the old traditions of craftsmanship, production and reproduction were not separated by time or geography. In the local community of the tradesman, farmer and fisherman, production was closely related to the domestic environment, and children took part in the productive process along with

their parents. Working side by side with adults, a boy learned the technical qualifications of his father and, as often as not, assumed his occupation, while a girl assumed the qualifications and functions of the women.

Without romanticizing the old rural and village life and the former industrial phase in the Nordic countries, which frequently meant miserable conditions for children, used as they were as cheap labour, there was one common feature in the lives of children in those days: they were a necessary part of society and the family. They had a function in the community. Their lives had meaning. There was a material reason for sticking together and a practical solidarity within the family unit that was anchored in the common fight for life, whether the child was a member of a Greenland fishing family, a Lapp community or a peasant or working family.

Social solidarity has steadily disintegrated throughout the industrial upheaval. Generally, the economic drift has been from rural to urban surroundings in the Nordic region, from agriculture, fishing and small crafts to industrial production. Similarly there has been a fundamental change in the way of life, from the rural community with its manageable, foreseeable horizons, to the town and city with their fragmented, immeasurable structures.

7. Pattern of group living

The 1960's saw a steep rise in the number of women who took on jobs outside the home (in Denmark, for example, the number doubled from 1950-60). Although working hours generally were reduced during the same period, it meant - combined with longer commuting time between home and job - that an increasing number of homes were without parental supervision for a greater time each day.

As women have gained new economic status, and in the process relative economic independence, a change has occurred in the traditional family grouping in the Nordic countries, especially in urban areas. Although statistics fluctuate from year to year, there is a clear trend: the annual marriage rate is declining, while the divorce rate is climbing.

In the largest of the Nordic cities (Copenhagen with suburbs, total population approx. 2,000,000) there are now only two marriages for every divorce. The general impression given is not that the majority reject the idea of living as couples but that they switch partners more freely. This pattern of group living has been called 'serial monogamy', a series of more or less permanent relationships with different partners. Children of such relationships move on with one of the parents (usually the mother, although there is a slight tendency towards a balance between the father and mother) or shuttle between their original parents.

These changes have gone hand in hand with an explosive expansion in the institutional sector: day nurseries, kindergartens, youth centres and less formal types of leisure activities.

For the child, this altered pattern has meant more time spent outside the home, more time alone with other children and/or child-care personnel, a social network less tied to the family environment than to the institution, the school and the group of comrades.

An increasing part - at least in terms of time - of the child's upbringing is controlled by the mass media and schools/institutions. The market for leisure activities and artistic production for children is expanding just as quickly, both for individual consumption (cinemas, gramophone records, tapes, books, comic books) and for schools and institutions ((theatre visits during school hours or with youth clubs, etc.).

The child's upbringing is becoming more and more a matter of public participation via the market and via institutions and in keeping with the changing family and job pattern. At the same time, there are signs of a moral, ideological and administrative crisis in upbringing. There is vigorous political debate on the objectives of schools or child-care centres (i.e. the goal to be achieved by the state's contribution towards the child's upbringing and a balancing of the influence of the home and the state). In Denmark, discussion concentrates on an alleged left-wing orientation in schools. In Norway, the debate in the 1970's concerned the goal of day-care institutions, with or without emphasis on Christianity as a factor in upbringing.

The discussion took on a radical note when the market boomed around 1970. Throughout the Nordic region 'free theatre groups' sprang up in quick succession, often producing drama for children, not infrequently with a socially critical message. In all five Nordic countries, in the early 1970's, there was heated debate on the implicit or explicit political content of children's literature. One camp attacked conservative social attitudes and stereotyped sex roles in literature and the other criticized left-wing 'indoctrination' or even the immorality of new books on social reality.

The discussion was sparked off by the market boom. The number of children's books published annually doubled during the period, comic books flourished as never before, the music industry made increasing inroads into the young market and children spent more and more time watching TV, particularly internationally produced entertainment series. International toy production was linked with familiar media figures and became independent, marketing Disney characters in plastic, toy versions of Marvel heroes transformed into nursery lamps, disposable cutlery and tablecloths for children's birthdays, pencils, etc., with popular motifs from the culture industry).

8. Family development

As far as the traditional family pattern in the Nordic countries is concerned, the second Industrial Revolution has helped loosen family ties. The multi-generation family has given way to the nuclear family, which is itself splitting up into individuals, who face life alone. The family unit has become 'individualized'. At the same time, 'intimidation' has occurred in a family context, reducing the nuclear family in industrialized consumer society to a miniature consumer unit in which emotions have been torn from their natural background. The nuclear family is now, more than ever before, the only place where the modern individual can satisfy his or her emotional needs. On account of the specialization and mechanization of the work process, people are denied the chance of expressing themselves through their work, and the satisfaction of this need is transferred to the family and to marriage the more so because of the lack of other social institutions offering community and close social relations. The result is too often excessive emotional strain on the family's resources. Furthermore, many of the modern family's traditional roles have been taken over by the State; a number of reproductive and qualifying functions that once took place within the family circle now take place in State institutions. With new standards of qualifications in contemporary industrialized society, the family can no longer educate its members for the labour market. This has necessitated a state-run educational system to handle the task. Today's child in the Nordic countries starts school at the age of seven years and primary socialization (the upbringing of the 0 - 7 age group) has also increasingly been delegated to child-care centres, kindergartens, etc. As a growing section of the female population has entered the labour market, women have had to be relieved of some of the work in bringing up children.

This structural reorganization of the Nordic family can be seen in the reduction in its size and in the declining number of occupants per dwelling. In spite of sharp geographical differences, development in Denmark in this respect has been symptomatic of the Nordic region as a whole: in 1901, 27% of the Danish population lived in families of more than six persons; the corresponding figure for 1970 was 5%. The decade 1960-70 saw a big change in dwelling structure and family size. In 1960, 16% of the total number of dwellings in Denmark were occupied by one person; by 1970 one-person dwellings had risen to 24% of the total.

9. Development in structure of communications

Another factor in the Nordic countries that has influenced social development and which one should bear in mind in any discussion

of a child-oriented cultural policy is the growth of 'the awareness industry.' The term "awareness industry" means that communication within society is subject to the same mechanisms as affect material production under the current conditions of production.

Development of the awareness industry in the Nordic countries has had a specific effect on newspaper publication; the number and circulation of daily newspapers have fallen in relation to those of the "pulp press". At the same time, the daily press has become highly centralized. The figures for Denmark illustrate the trend clearly. In 1960, the total circulation of all the country's daily newspapers was 1.6 million whereas by 1975 it had risen to more than 1.7 million despite the fact that the number of publications was little more than half what it had been fifteen years earlier.

In the field of radio and television, current-affairs and cultural programmes have had cuts in their broadcasting time in favour of more entertainment programmes.

The total number of broadcasting hours on TV in the Nordic countries rose from 8,568 in 1965 to 15,059 in 1977.

Television viewing by children has risen most sharply. The figures from Sweden illustrate the trend. In 1964, children in the 3-9 age group on average watched 0.72 hours of television daily; in 1977 the figure was 1.48 hours.

Although the statistics reveal nothing of the qualitative substance of these communication media, they nevertheless indicate a tendency for the press, radio and television, during the new era of industrial expansion, to develop in the direction of industrialized awareness. This has had a paralysing effect on the population's urge to learn for itself and the spontaneous needs and interests of the people, including children, are not authentically expressed in the mass media. This is one of the reasons why the experimental 'Borneavisen' (children's newspaper published in Denmark and to be discussed later) has aroused so much interest among young people. The manner in which the mass media have developed, has made it difficult for them to provide a satisfactory outlet for children's immediate interests, needs and imaginative development. At the same time, television has come to fill the vacuum that has occurred in the family's new structure. In the Nordic countries today, women find themselves to a large extent in just as difficult an economic situation as men and have difficulty in fulfilling their role as mothers. This is where the TV set makes its entry, with special programmes for children to lift some of the load off the parents.

It would be too pessimistic to write off the above trends as having exclusively a negative effect on children's culture. Industrial development has brought liberation from oppressive material conditions, from child labour, and has afforded us greater leisure and greater potential for stretching our human and imaginative abilities.

The lessening of family and social ties has helped break down class and social structures. Mass media and the new communications structure, despite their initiative-blocking mechanisms which, for example, are brutally exercised in linguistic-minority areas where TV programmes are not broadcast in the local language (Greenland and Lapland), have helped widen children's horizons. However, it will take a determined effort on the part of central and local government, parents and children, to minimize the negative aspects of social development in the Nordic countries and to exploit the positive opportunities it presents.

10. Children's theatre in the Nordic countries

The term 'theatre activities' is applied in its broadest context in the Nordic countries, embracing national theatre and free drama groups, professionals and amateurs.

When Nordic cultural co-operation was put on a regular, intensive footing, theatre - with its unique form of public contact - quickly attracted attention. Encouragement was provided through two channels: funds were given in support of guest performances, and a programme of seminars was launched.

Children's theatre has come to depend substantially on free drama groups. It is these that have been responsible for a large proportion of guest and other performances for children. After a brief introduction, outlining some of the general trends in children's theatre in the Nordic countries, we shall report on two authentic examples of this kind of activity.

Children's theatre has long traditions and is widespread in the Nordic countries. This is particularly the case in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. However, the ethnic minorities (Lapps and the Eskimo population of Greenland) also conduct drama for children. Some of the first serious attempts at launching children's theatre as an independent art form in the Nordic countries occurred in the early 1960's, after industrialization had set social changes in motion in the cultural and social fields. The lessons to be learned from experimental children's theatre at that time were primarily ones of liberation - "Do your own thing". The name of the game was 'express yourself', freely and unshackled by references to specific themes.

Gradually, children's theatre developed along three lines, which have clearly been typical of the 1970's:

(a) The content of children's theatre altered, with more and more productions dealing with problems relevant to the contemporary child.
(b) The methods adopted by children's theatre altered, shifting

towards methods that succeeded in drawing children directly into drama activities.

(c) There was considerable growth in the number of touring theatre groups, which travel about the country, playing for children in their own environment.

This last development has meant that many more children than previously have had the opportunity to learn about theatre at first hand. Even more important, a much broader section of the juvenile population, from social environments and classes which traditionally never visited a theatre, have been given this experience. We shall look at an example from a children's theatre tour in Greenland arranged by the Greenland authorities, and at the work of the Swedish children's theatre movement, which has deliberately aimed at reaching youth in Swedish society who would otherwise have little opportunity to experience theatre for themselves.

This report does not examine the energetic work of amateur dramatic societies in the Nordic countries, although to a large extent these also involve children directly in theatrical work. The amateur drama societies recently formed a joint organization, Nordic Amateur Theatre Council (NAR), and we recommend interested readers to contact: NAR, Post Box 70, DK-6300 Grasten, DENMARK.

11. Children's theatre tour in Greenland (by Kusten Thonsgård Hansen, Aarhus University)*

(a) Tukaq Theatre

The world's first and only Inuit (Eskimo) theatre is in Denmark. It is the Greenland Tukaq Theatre, founded in 1975 by Norwegian Reidar Nilsson. During its short history, the theatre has gained fame well beyond Danish shores as an ethnic minority drama institution.

During its initial period, the theatre received support from the Nordic Cultural Fund. It has since received subsidies for some parts of its work from the Fund and from the subsidy scheme set up to promote Nordic touring theatres. Reidar Nilsson speaking on the theatre's aims, says: "As in all other forms of genuine theatre, an ethnic theatre can blossom and develop its own soul only by seeking the inner personality of each individual. Tukaq Theatre has found that its path on this quest lies in the old symbols, myths,

*Based on an interview in "Børneteateravisen". (Children's Theatre News) No. 29, 1980.

legends and in moving pictures, which prick the subconscience and lead man back to his origins. Only via the authenticity of the player do we have a personal opportunity to penetrate behind masks and veils of forgotten culture in the audience and awaken impulses that may be the spark the individual needs to give his life new meaning."

The theatre trains Greenland players but it is primarily for its performances that it has become famous. Its best known performance is probably 'Inuit' (People/Eskimos).

Since its première in the Faroe Islands in 1977, 'Inuit' has been performed for audiences in Canada, Alaska, France, Holland, Denmark and Greenland. A televised version has also been broadcast by a number of countries.

In 1978, Tukaq Theatre embarked on a major tour of the entire west coast of Greenland, playing at most of the hamlets and communities along the way. It was the Tukaq's breakthrough in Greenland; the first-time audiences had been treated to a professional touring company of Greenlanders performing in their language a theme drawn from Greenland. 'Inuit' played to delighted crowds. The Tukaq Theatre had firmly established its functions as a cultural 'harpoon'. The name tukaq is in fact Eskimo for 'tip of a harpoon': the harpoon is directed toward its target, buries itself in the prey but maintains a strong line connection with its point of origin. Similarly, Tukaq Theatre tries to build a strong bridge between the old and the new cultures of Greenland.

The 'Inuit' tour gave the impetus for a children's theatre tour in 1979, the International Year of the Child. 'Inuit' had been seen by many Greenland children - although it is not exclusively a children's play. In the same way, the company's performances for children in 1979 were attended by many adults, especially in the smaller communities.

This confirmed not only the Theatre's universal mode of presenting its drama but also the existence in Greenland society of a 'common cultural background' for children and adults. The segregation of children and adults in separate cultural camps, so characteristic of western industrialized society, would appear to be less marked in Greenland. It would seem that a conscious cultural effort is being made to preserve the Greenlander's life style. Tukaq Theatre is making its contribution to the furthering of such efforts.

The Tukaq company performed two works on its Greenland tour. They were given in 16 towns and villages in southern Greenland - a total of 43 performances in 45 days. 'Den lille kadi' and 'Samspil' were the first performances of children's theatre to be produced in Greenland, in the Eskimo language, with Greenland actors. For many children it was the first time they had ever attended a theatre performance. As had been the experience with other ethnic theatrical activities (among the Lapp minorities of the Arctic region), the

Greenland tour was ample confirmation of the vital significance of the linguistic dimension for children's linguistic and cultural awareness and confidence. The tour was organized by the Year of the Child Secretariat, National Library, Godthab, Greenland, which handled the practical arrangements in conjunction with the labour and social directorate under the Greenland government.

(b) Audience participation

'Samspil' was based on a song the players had written: 'I'm sitting by myself' ('Kisimillunga issiavunga'). The lonely/alone theme was illustrated by various situations and games that encouraged the children to take an active part. The work was performed for children in kindergarten, pre-school and 1st and 2nd grades. The actors considered it important to discourage the tendency of the adult teachers in charge of the children to curb their activity during the play by telling them to sit quietly, etc. The adults had to join in the game - or leave the theatre!

Tukaq played 'Samspil' only in the larger towns because in the smaller villages there are no kindergartens, as the family pattern has not yet been affected by division of labour. Moreover, in many Greenland hamlets there were too few children for the Theatre to base a performance exclusively on them. Instead the company presented 'Den lille kadi' for the whole community, children and adults. Two of the members of the theatre company Makka Kleist and Rasse Thygesen, later recalled audience reactions and their contact with the audience:

Rasse:

Most of the children only have the chance of seeing live theatre every two years or so. In some of the villages, they had never seen live theatre. And here it was - in Greenland's own language! They were delighted, and really got into the swing of things.

Makka:

It was so obvious, the sensation as the play began, when Ali came on stage and lay down to sleep. In the oddest clothes! And the rest of us came on - in our strange clothes, too! But then we began talking. And we spoke Eskimo. The air buzzed as children and adults realized that they could understand the whole thing, every word! We designed the play as openly as possible, so that children and adults could see it at different levels. Depending on how many children or adults there were, you could improvise and hint at things relating to both children and grown-ups. It caught all age groups, drew them into the action, gave them something to chuckle at.

It was terrific for us players to have children come along to the performance with their parents or grandparents and see it with them. There were elements of the play that gave us great fun. For example, when Ali (Rasse) returns after having been away for seven years and says - just as grown-ups always say to children, only this time it was said to the grown-ups - "Good gracious, you're a big lad/lass now! I almost didn't recognize you!" And the kids would roll on the floor laughing - because now it was the grown-ups who were getting their treatment. And the adults were taken aback at suddenly being drawn into the action. Some of them laughed, others didn't quite know what to do ... it was a children's performance so they thought they could hide!

People were much less inhibited in the smaller places. If they felt like laughing, they laughed! If they wanted to say what they thought of the show, they just upped and spoke! If they thought it was a rotten performance, they let us know in no uncertain terms! If there was something they were dissatisfied with, they told you! At one stop there was a man in the audience who kept shouting "What a bloody show! What a bloody show!" He was pretty drunk ...

Rasse:

I sat there on the floor and had been listening to him bawling his head off for the past half-hour. But then I managed to fit his words into the dialogue - and shouted them at the top of my voice! And he shut up like a clam! He had been saying it because one of the other girls, Naja, is from Holsteinsborg, where they have a special accent, and he had been mimicking her. He thought it was great fun. But he was a bit squashed when he heard himself in the play!

Makka:

After the show, he came backstage and said, "A grand show, a grand show!" and he thanked all of us!

Rasse:

He had suddenly found himself part of the action - because people looked at him the moment I said his words. He had to do something to get attention off him - so he shut up! We had lots of experiences like that. We performed the play along the lines we had planned but depending on the audience we improvised a lot. When we found that something suited a particular audience, well, we made a special point of it, maybe repeated it, to get more fun out of it. It brought us closer to our audience. It's a terrific experience doing children's theatre when you're both free and tied at the same time.

(c)

(c) Contact with the public

The theatre programme went somewhat beyond its original intentions as a children's theatre because it entertained so many adults. But contrary to the usual situation in Nordic children's theatre where adults often form an embarrassed, half-hearted perimeter, the grown-up section of the Greenland audience - particularly in the small villages - got right into the spirit of the performance. Neither children nor adults needed to be asked twice to join in the play as it went along. It varied from village to village as to how enthusiastic the audience were when they had to get down on their knees to greet the sultan! But they all had a wonderful time!

The humour of the performance was one of the reasons the drama company was able to establish such close contact with its audiences in Greenland. It was seen, for instance, in the characters and in the style of acting. The 'villain' of the piece, the stupid, fat, male-chauvinist Mustafa (Efraim Kristensen) was particularly popular with the audiences because of the exaggerated mimicry of the part.

But the way the players felt about their contact with the audience was an important factor.

Rasse:

We could get them to join in with our story because we spoke directly to them as individuals. It means a lot having close, immediate contact. I've seen quite a bit of children's theatre in Denmark, and I think that for the most part they are playing in a vacuum. They seem to lack real contact with the very audience they are supposed to play for. It's as if they are afraid to let themselves go. They have a certain set structure that says, "We're going to do a play." And they go out and do it.

Makka:

I think it's a point of some importance that the players can often themselves be "closed" - they are the result of an upbringing, a cultural pattern in which it isn't the done thing to open yourself completely to your surroundings. If actors don't open themselves and if they're not honest in the openness they try to create, they can never succeed in winning over an audience, whether it is children, young people or adults. The initiative obviously has to come from the player because the audience doesn't know what the play is all about. The actor mustn't talk up or down to the audience - but directly to them.

Rasse:

I think it's important to get children involved in children's drama

once you gain their trust. If we wander a bit off the story, the kids get us back on track. The story is tossed backwards and forwards between us.

Makka:

There's a continuous interplay between us. We draw immense inspiration from the audience - and can deliver even more of ourselves.

Children are very wise!

Makka:

At the end, as narrator, I say, "And so you see how the children managed to do what the grown-ups couldn't. The sultan summoned the real judge and told him he should speak to children and listen more to them, see how they played - because that would teach him a lot! And he said, children are very wise!"

Rasse:

They are, too! Children are a pure source, whereas grown-ups can be said to be polluted in many respects. We want to make children feel proud of themselves.

This respect for the child, is it not an ancient tradition in Greenland culture?

Rasse:

We have given the child and the old man pride of place. The old man because he passes on his wisdom and knowledge to us. The child because it is delicate and pure. The child is such a fine human being. We love it dearly and would prefer not to tell it untruths. But we have become a bit removed from that way of thinking. We in Greenland have taken on the European way of upbringing. But ours is really a very beautiful way of thinking.

It used to be against all moral codes to strike a child in Greenland?

Rasse:

That's absolutely true - it was considered that it would sully the fine, pure human being. If you strike a child who has never felt a hard hand, you violate its feelings. And that can never be washed completely away, even though the child tries to sort things out in its mind and the relationship is repaired.

(d) The aftermath

Rasse:

After we performed "Samspil", the play about loneliness, a number of schools and kindergartens took up the theme and worked on the subject of being alone or rejected by a group. The children could recognize their own situations, and they discussed at length how it could come about that you could treat anyone like that.

Makka:

One kindergarten teacher told me how they had first talked over the different situations and then asked the question: is this something we know about ourselves? Some of the children re-enacted what they had seen on stage. I was very pleased to hear that, pleased that it hadn't just been a sterile visit to some theatre event but something they could use and build upon. The greatest praise we can have is to hear of our young audiences working constructively with the material themselves.

In connection with "Den lille kadi", some of the bigger children would come and talk to us afterwards. They were very interested in our costumes and where we had got them. We told them that we had made them ourselves out of old curtains, remnants of materials and so on - and that the fellows in the group had helped. You should have seen their faces light up! You could see what was in their minds: if they can do it, so can we . . . !

12. Do children need their own theatre? - an interim assessment

There is a good deal of discussion at present among participants in children's theatre productions in the Nordic countries as to the potential and function of children's theatre in a modern, industrialized society. In March 1981 the Nordic Cultural Secretariat published an edited selection of contributions to the debate in a special document, 'Børneteatret i Norden' (Children's Theatre in the Nordic countries). Do children need children's theatre, and how should the theatre function as an artistic medium in order best to meet the needs and demands of the child?

The evidence so far would seem to indicate that if children's theatre can satisfy the needs of children for active social togetherness, for enterprise and involvement and acceptance of the world they live in, then it has a function. This does not mean that children's theatre cannot deal with mythological or fictional subjects. Both are important to popular identity formation and development of imagination.

The stage through which children's theatre has passed in recent years in the Nordic countries and the experience gained from this

activity indicate that this art form has definite possibilities, thanks to its dramatic presentation, in both a professional and amateur context. Given the right conditions, children's theatre can perform an important function in the lives of children. This has become evident from the theatre's activities in the Nordic countries - including the two examples in this report.

As opposed to integrated child-directed social activities, theatre for children gives them the status of onlookers. This is a restrictive influence when one of the aims is to stimulate people into forming a socially active identity. Not surprisingly, therefore, current discussions within Nordic children's theatre have been aimed at producing theatre 'for and with' children without there being any conflict in terms.

Children's theatre cannot change a child's reality. But it can help alleviate the child's social oppression especially in industrialized society whose rhythm and attuned awareness fail to satisfy the child's needs and interest. This, too, is an experience that has typified economic and social development in post-war Nordic countries.

The views expressed above are based on a study of numerous publications and on an examination of children's theatre in the Nordic countries.

13. Contact addresses

For the latest details of children's theatre in the Nordic countries, attention is drawn to the existence of three drama publications specializing in children's and group theatre:

In Finland: 'Teatteri', Berggatan 6, A 8, Ooloo Helsingfors 10, Finland, tel. (0) 66 51 69

In Sweden: 'Nya Teatertidningen', c/o Teatercentrum, Björkhagen skola, Karlskronavägen 10, 121 52 Stockholm, Sweden, tel. (08) 49 83 28

In Denmark: 'Børneteateravisen', Frederiksborggade 20 (3), DK-1360 Copenhagen K, tel. (01) 15 69 00

In addition, 'Nordisk teaterkomite' (Nordic Theatre Committee), Berggatan 6, A 8, Ooloo Helsingfors 10, Finland, tel. (0) 66 94 49, can provide regular details of children's theatre activities in the Nordic countries.

Nordisk Amatørteaterråd (NAR), Postbox 70, DK-6300 Gråsten, Denmark, tel. (04) 65 13 83.

The publication 'Børneteatret i Norden' is issued by the Nordic Cultural Secretariat, Snaregade 10, DK-1205 Copenhagen K.

Other references:
Peter Duelund: 'De kulturelle bevaegelser i Danmark 1960-75' (Cultural movements in Denmark 1960-1975), Institute of Cultural Sociology, University of Copenhagen, Rosenborggade 19, DK-1130 Copenhagen K.
'Børneteater og opsøgende teater' (Children's theatre and touring theatre), Report 1979, Ministry of Culture, Nybrogade 2, DK-1203 Copenhagen K. Jørn Langsted: 'Fantasi og børneteater' (Fantasy and Children's Theatre), Institute of Dramaturgy, Willemoesgade 15 D, DK-8200 Aarhus N, Denmark.

14. Visual arts and exhibitions for children

In this context, 'visual art' as interpreted by the Nordic Council of Ministers, relates to architecture, painting (including sketching), graphic arts and sculpture, while 'museum activities' relate to museums of history, natural history and art history.

Notwithstanding the differences basic to individual regions, the approach adopted in the above artistic spheres was to aim for a wider field of work, a greater field of contact and a broader field of communication. This is also directly applicable to children in the Nordic countries.

Where it is practically possible, joint Nordic projects should be realized by expanding the field of work of existing institutions and organizations, provided that the latter can reach a broad section of the population and that such an arrangement enables different population groups to find expression for their own cultural heritage and participate in the field of visual art.

We shall now look at two visual-art enterprises in Finland.

(a) Voipaala Art Centre

We arrived at Voipaala Konstcentrum (Art Centre) with the thermometer at -25° C. The frost formed in our nostrils and eye-brows and as we walked up to the main building, the snow crunched under foot. The main building, dating perhaps from the turn of the century, is a timber structure, white-painted, with fine architectural details around the windows and on the roof.

Marjatta Ranta stood in the doorway to welcome us. She wore a long Marimekko dress, with warm yellow and white strips. Inside, the stoves were crackling, and as we munched home-baked buns and sipped our coffee, we listened to plans for developing the art centre and heard how the former stables and greenhouse were to be converted for children's activities, workshops and exhibitions (as in the case of the main building).

Since its start in 1977, Voipaala has offered young people a

chance to come and fulfil their urge to create. Artistic events for children were arranged in summer 1977. It was this that gave rise to the idea of opening a special artists' studio at Voipaala - exclusively for children.

In Spring 1978, a plan was developed at the College of Industrial Design, based on a student project, for a stimulating play area for children. The plan was financed by the arts commission for the county of Tavastehus. The first phase was completed within a few months: a 'pottering room', where children could simple play and 'potter about' with various materials made available to them. There was a play-area close to the pottering room for the youngest children, together with a small stage for drama work.

In this area, which has been called the children's studio, a variety of activities have been organized to encourage expression through movement, words and pictures. The number of participants has fluctuated between 15 and 90.

The Voipaala centre has also specialized in the revival of traditional children's games. This was taken into account in planning the children's studio, particularly bearing in mind the historical surroundings that Voipaala has to offer for this purpose. The children's studio was expanded as quickly as funds would allow. At present Voipaala is waiting for Ministry of Education support for a workshop in which children of all ages can have guidance in expressing themselves in pictures.

One special project is being conducted by the School of Pictorial Activity for children under school age. Children taking part in the project will make up an experimental group whose development will be observed in order to provide a picture of the importance of art education for personality development and for development of various skills in the child.

Members of this working group for art instruction are Inkeri Sava of the Educational Institute at Helsinki University and art teachers Elisse Heinimaa and Marjatta Ranta.

The findings of the study are expected to provide valuable experience for developmental psychologists and for development of school curricula. In addition, the results are expected to benefit research and education in visual art and visual expression - and the planning of day-care programmes as well as the training of child-care staff.

The experiment with art instruction for children under school age forms part of a general programme of innovation involving intensified visual and art education which is being conducted in collaboration with the primary department of Rauhala Primary and Lower-secondary School in Valkeakoski.

The children's studio idea has inspired the proposal that studios should be developed as a special facility at schools and day-care

centres throughout the municipal area, that a summer club should be set up in conjunction with the city's youth council, and that a special children's instructor should be employed to look after the children who visit the studio.

(b) 'Snow-happening" with visual artists

Every year in February at Hanaholmen, Finland, the local culture centre and Nordic Art Centre arrange a 'Nordic Playroom' for the whole family. In 1980 the event was a "snow happening" with visual artists. The theme was obvious, considering that organizers had concluded a seminar on 'Children's culture and the visual arts' the day before. The participating artists had already made a good start on their snow sculptures while the seminar was in progress.

On the Sunday afternoon the sun shone from a clear sky, the weather was calm, and the temperature - 20° C. This guaranteed the artists an admiring public outside and in. In the early part of the programme the children could drive in a dog-sledge on the ice along the edge of Hanaholm Bay or spin round at a dizzying speed on Olavi Lanus's merry-go-round on the ice. Daring skaters proved that it took more than 20° frost to stop them enjoying themselves. In the courtyard, sculptor Osmo Valtonen was producing frost-work patterns on a specially designed machine: slow drops of water froze instantly to ice flakes on a revolving disc. With the aid of a huge sheet of plastic, a garden hose, and a supply of hot air from a vacuum-cleaner, Osmo Valtonen and Charles Michalsen (Norway) 'blasted out' an enormous tunnel of ice during the afternoon and proudly led a party of admirers between its icy walls.

Away in the background, Olavi Lanus built a gigantic sculpture in snow, 'Kneeling'. Together with an iced fir-tree and a sculpture of icicles, this monument spent the winter as the pride of Hanholmen! So did the three fantasy figures that arose from the snow in a group of trees further round the headland. Sculptor Susanne Ussing, assisted by Morten Fyverbom (Denmark), modelled three snowheads around the pines whose form and colourful faces aroused surprise and delight among the crowd.

The red-cheeked visitors could buy hot juice and coffee at the nearby restaurant, and in the auditorium there was a film programme of 'I have a tiger' and 'The hare and the goat' (two Finnish children's films) and two films about 'Emilia'. The small lecture hall had been transformed for the occasion into an artist's studio, where three students from the College of Arts and Crafts and Industrial Design saw to it that there was a constant supply of paints, paper and other equipment for all interested children.

There were also three indoor exhibitions: 'Children choose art' from the Swedish National Exhibition Centre and a photography and

sketch exhibition of children's portraits from Drammen Art Society, Norway. As Artist of the Month at Hanaholmen, Helinä Wähä put on an exhibition of oil paintings.

It was an excellent 'happening', and at a cautious estimate, approximately 400 children and adults took part in the activities during the day.

15. Child-centred social activities

A number of experiments have been conducted in the Nordic countries in recent years involving child-centred social activities (i. e. activities controlled and directed by children). As far as possible, these activities have been the result of the children's own initiative, and they have involved children directly in the planning process. Projects have included play areas for children, children's interest centres and children's 'parliaments', which have been an attempt at enabling children to express their own needs and interest and views on social conditions and events in a society in which it is often the adults who - on behalf of the children - dominate the picture without consulting the children.

The child-centred social activities have also been an attempt at eliminating the traditional divisions between 'artistic' and other social activities. They are an expression of a broadly defined cultural concept that tries to satisfy children's overall needs and which seeks to put forward an alternative to the social trends briefly referred to above.

We can give two examples, one from Denmark, the other from Greenland.

(a) "Childrenland" in Vrå, Denmark

The following is a description of a project whose structural development was the first of its kind in the Nordic countries.

In 1968 something called 'Børnenes Jord' ('Childrenland') was started at Vrå, a small town in northern Jutland, Denmark. A group of parents got the project moving. They wanted a place where they could engage in a wide range of joint activities along with their children. The idea became realizable when an elderly couple donated 10,000m2 (2.5 acres) of land to the project on condition that it should remain the property of the children of Vrå. Then followed a period of difficult negotiation with the local authority which concluded with the children being granted the right to own the land. Childrenland was a reality!

Børnenes Jord is an activity centre, offering children, young people and their parents a host of things to do. The place functions regardless of weather, summer and winter. Indoor activities are

popular and are given the same high priority as outdoor ones.

The land and everything on it is owned by a private foundation, 'Børnenes Jord i Vrå'. In the final version of the transfer documents filed with the land registry office, there are the following crucial sentences:

'No part of the transferred parcel of land shall be parcelled out, sold, mortgaged or otherwise made the subject of credit. The whole parcel shall in perpetuity and in its entirety be used as a play area.'

In a society in which the interests of children in many respects are not awarded the same priority as those of the adult population, and in which intentions originally favouring children are gradually converted into materially-oriented intentions for economic or practical reasons, remarks such as those given above clearly represent intentions permanently favouring children, and in their legal substance are unique for institutions of children's culture in the Nordic countries.

One of the first steps the parents took when they had secured the land for the children was to build a house so that Børnenes Jord could remain open in winter. Denmark often had temperatures of -10-15° C. A programme selected at random from winter 1978-79 shows that there were many varied activities during a given week, from the decidedly artistic to the more sociable type. On Monday, for example, the children worked on a marionette theatre. This is a form of drama that has become very popular and polished at Vrå, and the children often visit other towns to give marionette shows, with dolls they have made themselves. Throughout the week there is a play-school for the youngest plus activities for the older children. Children under the age of seven are 'honorary members', which means they are exempt from payment of the weekly subscription of D. kr. 1. -, which all users of Børnenes Jord aged seven years and over must pay.

There are modelling evenings, glove puppet theatre, children's films, general community get-togethers with music, games, table tennis, reading aloud, etc.

In spring Childrenland begins its preparations for summer. The adventure playground is an important element. A large piece of land has been marked off into smaller 'holdings', and every year these are allocated to interested children. This happens at a weekly general meeting, at which all the children who use Børnenes Jord gather to discuss and plan the events of the following week. There can be a lot of work ahead, if a child has been allocated a piece of land. Winter and wind have taken their toll of the houses and buildings. Maybe it is time to build a new one? Clearing the site is the first step and that can be a dangerous job. So it is important that there are always parents present at Børnenes Jord.

One of the summer activities the children of Vrå enjoy most is undoubtedly their Olympic Games. The Games are arranged in particular for those children who will not be going away for the summer holidays, but an increasing number of children every year are postponing their summer holidays until after the Olympics. More than 80 children - boys and girls - now participate in the different events.

After the summer holidays, plans are put forward for the autumn and winter programme.

(i) 'Government' of Childrenland

Børnenes Jord is a private foundation, which means that if it makes a profit, the money must be invested in improving the land and making the project even more interesting. An executive committee has the formal responsibility and manages the economy but in all practical matters the decisions are made by regular working-group meetings attended by parents, the executive committee and all the children who want to attend.

The meeting discusses the wishes and suggestions expressed by the children at earlier Monday meetings, and decisions are made on forthcoming major purchases and arrangements.

In 1978, the accounts showed revenue of D. kr. 82,000 and expenditure of approximately D. kr. 60,000. The largest items were an amount of D. kr. 22,000 from Børnenes Jord's 10th anniversary celebrations and the annual local-authority grant of D. kr. 35,000. The treasurer also reports donations from the employees of one or two local firms and organizations - and D. kr. 3,000 from the town's amateur dramatic society.

The meeting also decides which parents will take supervisory duties at the adventure playground and on which days.

(ii) Conclusion

There has been considerable interest in Denmark and the other Nordic countries in the Vrå project ever since it began. A number of places have attempted to copy the idea. There are, for example, childrenland sites at Åarhus and Ålborg, the second and third largest cities in Denmark, but nowhere has it been possible yet to arrange guarantees that the land will be preserved as a Børnenes Jord in perpetuity. Although many wonderful events and projects are conducted at these and other places, nothing has guaranteed children's right of ownership as in the case of Vrå. There is nothing of legal standing to prevent future urban planners, for instance, expropriating the land for some public purpose. Parents of children at Børnenes Jord in Vrå are quick to stress that if there is no guarantee that a children's haven of this type can be preserved for ever,

then it is not to be expected that parents will embark on the major task of establishing one. This has in fact been the experience of similar projects - and one of the reasons that many child-centred/parent-guided activities in the Nordic countries have ceased to function. The parents at Vrå believe it is only reasonable that local authorities should make land available for permanent use as Børnenes Jord.

It is one of the basics of a Børnenes Jord that it must be a joint activity centre for children and parents. As opposed to other state-run institutions, there is no need here for the user to adapt. It is in fact the users - the children - who decide which activities should be initiated and which investments made for future activities. Parents act as catalysts and assistants and as equal partners in many of the activities.

An illustrated report from Børnenes Jord in Vrå had these observations to make:

"In the over-industrialized social pattern and system we attempt to function in today, the opportunities the generations have of spending time together are reduced to leisure hours - but at the same time, leisure interests are split into an enormous number of sub-groups, the result being that children and parents have a very limited leisure-time together. The balance must be restored, if children and parents are not to lose contact with each other at the level of leisure interests. Children and young people today are constantly being looked after by "strangers". After what has probably been a long day at some day-care centre or other institutions, they come home to yet another set of "strangers" in the form of TV, radio, record-players, comic books, etc., which fill their leisure hours. When parents eventually come home after a tiring day's work, the day's only shared leisure experience is an episode in some TV serial. The creativity of such a shared experience is questionable - so is its social value. And children and their parents certainly get no closer to each other via this kind of shared experience.

Efforts are being made from many quarters in the Nordic countries to have a shorter working week for men and women. In Denmark, for example, the working day has not been reduced since 1921. It is still eight hours, although there is no longer Saturday work (for the most part.)

Børnenes Jord solves no problems - nor does it ease any of the labour-market processes that limit parents' opportunities and energy to initiate leisure activities and create a decent cultural platform for their children's upbringing and general conditions. Such changes would require a social policy that took a fundamentally different approach to the welfare of children and their parents. In effect, Børnenes Jord stands out as a practical example which may help to counteract the tendency for children and their parents - even within

the same module of leisure time - to be mutually isolated and separated in their social relations.

'In its essence, Børnenes Jord represents a move on the part of adults to cease adapting their children to a technologically well-run adult world and instead to try to assess things from the child's vantage point,' as one of the parents at Børnenes Jord has put it.

The above description of Børnenes Jord at Vrå in Denmark is based upon an illustrated account by Frode Muldkjær, 'Sammen kan vi det hele' ('Together, everything's possible'). Photographs by Bent Sørensen. The book can be obtained from the publisher as a book or in poster-exhibition form: Forlaget Medvind, Jorden Rundt 9, DK-7200 Grindsted, Denmark.

The circumstances and work involved in setting up Børnenes Jord in Vråare described by one of the initiators, author Carl Scharnberg in the book, 'Børnenes Jord - svar på en udfordring' ('Childrenland - answer to a challenge'), published by Aros.

(b) Youth parliament in Greenland

To celebrate the introduction of self-government in Greenland and to mark the International Year of the Child, the Greenland National Council granted the necessary funds to hold a 'youth parliament' in October 1979.

Members of the youth parliament were elected democratically from among the senior pupils in lower-secondary school in all towns in Greenland, and after a round of - occasionally very heated - electoral contests, a total of 21 young people between the ages of 14 and 18 met as duly elected representatives in Greenland's capital, Nuuk.

For many months in advance, teachers and pupils at schools throughout Greenland had been fully informed of the aims of the project. In conjunction with a course for teachers of senior classes at lower-secondary school, a number of topics and problems of importance to the young people of Greenland were defined and listed. Problems were drawn up in such a manner as not to offer a series of standard answers or ready-made solutions. On the contrary, problems were formulated in a way that made solutions depend very much on the structure and opportunities of each local community.

Each representative arrived fully briefed and well prepared at the Youth Parliament; for more than a week prior to the representatives' departure for Nuuk, all pupils in grades 8-11 had worked intensively on preparation of various speeches and statements.

After the formal opening, carried out by Mr. Jonathan Motzfeldt, chairman of the five-man National Executive Council, the Youth Parliament had a week to deliberate before presenting its conclusions to Greenland's 'real' parliament. It was a busy and most exciting week for the young representatives, for everyone

involved in the project at close quarters, and for all the pupil-constituents listening in to the daily radio broadcasts from the Youth Parliament.

Interspersed with their meeting sessions, the young 'parliamentarians' had the opportunity to visit a number of large companies and organizations in Nuuk and Greenland's National Museum as well as attend a musical evening, with singer Rasmus Lyberth as the main attraction.

(i) Demands of the young

On its final day, the Youth Parliament presented the following list of demands to Greenland's parliament proper:

- No to uranium mining in Greenland.
- No to additional large apartment blocks. Yes to experiments with smaller dwelling units and collectives.
- No to overfishing. Yes to greater priority being given to the smaller co-operatives and to long-term, interest-free loans to small, commercial fishing vessels.
- No to continued heavy dependence on imported energy. Yes to energy independence of foreign suppliers through exploitation of Greenland's existing coal reserves and hydro-electricity.
- No to con inued dependence upon imported goods generally. Yes to Greenland's own products such as clothing and food receiving economic support, while import duty is levied on imported goods.
- No to greater Danish influence in institutions of higher learning. Yes instead to additional investment in teaching materials in the Greenland language and to higher qualifications for Eskimo-speaking instructors in courses and programmes for further and in-service training.
- No to increased centralization of trade and industry. Yes instead to reorganization of total resources to benefit village communities and smaller firms.
- Equal pay for equal work in practice.

Even the most casual observer of Greenland politics in the 1970s will be familiar with virtually all of the above recommendations. To a large extent the Youth Parliament expressed views which leading political figures have been voicing with increasing emphasis over the past 5-10 years.

While the Youth Parliament may not have cast new light upon future development in Greenland, it did show its strong support for policy plans already proposed. The Greenland Parliament proper and the National Executive Council thus received resounding confirmation that the young generation and the voters of tomorrow are behind them in their basic policies. At the general election in 1982,

roughly 15% of the total number of votes will belong to the age group represented by the Youth Parliament.

In practice, adoption of a policy on the lines suggested by the Youth Parliament would require a close examination of the criteria on which the policy should be based. This means taking education and upbringing, and school structure, content, aims and form into the forefront for critical consideration and reappraisal.

We need a school which, in its aims, form and content, puts an increasing degree of influence into the hands of the pupils, who can combine theory and practice and who will give greater priority to liberty, equality and fraternity than to marks, examinations and experiments: a school that puts equal emphasis on manual and intellectual work and a school that promotes the urge and determination of young people, parents and teachers to break with those factors that tend to restrict the desired development and growth.

Only by providing such a framework for our children's education can we offer youngsters any hope of sticking to their ideals and attitudes in a future which must contend with uncertainty, recession and unemployment of hitherto unknown proportions. That is why it is important to listen to our young people - and work for a society based on concepts and values that do not necessarily mean growth and development at all cost.

Dare we? Can we? Will we?

(ii) Preliminary conclusions from Youth Parliament

Was Greenland's Youth Parliament just a publicity stunt or will it have an effect on the future opportunity of young people to make their views known?

There is no clear cut answer but in the follow-up period, an 18-page newspaper in Danish and Eskimo was published and used in the teaching of the Greenland language and in contemporary studies. The newspaper was for the most part a report, with photographs, on the proceedings of the Youth Parliament. This meant that thousands of youngsters once again had the opportunity of debating contemporary problems.

A number of the Youth Parliament representatives have since joined political youth organizations and are trying to exert influence on local politics in this manner.

Debates are currently being conducted throughout Greenland on the organization, fields of work and responsibility of pupil assemblies/councils within the school structure.

In Godthåb, the mayor, inspired by the work of the Youth Parliament, has proposed the appointment of a Junior Local Authority to advise on special matters relating to children and young people.

A suggestion has come from Thule that an exchange programme

be set up for children and young people in Greenland; many people consider it unreasonable that young Greenlanders get to know towns and regions in Denmark before they have even seen their own country properly.

Political awareness in Greenland can no longer be dismissed as an 'awakening' phenomenon; it is fully fledged - and fortunately so. Political work in Greenland in the years ahead will involve major and onerous tasks. The country needs every single one of the 15,000 or so children and young people who will obtain the vote over the next 10 years. Very soon it will be the under thirty's generation that determines political development in Greenland.

It would thus be true to say that the Youth Parliament has had both real and symbolic value. Real in the sense that the views of the young have been heard and respected. Symbolic inasmuch as Greenland's politicians have demonstrated that they are willing to enter a dialogue with children and young people on important matters of principle. This attitude to the young will influence the entire process of decentralizing decision-making, and it is gratifying to see that schools are prepared right from the outset to give the younger generation a share of responsibility for joint activities.

Bringing up children and young people to feel a responsibility for common interests is a political goal in Greenland. It will be our job to see that children and young people really do share that responsibility.

We adults must do our utmost to ensure that this political goal is achieved.

16. Film and video in local society

The film/video medium is a field that has long been the subject of debate and report in the context of Nordic collaboration. The bulk of the work hitherto has been carried out at national level. The more methodical studies of opportunities for co-operation in this field have so far led to the appointment of a joint Nordic film committee with the task of investigating the prospect of improving production of children's films in particular and their distribution throughout the Nordic region. The committee will conduct joint-Nordic viewings of children's films.

In the video field there have been a number of experiments related to children, which have involved children directly in video production with an educational purpose in mind. An example of experimental work of this type in Denmark is given below.

(a) Film/video as a medium of expression for children

Children receive an astonishing volume of pictures during the course

of a single day - more than their grandparents received in the course of a whole life, some people believe. Most of these pictures are 'moving pictures', and it is not until the child has passed through its first few years that it learns to distinguish between film and reality.

It is an educational goal in all the Nordic countries to give children the opportunity to form a defence against the pictorial bombardment by developing a critical approach to the film and television medium.

In practice, this goal is achieved partly by means of critical picture analysis as an independent - or part - subject in school, and partly by a series of practical projects in which children are positioned 'at the other end' of the communications channel, as transmitters. Children make films (standard and video) in many places in the Nordic countries and within many institutional structures.

One Danish example is a 'junior film workshop' established in the town of Hadersley in connection with a video workshop for adults in a community centre run by local residents.

The junior film workshop began operation in 1977 with the financial support of the Ministry of Culture, the Danish Film Institute and the local authority. During the first two years of its existence, 50-100 groups of 4-8 children have made their own short films, choosing a story/subject and executing it entirely on their own, receiving technical advice only when they themselves requested it.

The result has naturally been an extremely wide range of films. Not all of them would survive a normal technical or aesthetic appraisal, and they would be unlikely to compete anywhere with any professional film made for children, if their success had to be judged by box-office potential.

But they give a patchwork picture of a child's world ranging from a film about the town's local-history museum, the fire station or the dairy, to a western ('Showdown at Los Hadersley') and a documentary on life at a children's home on the outskirts of town.

And at the same time they have given several hundred children a first-hand impression of how films are made: 'You find out how much they fake in films,' as one 11-year old director said afterwards. Thanks to practical experience, children have an independent standpoint from which to judge the products of TV and cinema, sorting reality from fantasy, the 'fake' from the genuine and hence also an experience with which to appreciate the technically or aesthetically well-made product.

Similar experiments have been conducted at many places all over the Nordic region. In Sweden there have been projects under the auspices of schools, youth clubs and youth organizations. In some places, the materials are very simple e.g. drawing directly

on the film-strip or using various puppet and animation techniques. Some projects employ the simple Super-8 camera, others rely on video tape recorders (which shorten production time and speed up presentation of the finished result).

Whatever the technical method, the final goal in all cases may be described as being 'a lesson in an aspect of culture': giving children the tools and experience they need for independent assessment of the picture medium which occupies an ever-increasing part of their time, senses and consciousness.

17. Children's newspapers - a Danish example

History over the past century has taught us that the press is a vital part of the democratic process. Freedom of speech is essential if the press is to perform its function. It is in principle available to every member of society regardless of religion, sex, political standpoint and irrespective of age.

In practice, the print medium is technologically and economically demanding if we look beyond duplicated/xeroxed publications with little impact. In practice, the normal daily newspaper is inaccessible to children. They can scarcely read it on account of its language, and it seldom examines international or everyday affairs from the child's point of view.

The Year of the Child (1979) presented an ideal opportunity to launch various attempts at tackling the problem. In October 1979, Unesco and the Secretariat of the International Year of the Child in Geneva arranged an international conference in Paris for editors of children's newspapers. One of the participants was new to the business - Marianne Kjær, editor of the Danish children's newspaper, Børneavis 'Ren for alle' ('One for all'). Its first issue appeared on International Children's Day, June 1, 1979, and the newspaper has continued publication ever since. From September 1980, it switched from monthly to twice-monthly publication. It is read by 80,000 children in the 9-14 age group, and readership is national.

The newspaper is produced as a team effort by children and adults. Much of its space is devoted to reader's letters. They cover a wide range of subjects and spark off vigorous debate - mobbing at school, the problems of being fat, of being in love, the Danes' treatment of Greenlanders, why the Year of the Child was merely a sop, road safety on the way to school, etc.

Each issue carries an article by 'Junior Reporter', in which one or two children choose a topic, an institution, a person they would like to investigate or interview - and they visit the place/person with the newspaper's editor.

But the newspaper also deals with subjects that fill the pages

of adult newspapers - Chile, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Iran, the nuclear arms race - all viewed through the eyes of the child. The newspaper reports on experiments with new forms of education, pupil democracy, democratic decision-making in families - all from the child's vantage point. It writes on how children see death, puberty, puppy love - all topics of interest to children, presented in an accessible style.

The newspaper writes on the economic exploitation of children in Denmark and other countries. It highlights examples of exploitation via consumption or through the use of underpaid children to do work. Right-wing politicians have already labelled this series of feature articles 'an attempt to destroy a child's pleasure in work'.

The newspaper has received support from the Danish government (through the medium of the Ministries of Social Affairs, Education, and Culture respectively) and from a number of organizations and foundations. It is published by a private foundation, whose executive board includes representatives of the Danish Union of Teachers, Danish Women's Association, Danish Library Society, Ministry of Culture's working group on children and culture, scout and guide organizations, Danish Athletics Federation and other youth-related bodies.

The newspaper's stated objective is to inform and entertain readers and accustom children not only to reading newspapers but also to expressing themselves in a news medium. The editorial policy may be described as 'critical pluralism from the child's standpoint'.

18. A different kind of exhibition

A goal common to many experimental cultural projects in the Nordic countries in recent years has been the effort to mix media and art-forms, children and adults - multi-media arrangements for the entire family.

Exhibition sites, galleries and museums are often highly suitable for this purpose - flexible room arrangements, frequently adjacent outdoor space, and a mixed historical/cultural function that adapts well to projects aiming at 'the total experience'.

From internationally renowned museums (e.g. in Israel, New York and Amsterdam) we are familiar with tremendously successful examples of this type of activating exhibition designed especially for children and/or families. However, it is possible to achieve an element of success in more modest surroundings, too, as happened at Galleri F 15 in Moss in SE Norway in autumn 1979.

The occasion was the International Year of the Child, and the cultural inspiration came from the 'new cultural policy' adopted by the Norwegian Storting (parliament), which allows, for example,

for handsome state reimbursement of local and county authority expenses in connection with cultural projects and regular activities. In the county of Østfold, for example, there is a full-time cultural director and two cultural and leisure consultants, all of whom are engaged in product renewal in community culture. Moss is the largest town in the county.

The exhibition, during the 14 days it was open, was visited by 23,000 people. To put it another way, on the giant slide leading from the first floor of the building into the garden (and into a marquee tent there) there was a registered average flow of 6,000 adults and children per day during the period.

However, there were other ways of breaking out of one's everyday routine. One exhibition room had been converted into a dining room as toddlers experience it - tables of which one could only see the underside, chairs so high one could hardly clamber on to them. The physical environment outside the home is another area which is not arranged to suit children - even in Scandinavia, which has otherwise created a name for itself with well-designed playgrounds. A second room was laid out as a section of roadway, as a small child experiences it on a pedestrian crossing, with a juggernaut truck revving up its engine in one's ear and displaying its colossal front, as one makes one's humble, uncertain way across the striped roadway. On the wall there were brief but telling road-death statistics.

The whole of the upstairs floor was arranged as a playroom. There was a make-up section, which produced more than 2,000 made-up faces, instruments for playing on, paper and paints with permission to draw on the walls, a fairy-tale kiosk, where one could listen to 1001 Nights and all kinds of other stories. On the main stairway, there were samples of comic books and other children's literature seen from a critical standpoint.

Finally, there was a drama workshop in conjunction with the make-up and fairy-tale kiosk. Drama pupils from the Nordic Folk High School at Kungälv (in Sweden, a hundred kilometres on the other side of the border) performed brand new versions of the traditional fairy-tales of Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, Little Red Riding Hood, etc., with children visiting the exhibition. There were no language problems (Norwegian/Swedish) but there was often a dispute about how the story should end.

The arrangement at Galleri F 15 in Norway is not perhaps unique; the various elements in the exhibition have been tried on many other occasions. The novelty lay in the combination of demonstrating what it felt like to be a child, so that even a grown-up could feel the child's problems in his own person, and stretching the imagination through play, fantasy, and drama to discover something of other ways of living.

The combination of many media, of adult and child interest, of

Swedish and Danish participation in an event for Norwegians - all these devices assembled in one place, helped crystallize a goal that very often must content itself with an abstract form in a political document: dismantling barriers and boundaries, creating shared experiences that shock and surprise us out of our stereotyped way of thinking - cultural activities and experiences that diverge from convention and the accepted categories.

19. Children's rock, Child Power

In November 1979, a concert was held in the oldest and grandest concert hall in Copenhagen, Odd Fellow Palæet. The stage was festooned with strings of balloons, there was a make-up department in the cloakroom where people could paint their faces to their heart's content or sprinkle themselves with silver dust. All the seating had been removed and in the centre of the empty floor was a gigantic audio-mixer panel.

The Year of the Child Rock Festival was about to start!

The organizers were children, members of the junior rock band, No Parking, all 13-17 years old.

All of the other participating groups were in the same age range, with names like The Hemorrhoids, The Knots, Louis and his Happy Hams, Barrock, etc. and the audience were children - 5,000 of them aged 5-18 years.

The concert was the first manifestation of the children's rock scene. With adult assistance, one or two of the groups had earlier issued albums, and some of them had a year or so of experience of after-school professional playing, but the message from the concert, with its 15 rock groups from all over Denmark, was "Kids have their own musical ideas, and they know how to express them."

Musically, most of the groups were traditionalists - hard rock, either of their own composition or borrowed directly from the great rock hits of the 1950s and 1960s. Only one or two of the groups represented punk music. Other groups - with a little help from their (adult) friends - played what some of the children were quick to deride as 'teacher's rock' -i. e. lyrics with a social message, often written by the children themselves. Here is an example from No Parking's second LP, December 1980 (translated from Danish):

"The first thing I remember when I was still young,
was: When you're a kid, you've got to hold your tongue,
'cos you can't play fire-engines on the 16th floor
when the missus downstairs won't have you play no more!

Turn it down, turn it down, you're making a racket,
it's about time you went and earned a packet!
Pack it in!

This ole world is overpopulated, say your prayers,
'cos we're at the point where they're packing us in layers!
What's gonna happen on the 16th floor,
when they decide there ain't no room for more?

Turn it down, turn it down ....."

Perhaps the most important effect of the children's rock offensive and its yearning for publicity is its spreading function. At every school and in most blocks these days, there are groups of youngsters learning to play guitars, the electric organ, drums etc., trying their hand at song-writing and composition. Some of it is good, some not so good, but all of it demonstrates one point clearly: that children have the urge to "do their own thing", with no interference from grown-ups or teachers. Children's rock has got them doing what several years of song and music classes at school have failed to do - express themselves musically.

It is a generally accepted fact that children make their own melodies, rhythms, rhymes and songs up until the time they go to school - but that all independent productivity ceases abruptly the moment that music class (and the restrictive influence of other classes on bodily movement, personal awareness, etc.) starts. Music instruction at school is based on the classics (the systems of Carl Orff or Zoltan Kodaly or the national (romantic) song treasury). Afro-American musical tradition (jazz, beat and rock) are still alien to centralized music instruction in Nordic schools. As a result, children find themselves living in two musical worlds: one contains the music they must learn at school, the other is utterly different (it is their leisure world, their own choice of music on records, at concerts, on the radio, accompanying cinema commercials and films, and includes even the "no-man's musical land" of muzak in supermarkets and shopping centres).

This probably partly explains why children have grabbed their chance with rock and formed groups and bands: "This is music we can make ourselves. It sounds like the stuff we want to hear, and it has none of the teacher's moral and social message and manipulation."

But it is by no means easy finding a chance to play in a band, unless you conform with society's rules (and play within the framework of school or youth club).

In an interview in Denmark's children's newspaper, Børneavis (described earlier) the group "No Parking" said:

"Kids haven't much encouragement to form and play rock bands. It's difficult to find premises and it's expensive gear. Today a group can at best get two hours a week at a youth club - that's hardly enough time to tune your guitar! We'd like to see special kids'

clubs, where kids could play their own music. Not run by adults but by kids. Grown-ups would be welcome to drop by - but kids would be the boss!"

Of course, musical expression among children takes many other forms apart from rock in the Nordic countries. There are the familiar ones such as scout bands, school bands and orchestras, private music instruction, girls' brass bands and so on. In Denmark (where children's rock seems to have taken a stronger hold than in the other Nordic countries) one child in four between the ages of 9 and 12 attends music or singing lessons regularly.

But music has sharply dividing social and sex lines. Whereas 39% of children in the 9-12 age group from the upper social class attend instrumental or vocal lessons, only 17% of children in the lowest social class can claim to do the same and while one girl in three either plays or sings, the same can be said for only one boy in six. Children's rock looks very much as though it can break down this traditional pattern - perhaps more the sex balance than the social.

Of course, there is also the alarming but challenging aspect of the situation; it leads to the formulation of demands for a children-oriented policy. For example, in the above interview, the children, looking for a place to practise, quickly came up with another demand: places to be on their own terms with their own rules. It is a demand backed by some tradition, and the International Year of the Child helped push matters along.

In April 1980, four to five months after the interview in Børneavis, the idea of a Children's House run by children on their own terms began to take shape. A vacant property owned by the local authority in one of the oldest parts of Copenhagen, Christianshavn, was entered and occupied by a group of local children, who set up headquarters there and approached the local authority to negotiate for the right to stay. The council had let the property stand empty for some considerable time and had recently shut down a youth club in the area. Many of the children really did need another place to go.

The children were initially successful in this particular attempt to take matters into their own hands. The council handed over tenancy of the property to the children and assumed some of the basic costs. They installed two adult instructors to advise, but not to control. The experiment has since run into difficulty but it served one useful purpose - the idea has "caught on".

Elsewhere in the Danish capital, the municipal council planned to demolish an adventure playground to make room for new housing. It was in the oldest and most deprived residential area in Copenhagen ('the black heart of the old working class district, Nørrebro') and the playground was the only breathing space in the densely populated district. Adults and children, residents and outsiders

demonstrated in protest and occupied the playground to prevent the corporation's bulldozers from clearing the site. It developed into a running battle between police on the one hand and children and residents on the other in early summer 1980. The police won.

However, many children in the area continued the task of finding a place to spend their leisure time. They wanted a Children's Clubhouse. During the course of summer and autumn 1980 they occupied and vacated 4-5 empty dwellings or shops, each time setting up a temporary Children's Clubhouse. The same movement made itself felt in the Copenhagen suburbs. In the second largest city in Denmark (Åarhus) a group of children in autumn 1980 met regularly twice weekly and finally presented a complete plan to the city fathers for a Children's Clubhouse plus an application for funds to run it.

The more anarchistic Copenhagen branch of the movement calls itself Children's Power. The more legalistic Åarhus movement sympathizes with its counterpart in the capital but has drawn a distinguishing line between the two by adopting the name Children's Rights.

These movements have not sprung from the private organization for adults and children that has existed in Denmark, Norway and Sweden throughout the 1970s and called BRIS, Børns Rettigheder i Samfundet (Children's Rights in Society). BRIS gives moral support to these two militant children's organizations but the militants do not want moral support - at least not initially. There basic claim is "a place where we can be left alone".

20. Conclusion

The term 'culture' was formerly synonymous with such activities as literature, theatre, art, music, films - in other words, activities with a decidedly artistic slant. In recent years, however, there has been a fundamental change in the concept of 'culture'. To many Nordic people, culture has become the whole complex of ideas and standards that govern us all in everything we do. It is seen clearly in the activities that have sprouted in the Nordic countries and which have been discussed in reports on culture and children published by the respective ministries of culture. Cultural phenomena should be viewed in relation to economic, social and political factors. Cultural activity has become a general part of human living. This has made its mark, for instance, in the practical application of cultural policy - particularly as far as children are concerned. The Nordic report on children's culture, which has been compiled for the Nordic Cultural Secretariat by a joint Nordic working group, stresses that a healthy and pleasant working environment, shorter working hours and improved economy for parents have an important influence on children's cultural development in society and are essential if

children's own culture is to be guaranteed favourable conditions for development.

This trend must be considered against the background of the economic, social and technological development that the Nordic countries, despite individual national differences, have shared during the expansive industrialization process of the post-World War II period. Industrialization brought many of the same type of problems to all Nordic countries. The population migrated from rural to urban communities, the formerly strong family ties were weakened, and society assumed responsibility for much of the children's care and upbringing. Children are not sheltered to the same extent but are much more exposed to commercial exploitation of their lives. The problems of the Nordic countries must therefore be considered specific in a global context. In material terms, these countries are highly developed but have passed rapidly through a series of social and cultural changes. Standards and families living patterns have been uprooted in the process of commercial growth and uncontrolled industrialization. Children are no longer protected to the same extent.

By comparison with the specific material problems of famine, malnutrition and death facing the developing nations, those with which the Nordic countries have to contend may seem something of a luxury. Compared with these massive problems, the Nordic countries are a privileged society. But material growth has had its cost in human and social terms - it is urgently necessary today to restore something of the balance. A determination to do something about this has been expressed particularly by social and ethnic minorities and among children and young people, who must take steps to defend themselves against the commercial exploitation of their lives. At the same time, it is necessary in the Nordic countries to remove some of the social inequalities that exist in relation to cultural opportunities in life.

We hope we have given a few examples of the way the Nordic countries are tackling the problem, such as activities that can lead to a cultural policy which also holds some answers to the human problems facing adults. In this way, a cultural policy for children can become a cultural policy for the whole nation, relevant to the problems that materially well-equipped Nordic countries have on their hands today.

The view is widely held in the Nordic countries that if a solution is to be found to the problems that will weigh upon people in future, it will require changes not only within and by the official cultural bodies, but the will to preserve and develop a cultural identity. It is conceivable that the popular social and cultural movements in the Nordic region, especially among children and young people, may be required in future to transform material, technological development

into a tool for human use, diverting it from a destructive development trend which threatens to ruin human fellowship and self-expression.

21. Examples of artistic activities for children under Nordic subsidy schemes in connection with the International Year of the Child 1979

(For fuller details of national activities, readers are invited to contact the ministries of culture in the respective Nordic countries. Addresses are provided elsewhere in the report.)

(a) Booklets on children and culture

To provide an account of long-term planning of work on children's culture, the Nordic Cultural Secretariat took steps in 1979 to enlarge its Nordic Report (NU) series of booklets on children and culture in the Nordic countries, the purpose being to encourage new activities in the field of children's culture.

So far the following booklets have been published (titles translated but booklets not necessarily available in English): 'Children and literature in the Nordic countries', 'Children and films in the Nordic countries' and 'Children and museums in the Nordic countries'. There are plans for the publication of 'Children's theatre in the Nordic countries' and 'Children and visual art'.

The booklets are designed to gather experience and ideas in one place for easy reference. Print orders for each booklet are approx. 20,000 copies, and these are distributed to major cultural institutions throughout the Nordic region. They are also available at booksellers in the Nordic countries.

(b) Nordic Cultural Fund

The Nordic Cultural Fund was set up in 1966. It has since granted financial support to many projects related to children's culture.

Children's culture had previously accounted for a very modest 1% of all grants made by the Fund - but the International Year of the Child provided a special opportunity for the Nordic Cultural Secretariat, within the auspices of the Fund, to allocate special priority to children's activities during the Year of the Child.

In consequence, the following projects were initiated:

- An exhibition on Lapp children, then and now.
- A joint Nordic puppet-theatre project for children.
- Implementation of a Nordic cultural week on the theme, 'Children in Nordic and other countries'.
- Exchange visits by school orchestras.
- Visual-arts Activities for children.

Funds were also granted for a number of projects related to quite definite educational fields.

Moreover, during the Year of the Child, the Fund made donations to a large number of associations and organizations for conference and seminar activities concerning children's culture.

During 1979 the Nordic Cultural Fund made a total contribution of D. kr. 695,000 to activities relating to children's culture.

(c) Youth co-operation

Subsidy arrangements for Nordic youth co-operation also included children's organizations. The borderline between children's and youth organizations is a difficult one to draw. A number of bodies which in name are youth organizations, in fact organize children and young people under the age of 15 years and draw a large proportion of their members from this age group.

Under the new procedure, the subsidy for organizational co-operation has been placed on a separate footing, and priority is given to outward-looking projects. There is thus every reason to believe that in the long run this will lead to more direct cultural measures and experiments in cultural work among children and young people.

The amount budgeted for Nordic youth co-operation in 1979 was D. kr. 1.6m. Of this total, the sum of D. kr. 315,000 was earmarked for children's organizations and activities related to children's culture. Major projects included the following:

- A seminar on the economic crisis and unemployment, and their effect on development of the child.
- A seminar on the commercial influence on children's leisure.
- A seminar on the project 'Children and films'.

It should also be mentioned that the Nordic Council of Ministers in 1979 granted D. kr. 250,000 for innovation in education involving exchange of teachers and pupils between the Nordic countries. In view of the relatively modest figure, these activities were concentrated on school-camp arrangements. Experience confirmed that exchanges of teachers and pupils is a good form of Nordic co-operation. A week spent together with a class from another Nordic country, stimulates interest in co-operation and in the social and cultural conditions prevailing in the other Nordic countries.

(d) Theatre co-operation

Nordic co-operation on the theatrical front can be subdivided into three main spheres: guest performances, additional drama training, and economic support for amateur theatre.

Since theatre co-operation was placed on a regular basis, the Nordic Theatre Committee, which is responsible for the work, has concentrated on guest or visiting performances, which have a long tradition in the Nordic region. Funds made available for this purpose are very modest: approximately D. kr. 1 million per annum in recent years.

When the visiting-theatre scheme was expanded in 1974, it was made clear that extra activity for the most part should be devoted to theatre for children and young people and to amateur theatre. As a result, subsidies have been given to many visiting theatre activities and tours.

In 1979, the Nordic Theatre Committee had the sum of D. kr. 1.7m at its disposal. A large part of this sum was channelled into projects promoting children's theatre.

During 1979, the Nordic Theatre Committee gave its support to 38 guest performances, 12 of these aimed at audiences of children and young people, the remaining 26 being for adults, although it should be stressed that plays for children and young people are often intended to be seen by children in the company of grown-ups, and it is clear that the adult performances would seldom be unsuitable for children.

Guest performances in 1979 were given for children's theatre - but also in connection with seminars on children's theatre.

There were three seminars during the year on theatre for children and young people organized by the Nordic Theatre Committee:

'The Dovecot and the collective work process' in Ribe, Denmark (40 participants).
'Acting techniques in theatre for children and young people' in Vasa, Finland (78 participants).
'Children's theatre - a challenge for the dramatist, a cross for the critic?' at Hanaholmen, Helsinki, Finland (70 participants).

The Theatre Committee has since published reports on these seminars.

(e) Other theatre activities - Nordic Amateur Theatre Council

The Nordic Amateur Theatre Council is the body that deals primarily with amateur theatre and drama. Its goal is to promote the interests and status of amateur theatre in the Nordic countries by co-ordinating the exchange of experience and views, by launching activities of a magnitude beyond the capability of the individual country and by arranging exchange of performances, conferences, etc., thereby furthering the sense of Nordic fellowship.

In 1979, the Nordic Amateur Theatre Council had a budget of D. kr. 250,000 and gave its support to 12 Nordic guest performances,

three of which were specifically intended for children and young people. One of the most successful projects was that conducted by Silkeborg Puppet Theatre (from Denmark) in the Faroe Islands. The puppet group put on 12 performances in Faroese schools and libraries.

The Council also arranged - in 1978 - a seminar on 'Children and theatre - new working methods in theatre for children and young people' for Nordic leaders of children's theatres in preparation for the Year of the Child.

In addition, amateur theatrical activity in the Nordic countries was debated as part of the programme at the Nordic Amateur Theatre Council seminar in 1979: 'Drama and amateur theatre in Nordic co-operation: opportunities for co-operation and development'.

One of the prime factors in relation to amateur theatre under the Council of Ministers is that it must be firmly rooted in the local community, for whom it may represent a necessary tool and medium for expressing its own standpoint on its own terms.

This interplay between amateur theatre and the local community has meant that in almost all cases, amateur theatre has been an inspiration for both children and adults'.

(f) Literary Co-operation

With effect from 1975, a subsidy scheme has been operated under the Nordic Council of Ministers in support of translation of literature from one Nordic language to another.

During the first year the scheme was in operation, subsidies were provided for the translation of 114 books, 21 of which were children's books. In the latter category there were many translations into the minority languages.

In 1979, a total of 118 grants were made, totalling D. kr. 1. 1m for translation of books from one Nordic language to another. Out of the total figure, 28 grants (worth D. kr. 0. 1m) were for translation of children's literature. This literature category thus accounted for 10% of total grants during the Year of the Child. By comparison, a total of 462 books received translation subsidies during the period 1975-78, 103 of them children's books.

The Nordic Cultural Secretariat also submitted a proposal during the Year of the Child that literature for children and young people be considered a separate genre in the statutes of the Nobel Prize scheme. This proposal, and a second proposal from the Nordic Council's literature committee to the effect that children's literature should be given a separate prize under the Nordic Council Literature Award scheme, are currently being prepared by the Cultural Secretariat.

(g) Musical co-operation

The council for Nordic musical co-operation, NOMUS Council, whose purpose is to promote development and knowledge of music in the Nordic countries, drew up a new programme of action in 1979, including a proposal to expand Nordic musical activities in the field of children's music. In this connection, it should be noted that no projects had hitherto been launched with special relation to children.

For 1979 NOMUS had the sum of D. kr. 1,403,000 at its disposal, a large part of which was to be used for project work.

The proposal concerning children's and music projects has been debated by NOMUS but no decision has been reached on a specific project.

Most of the initiative in launching children's musical arrangements in the Nordic countries under the UN Year of the Child was taken outside the framework of the Cultural Agreement. For example, there were exchanges between twin towns (children's choirs, school orchestras, etc.).

In some cases, the Nordic Cultural Fund lent its support for this type of exchange and during 1979, under the auspices of the Nordic Cultural Secretariat, steps were taken to form a federation of many Nordic amateur music organizations, involving nearly 300,000 active amateur musicians and singers. The field of amateur music, co-ordinated under SAMNAM, includes the musical activities of children and young people. Most of these activities receive support from the Nordic Cultural Fund.

Considering the increase in activity on all musical fronts in recent years, including folk-music and rhythm genres, it would be desirable if these fields of children's music were strengthened and encouraged to develop within the long-term framework of the Nordic Cultural Agreement.

(h) Film co-operation

The report on children's culture stresses the importance of improving the situation concerning children's films in the Nordic countries, highlighting Nordic co-operation on film import and greater co-ordination on production and distribution of children's films.

A subsequent report on 'a broader market for Nordic films in the Nordic countries' reached the conclusion that a joint Nordic children's film festival should be arranged every two years. This proposal is being studied by the Council of Ministers, and to encourage more specific and regular steps towards co-operation in the field of children's films, the Nordic Cultural Secretariat published the report, mentioned earlier, on 'Children and films in the Nordic countries'.

(i) Radio and TV co-operation

Co-operation between the children's departments of the Nordic broadcasting companies is one of the best-developed fields of radio and television. It includes joint programme ventures, purchases, exchange of programmes, and a regular feedback of experience and ideas.

Future Nordic co-operation in the field of radio and television will depend partly on the result of NORDSAT deliberations by a special working group under the Cultural Secretariat.

NOTES

1. The NORDIC COUNCIL is a consultative body set up by and comprising representatives of the national legislatures and governments of the Nordic countries. Legislatures nominate a total of 78 members of the Council. Nordic governments send as many representatives as they wish to Council meetings. Approximately 40 ministers usually attend. Government members are not entitled to vote at meetings of the Council. The self-governing territories of the Faroe Islands and Åland nominate representatives who form part of the Danish and Finnish delegations respectively. Greenland, which recently became self-governing, has applied for independent representative admission to the Nordic Council.

2. The NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS is a consultative body representing the Nordic governments. Its duties embrace the whole field of Nordic co-operation. The Council of Ministers has a changing membership, depending on which ministers are required to debate a particular issue. Nordic prime ministers, foreign ministers and defence ministers meet at regular intervals but not as a Council of Ministers. Each government nominates a minister to co-ordinate Nordic affairs. Cultural co-operation is made the responsibility of Nordic ministers of education and culture respectively.

3. Every year, children's theatre groups in Denmark assemble for a Children's Theatre Festival, held in different parts of the country but with one thing in common: the site and population have very little in the way of children's theatre. During the 1977-78 season, 35 children's and visiting theatre groups staged a total of 6,196 performances. Of these, 4,161 were visiting performances. The same type of movement is known in the other Nordic countries, too. Demand for such performances is heaviest from schools. In Denmark's case, out of a total of 3,664 visiting theatre performances, 1,773 were held at schools, 637 in libraries and 485 in kindergartens. In the field of Nordic co-operation there are many exchange visits by children's theatre groups and a good deal of experience is exchanged through the Nordic Theatre Committee both in the form of touring performances and seminars.

II. ARTS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN IN AUSTRALIA

Andrea Hall, Community Arts Board
of the Australia Council

"Imagine an Australia in which the education of young people has included the opportunity for them to make the Arts part of their lives. What an infinitely more interesting and enriching country to live in."

Dr. Kan McKinnon
former Chairman
Australian Schools Commission

In 1976, the Schools Commission and the Australia Council in close co-operation with the States and Territories, initiated an inquiry into arts and education in Australia. The study aimed to investigate the place of the arts within the education system and opportunities for young Australians to experience the arts, both as members of the audience, and as participants.

The study concluded that the increased importance of the arts in the community in recent years was not reflected in school and community-based services and activities for children. Careful planning and a good deal of energy were deemed necessary to transform the situation so that every young Australian could have systematic exposure to the arts while at school, and the opportunity to continue that involvement after leaving.

In order for this objective to be realized, a number of strategies were outlined in the report with the aim of:

1. ensuring that young people have opportunities for serious and connected experiences in the arts, both at school and out of school;
2. providing young people with opportunities for personal involvement in arts activities provided in ways which foster continuity and growth;
3. providing fruitful interplay between spontaneity and discipline, expression of strong feeling and formal skill. There is a need to avoid the haphazard and superficial, to push back boredom through progressive introduction of new objectives, new approaches, new experiences, new skills;

4. providing experiences relevant to the lives of young people. To develop systematically, an arts programme within the school related to the community.
5. providing programmes which reflect a distinctive Australian perspective. Children should have the opportunity to become familiar with the themes which have preoccupied Australians."

Attitudes have changed since 1976. Many more educators are now prepared to discuss the arts, and their place in the curriculum as an essential part of a well-balanced education, rather than as a frill or optional extra.

At the Commonwealth, State and local government levels projects have been initiated which reflect the above objectives and which demonstrate the way to further development.

The Community Arts Board of the Australia Council has a developmental as well as a responsive role. A growing awareness amongst artists, educators and the community, of the need to offer children excellence in the arts has led to steadily increasing numbers of applications to the Board for financial assistance to this area. Creative work with children is now recognized by artists and arts organizations as demanding of the highest quality.

The Board has also responded to a recommendation of the Arts and Education Report and initiated a national scheme whereby children in schools have the opportunity for sustained contact with practising artists. This scheme is described in more detail below.

Community Arts Board programmes offer children an opportunity to get in touch with their own creativity. In this context the Board's policies emphasize:

1. more sustained contact with the artist, as distinct from a brief and haphazard exposure;
2. greater opportunity for skills development;
3. exposure to excellence in the arts in their own place that is within a broader community, rather than a strictly institutional setting.

Two such projects assisted by the Community Arts Board are described below:

The Artists in Schools Project

The Artists in Schools project is a national initiative instigated by the Community Arts Board in 1978.

The programme enables artists to work with children in primary and secondary schools for a period of eight to ten weeks. The aims include:

(a) to stimulate interest and understanding of the arts within the

school through personal contact with a practising artist;

(b) to encourage State educational authorities to become involved in the administration and funding of the scheme.

The Community Arts Board and other Boards of the Australia Council have provided well over $150,000 towards the scheme since its inception, and have thereby enabled 57 artists, including poets, painters, actors, crafts people, writers, sculptors and musicians to work with sixty schools in five States of Australia.

The artist's role is quite different from that of a teacher. The difference can be illustrated by describing John Balsaitis' involvement with the children at Thomastown High School, in an industrialized outer suburb of one of Australia's largest cities.

John is an abstract painter who was excited at the prospect of working with children who, in the words of their art teacher "believe that five minutes is enough to see through the National Gallery. When asked to express creatively they fall back on familiar symbols which they equate with art ... maltese crosses, love hearts, Dracula heads, ballerinas, cartoon characters, silhouetted deer in the sunset ..." John believed that valid and exciting forms could emerge from these symbols and worked with the children to transform a conspicuous disused septic tank structure into a large-scale mural.

Poet and lyricist Eric Beach worked with children from many different cultural backgrounds in a school in the inner city area of Melbourne. In the words of a teacher "Eric had classes writing terrific stuff - even new migrants were writing poetry and still are".

A national evaluation of the scheme commissioned by the Board in 1980 demonstrated that the programme was progressing satisfactorily in line with its objectives, and that many educational authorities had accepted responsibility for implementation of the scheme in their own states and were contributing towards the costs of the artists' fees. During 1981, the state governments contributed $3.00 for every $2.00 contributed by the Australia Council.

The Flying Fruit Fly Circus

The Flying Fruit Fly Circus is an example of an arts programme for children provided outside the formal school environment and offering sustained opportunities for arts skills acquisition and development.

The circus began in 1979 and emerged as part of the repertoire of the Murray River Performing Group (MRPG), a community theatre company based in the rural growth centre of Albury/Wodonga. The MRPG, as a community theatre group, is attempting to create theatre which reflects local conditions and issues and to take their

performances into the street, shops, bars, libraries, etc. The circus is a step towards developing, despite accelerated growth, an indigenous culture which is unique to Albury/Wodonga.

The Flying Fruit Fly Circus is a circus of aids; clowns, acrobats, jugglers, high wire, trapeze and cycle acts. One does not need to make concessions that they are 'only children'. They display great expertise, energy and professionalism, discipline, spontaneity and originality engendered by the opportunity for self expression. The children are a cross section of the kind of children to be found all over Australia. Their ages range from 3 years to 18 years. The children are also involved in every stage of production, designing acts, erecting the big top, making props and helping with stage management.

Through sustained training with professional artists, the circus aims:

1. to provide a structure where local children who show abilities as potential Australian performers and entertainers have the opportunity through training and performance both in Albury/Wodonga and elsewhere to develop and succeed;
2. to provide training in the performing arts for local children as a means of developing a personal empathy and respect for the arts generally;
3. to provide a celebration of youth in the performing arts for Albury/Wodonga.

The degree of community participation and support for the circus is considerable.

The circus has toured surrounding country areas, participated in major Australian festivals and was invited to represent Australia at the Vancouver International Festival for Young People held in Vancouver in May, 1981. A significant proportion of the funds needed to send the circus to Vancouver was raised by the people of Albury/Wodonga.

III. A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO VISUAL ARTS TEACHING BASED ON THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

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The develo ment of the educational system is closely linked to continuous improvement in teaching practice. This is particularly important in the visual arts as a school subject as they fulfil the humanistic ideals of aesthetic education in a practical way through children's creative art activities.

The problems of the systematic approach in visual arts teaching depend upon the country or region of the world and are influenced by a seriqs of factors. Nevertheless, a number of problems of universal importance may be pointed out.

In making a systematic approach to visual arts teaching we are guided by the following concepts:

- creative visual arts activity is inherent in every normally developed child. Therefore, education in the visual arts is meant for all children, regardless of the socio-economic, cultural or socio-political conditions of their environment.
- children's creative visual arts activity is related to art, but it is not art in itself, or rather it is a special kind of art having a universal character.
- children's drawings are not professionally determined; they are a function of the child's way of life. Children's visual arts activity plays an integral part in various activities - play, speech, singing, work, drawing etc. - and it is carried out in a complex and integral way within the framework of the natural life cycle. Children's visual arts activity is a creative act, which through observation and imagination relates the child to its surrounding world.
- the development of children's visual arts activity is a highly complex, continuous and contradictory process. We still do not know the genetic factors which determine the creative potential of the individual nor to what extent it is susceptible to radical changes as a result of education. All problems related to the guidance of children's visual arts activity should therefore be based upon a deep respect and understanding of childhood as a unique and essential stage in man's life.

- visual art is of crucial importance in the development of children's artistic activities. Artists - painters and educators - should take the lead in reforms in the field of aesthetic education through art and raise it to the same level as the rest of contemporary education.

- the development of children's creativity is as much a personal as a social problem. The appeals for humanism and democracy in aesthetic education are bound to fail if they are not in accord with present-day living conditions. We are fully aware of the fact that the high ideals of INSEA for harmonious development of children all over the world can be achieved only with the active participation of society as a whole and with the moral and financial support of the respective governmental and non-governmental cultural, educational, economic and political institutions and organizations.

Education in the visual arts in the People's Republic of Bulgaria is an integral part of the national system for aesthetic education. The problem of aesthetic education is one of the most important in the political, cultural and social development of the country. The main goal is to bridge the gap between the material and spiritual spheres. To this end a complex programme for national aesthetic education has been drawn up. The programme guarantees the creation of optimum conditions for the expression and development of creative ability in all age groups and social strata and for the all-round harmonious development of the individual in all spheres of human activity.

The national system of aesthetic education embraces art, science and culture, education, economics and production, customs and socio-political organizations - in other words, the nation's entire life. Moreover, it is open to the world. The International Assembly "Banner of Peace" and the long-term programmes for harmonious development of the individual (for example the programme "Leonardo Da Vinci") ensure constant cultural exchange and co-operation with other countries and nations in the field of aesthetic education. The National Commission for Unesco and the National Committee for INSEA through their activities also contribute to this goal.

Three basic structural institutions are involved in the implementation of the national system for aesthetic education in the field of the visual arts: the Committee for Culture and its institutes and subdivisions in the districts; the Ministry of Education and its school and out-of-school units (extra-curricular art courses, aesthetic education clubs, optional courses, etc.); the Bulgarian Union of Artists in interaction with other artistic unions.

The idea "All arts under the same roof" is becoming increasingly popular. In Bulgaria it is applied in two ways: first, a comprehensive education in art subjects is given in secondary schools and

secondly, there is a system of out-of-school art centres for children. In both ways we respect the principle of making a complex educational impact through different forms of art on the child's personality and creating genuine possibilities for him or her to participate, according to his or her interest in different creative activities.

Aesthetic education in the secondary schools includes the following subjects: mother tongue, foreign languages, music, visual arts and aesthetics. Teaching in these subjects takes place in and out of school on an individual and a collective basis. Projects are being developed to provide common material facilities and laboratories for pedagogical research. Much attention is given to the link between school and life. It can be said, that complete artistic education is the organizational basis for the aesthetic training of students.

Visual arts are studied in secondary schools as follows:

from grade 1 to grade 3 - one period weekly
from grade 2 to grade 6 - two periods weekly
from grade 7 to grade 8 - one period weekly.

As from 1981, it was planned to study a new subject in the curriculum for the 9th and 10th grades - "Basic principles of aesthetics". Students can take visual arts as an optional subject for two periods weekly from grade 4 to grade 10, as well as participate in out-of-class art courses, both in and out of school.

The subjects covered by the visual arts curriculum are painting, graphics, sculpture, applied arts, analysis of works of art, and history of art. The different subjects are linked to practical visual arts activities by students. The aim of visual arts education is to foster the all-round harmonious development of the individual in the following ways:

- by developing the creative abilities of students and encouraging such qualities as power of observation, imagination, emotional responsiveness, etc.
- by helping students to form an aesthetic judgement of their environment through the discovery of the beauty of nature and the social and practical activities of man and society.
- by developing a critical sense in analysing and evaluating Bulgarian and foreign works of art and by fostering patriotic and internationalistic feelings and respect for the cultural heritage and folklore traditions.
- by promoting active participation, through visual arts activities, in the socio-political and cultural life of the school and in the aesthetic improvement of the environment.

The curriculum for the different classes is worked out in the traditional way characteristic of most countries around the world: pedagogical problems gradually become more complicated, each class preserving its relative independence in the general teaching system for the visual arts. Recently, however, experiments have been started with a new, more effectively structured curriculum in which the systematic approach is carried out in a different way. For example, in one of the experimental programmes, the teaching material is divided into basic problems, visual arts materials and techniques, means of expression, themes, subject matter and motives for expression at the different school levels - primary, intermediate and secondary. In another experimental programme links are sought with subjects such as vocational training, Bulgarian language and music.

The most recent experimental programme is based entirely upon the integral approach and guarantees closer co-ordination, and interaction between all structural elements of the teaching training system in all subjects taught. The programme so far has been tried out in classes 1 to 3.

Experience shows that the application of the systematic approach can create favourable conditions for solving the problems of education through the arts only when the educational process is guided by a teacher who is active as an educator or artist. Furthermore, the problems of visual arts education are partly the problems of art itself, because they are linked with the education of the future viewers and connoisseurs of art, and with the formation of their aesthetic criteria and ideals.

Teaching in the visual arts is directed towards the harmonious creative development of the individual. The present curriculum and methodological organization of the teaching process is a sound basis for stimulating the creative initiative of both teachers and students. This is proved by the results achieved in classwork and the success of the Bulgarians at numerous international exhibitions and competitions.

In our opinion, we should not always expect exceptional results from individually gifted students, but should aim at mass participation in creative visual arts activities by all pupils, without exception. That is why we value most the "ordinary" achievements of children - boys and girls who in their drawings express their joy in existence, in the sun and the blue sky. When we look at drawings by our children or those from other countries, we feel excited because behind each and every one lies the development of an individual who may not necessarily become an artist, but who nevertheless in childhood makes contact with the great creative world - a contact which will accompany him throughout his life.

IV. RESEARCH IN ARTS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN: THE CANADIAN SCENE

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Most research in artistic education for children is being done by students and professors in the various art education graduate programmes across the country. These programmes have greatly expanded in the last decade. Rather than describe the research coming out of these programmes in what could only be very general terms, it may be of value to concentrate on one example. Margaret Andrews received her M.A. in art education from the University of British Columbia in 1980. An independent jury at the University of Manitoba chose her thesis as being among the six best education theses completed in Canada during the 1979-80 academic year. Entitled "Culturally Based Art Education", Andrews' study presented a methodological model to elucidate one possible qualitative approach to the study, by children, of art in a cultural context. The "cultural context" seems particularly important in Canada - an officially bilingual and multi-cultural nation. Cultural identity has been emphasized in the recent constitutional debate and the arts are viewed as the transmitters of culture.

Fundamentally, Andrews' methodology provides a praxiological approach to the study of art by children, requiring that they learn to become responsible for their own actions by consciously investigating the inherent meanings of these actions on an on-going basis. The students are asked to become curriculum developers, cultural anthropologists, connoisseurs, critics and craftsmen.

In addition to fostering an essentially hermeneutico-social orientation, this methodology also focuses on personal relevance by providing opportunities for the child to consider his/her personal role and 'being' as an individual living in a cultural world. In essence, Andrews provides a means through which heuristic learning may be facilitated through dialectic interaction focusing on cultural themes. This interaction is carried out within four stages: investigation, criticism, production, and evaluation.

Andrews identified major aims for the programme as: (a) learning to understand the functions and meanings of art in culture; (b) learning to appreciate the role of the artist/craftsman in a cultural context; and (c) developing cultural competencies (i.e. sensibilities which would enable individuals to become responsible

and responsive world citizens, capable of intelligent and creative cross-cultural identifications and interaction). Andrews posited that the study of art within this context could provide unique insights into cultural values and world-views, leading towards heightened cultural and artistic consciousness.

Like most recently developed art education curricula in Canada, Andrews' model calls for both making art and responding to art; producing, but also learning about the function and role of art in society, art history and criticism.

One Canadian organization that uses children's art as a way of exploring cultural values (and perhaps the unity in Canadian diversity) is ALL ABOUT US/NOUS AUTRES, an Ottawa-based group, founded by Betty Nickerson, and designed to encourage creativity and expression by Canada's young people between the ages of 6 and 18. 'Art is a language, a form of communication that transcends barriers of language, distance, politics and economics,' says Ms. Nickerson. 'Children's art is a fresh, exciting view of familiar situations. Canada's wide-ranged areas have many of the same difficulties in understanding as those existing between nations.

Nickerson likes to use a quote from an American art educator, Miriam Lindstrom:

> 'The sense of being linked with all humanity through the expressive symbols that we use for communication profoundly stimulates our spiritual development ... Children respond to the challenge of making responsible statements.' '

ALL ABOUT US, a name chosen to illustrate the objective of the project, was formulated in 1972 when Nickerson received a grant enabling her to employ co-workers. The group contacted all the premiers and commissioners, and notified each of the 16,000 principals of elementary and secondary schools in Canada. In the first year, 365 schools contributed work by their students and about one-fourth of the 25,000 contributions were sent in directly by young people.

Almost all Canadian children receive some type of art education in elementary school. In high schools, art tends to be optional, particularly in the senior grades.

A recent 'National Inquiry into the Arts in Education' resulted in a number of separate provincial reports. (Education is a provincial jurisdiction in Canada.) The British Columbia Art Teachers' Association emphasized some of the most pertinent recommendations of their province's report when they wrote the following to the Federal Cultural Review Committee: '... we are deeply concerned by the limited access children have to art and artists. A federally sponsored programme which encouraged a greater liaison between

museums, galleries, artists, and the schools would be one possible way to attack this problem. In no way are we suggesting that outside agencies take over the teaching of art to children but rather that children be exposed to the visual arts through programmes that bring art and artists to the schools. Museums and galleries should also be encouraged to provide programme that would assist teachers and students to make better use of those institutions.

The community and schools must co-ordinate their efforts to increase public awareness of the arts if the arts are to retain a strong place in the school curriculum. Today's children are the citizens of the future. If children have a strong foundation of visual literacy included in the context of their formal education, they will be more likely to understand and support the arts as adults. Let us not allow the lack of money, professional resources, status of the arts in society, co-ordination of programmes and non-existent policy for cultural development to hamper the development of our greatest resource, our children.'

V. ARTS EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOLS OF CYPRUS

Costas Economou, Inspector of Art

The Ministry of Education pays special attention to art, which is included in the curriculum of pre-school, primary and secondary education. The involvement of children in art activities is considered to be of primary importance, as it satisfies a basic human need, one especially felt by children: the need to express oneself and communicate through plastic forms.

There is evidence of art being created through the ages, from the distant past when men were living in caves to the present-day. Though it may have served a number of purposes in different cases and in many historical periods, it has always been a sign of man's willingness and determination to surpass his limitations and solve the mystery of the world around him.

In education, we try to give children opportunities for creativity and to secure the necessary conditions for such activities, because we believe that, apart from the fact that these activities are pleasurable and self-rewarding, they facilitate growth and contribute to the development of a well-balanced personality.

The child should be considered as a complete entity and all aspects of his personality - physical, mental and emotional - should be nourished and treated equally. There are only a few activities that can achieve this, and those related to art are the most suitable and effective.

By introducing art in our schools, we aim at making the children capable of feeling aesthetic enjoyment by rendering them sensitive to the aesthetic values found in works of art, in their surroundings or in nature. This is achieved not by indoctrination, but by helping children to develop their own aesthetic criteria and make their own judgements.

Aesthetic development is pursued through two approaches:

(a) The creative or active approach,
(b) appreciation of works of art.

Greater emphasis is placed on the first approach, especially with children of the lower age groups. Children are encouraged to create and express themselves freely in a variety of media and on a diversity of subjects, based on their own first-hand experiences, observations or imagination.

The opportunity offered to children to engage themselves practically in art helps them to become aware of the elements of artistic creation in a concrete manner, while the plentiful choice of subjects, media and methods, facilitates the formation of personal criteria. Children become sensitive to colour, line, shape, texture, space, form, etc. and aware of the fundamental laws of composition, such as balance, unity, rhythm etc.

With the second approach, we try to help children appreciate and enjoy aesthetic values in works that have been created, not only by themselves but also by others: works by other children, by great masters or local artists, works of folk art and of our cultural heritage, as well as those found in nature and in our man-made environment. Teachers help children to become acquainted with these works by organizing children's art exhibitions, visits to exhibitions by local and foreign artists, to museums, studios or workshops, and by presenting reproductions, slides or films in the classroom. They motivate children, through appropriate discussion, to observe, to express their ideas and criticisms, and they help them to develop perceptual discrimination and visual sensitivity.

In our schools, artistic creation is encouraged also as a means of achieving many other objectives: we lay great educational value on art activities, as they help children to develop their potential, to explore and discover themselves and their environment and to retain their individuality in the modern conditions of technological progress. More specifically, we could say that art activities are beneficial in the following ways:

(a) Art is used as a means of communication, especially by children, who have difficulties in expressing their ideas through language, which they have not yet mastered. Children can express their thoughts and feelings by creating their own personal graphic language and symbols, unfettered by formal rulers and adult preoccupations.

(b) Art is a unique means for self-expression and helps children to externalize their feelings and experiences. The role of art is thereapeutic in the case of children suffering from unhappy or traumatic experiences, fears, insecurity or hostility. By expressing and externalizing such undersirable feelings, children face and come to terms with reality.

They create a new, more acceptable and joyful reality. In this way, they obtain the necessary sense of security, emotional balance and stability, which is indispensable for normal growth.

(c) The cognitive process and the intellectual development of children is also facilitated through art. By giving a concrete form to their experiences, children are able to sort out the

chaos and put an order to the world around them. This helps in concept formation and has a positive effect on their achievements in other disciplines.

(d) When children are engaged in art activities, the necessary conditions fostering creativity are secured. The unconditional acceptance of the individual, the absence of divergent thinking with the infinite number of solutions offered in art, all constitute the necessary prerequisites for creativity.

(e) International understanding is pursued through the appreciation of the culture and artistic creation of other nations.

Because of the importance the Ministry of Education places upon art, all the necessary measures for the realization of its aims and objectives are taken. All schools are provided with art materials (paper, paints, brushes, linoleum, cutters etc.) through the Ministry's stores, while teachers and children exploit the sources of their environment for natural materials (clay, stone, wood etc.) or scrap materials from their homes.

Our teachers, though in most cases not specially trained in art, are well informed about modern trends in art education and they do their best to secure the appropriate conditions and atmosphere so that children can create and express themselves freely. They respect the children's stage of development and maturity without imposing external models or criteria.

In secondary education, art is taught by specially trained art teachers, while in pre-school and primary education it is taught by class teachers. Some of them are better qualified to teach art as it is one of their special subjects in the third year of their teacher training course. In the last few years, some of these highly interested and talented teachers have been employed as special or peripatetic art teachers.

The subject is compulsory in pre-school and primary education as well as in the first four years of secondary education and it is usually spread over two 40 or 45 minute periods.

As a result of this attitude on the part of the Ministry and teachers, the art of Cypriot children is of a very high standard. This has been acknowledged in various international exhibitions, where our children have received the highest awards, either for individual works or for collections. Many exhibitions of our children's work have been specially organized in various countries: Greece, Bulgaria, United Kingdom, U.S.A., Federal Republic of Germany, German Democratic Republic, Poland, Sweden etc. and they have had a very good reception and earned favourable comments.

On the occasion of the International Year of the Child we felt our responsibilities towards children more intensely; everything necessary should be done so that all children have the opportunity

to express themselves and communicate through art. We have the responsibility of ensuring such living conditions that in their drawings only the joys of life are depicted.

VI. CULTURE AND THE CHILD

Andrea Karpati,
Eotvos Lorand Tudomanyegyetem
Bolcseszettudomanyi Kar,
Hungary

Among artistic activities, dance plays an important role in Hungarian art education. Two styles are involved:

(1) Folk dance, taught as part of the Kodaly method of music education in one-third of the Hungarian schools during gymnastics classes. Folk songs and dances became so popular as a result of the Kodaly method, based on the treasury of native folk art, that a chain of "dancing houses" came into existence. Here, young musicians present original folk melodies - often their own collections - to a public of teenagers, who learn the elements of folk dance coached by professional folk dancers and practise it with the vigour of the best discos! Recently, dancing houses for the very young were established, where traditional crafts are also practised and taught.

(2) Creative dance, elements of jazz ballet, pantomime and gesture language. This is in an experimental stage and programmes for elementary and secondary schools are being developed by groups of dancers and teachers.

Theatre has also found a place in the school curriculum and in the programme of nursery schools. The rudiments of acting are introduced in the programmes for literature and art at the lower levels, where dramatization of stories and poems is a natural activity for all children. At the higher grades, short acting improvisations help in literary analysis of plays as well as in better self-knowledge. The illustrative as well as the psychotherapeutic use of theatre is becoming more and more popular in Hungary. Actors' and teachers' joint workshops, festivals of child drama and publication of classroom materials have resulted in a really useful 'audience education' for the theatre as well as in a more entertaining atmosphere in literature classes.

The teaching of music has traditionally been the strongest aspect of Hungarian aesthetic education. Such celebrated composers as Bela Bartok and Zoltan Kodaly compiled materials for classroom use and revolutionized musical education. Kodaly Institutes, centres devoted to the methods of our great composers and teachers were set up.

In the field of fine arts the following problems exist:

- how to bring the 'practice and theory' of fine arts usefully together. How to teach evaluation and criticism.
- how to evaluate the products of art education - children's works and analyses. How to make evaluation part of the teacher's everyday practice and a useful tool in programme improvement.
- how to make art education part of the programmes, not only of all elementary schools (grades 1 - 8) but also of all secondary schools (grades 9 - 12). At present, art is taught only in 'humanitarian' secondary schools - i.e. in those which give no professional training, and only prepare for university and college.
- how to improve teacher training.

About our successes, there is not much to say: some of our results are already known. Here are some reminders:

- A multiple choice of programmes, fulfilling the aims of the educational plan; these programmes are designed in co-operation with teachers and artists as well as theoreticians.
- A series of centrally published educational aids: (readers, slide collections, posters, teachers' manuals) which all schools get free, or for a very limited fee.
- A chain of after-school activities: (clubs, circles, summer camps) where children can become familiar with different forms of art, also free or for a very low contribution.
- The problem of having artist-teachers in schools is still unsolved in Hungary. There is little to attract artists to join in school work. The everyday routine of pedagogical work does not seem compatible with the creativity of an artist. What we try to do is to attract young artists to do part-time teaching in schools, and artists of all generations to join committees for programme development and curriculum design.
- Cinema is the last field of art we will deal with in the present study. Experiments with filming in schools have been going on in the last ten years in all parts of Hungary. Here are some of the trends:

(1) production of cartoons - children design figures and do some of the phase drawings, while professionals make the films.

(2) teaching artistic photography in art classes and in after-school circles is fairly common.

(3) Teaching children to make films by themselves: From script writing to editing a curriculum designed by the Institute for Public Education for four years for grades 5-8, is now under 'hothouse trial' (trial in a classroom situation) at several schools.

In his article, "Child and traditional culture", Shoichiro Kami gives a shocking survey of the struggle for the national artistic inheritance and for its survival in the minds of Japanese youth.

We in Hungary have faced similar problems - industrialization, improvement of living standards in the villages, the spread of plastic materials and of television. Plastic has become a substitute for traditional materials and folk crafts and television is a new way of entertainment - a substitute for village dance halls and spinning rooms, places where folk songs, dances and tales were cultivated. All this led to a decline in folk traditions. But there were soon developments in Hungary to counteract it.

(1) The collection of folk songs by composers and music historians and their incorporation in the music curriculum (see earlier).
(2) The organization of folk dancing houses, as a successful alternative to discos (see earlier).
(3) The creation of Children's and Youth Art Centres to teach traditional crafts.
(4) Inclusion of folk arts, as part of the art curriculum in schools.
(5) Open-air museums in folk art centres in Hungary.
(6) Organization of folk art camps all over the country; a big, central camp is held every second year in the hills around the capital for 3000 children who demonstrate the folk arts of their neighbourhood. Most promising of all, the children carry on collection and preservation work as well.

The survey of artistc activities and art education of children living in the Nordic countries in this documentary dossier, introduces an 'extended concept of culture', or 'sociocultural concept', emphasizing the social utility value of art. In Hungary it is also considered very important to create a more 'aesthetic' environment for children and to include artistic activities in their 'daily routine'.

The newly founded 'Designing Centre', an informatory organization for designers and producers, declared the improvement of children's surroundings to be one of its major goals. Exhibitions of dresses, furniture, classroom equipment and toys are aimed at directing producers towards a more tasteful, sometimes even artistic, world of objects. Lectures, meetings and fairs work in ever improving co-operation for a more human environment, which seems also to be an essential part of art education.

School buildings, classrooms and their equipment, as well as teaching aids, were neglected for a long time. However, three years ago, the 'Teaching Aid Commission' was founded, without the permission of which, no classroom object or furniture, teaching aid or reader is supposed to be released or published. The members of the commission - artists, designers, art historians and practising teachers meet when the school object has already been declared

pedagogically useful. They consider it as an object of applied art, and judge its aesthetic qualities, form and function.

'Decentralization' appears to be another important aspect of art education in the Nordic countries. In Hungary, this trend is manifest in two ways: (1) Foundation of museums, galleries, collections of fine and folk art in those minor towns and villages where native artistic traditions deserve maintenance. Such museums can serve not only to house the treasures of the past, but also as cultural centres where lectures, meetings with artists, concerts, collectors' clubs and other forums for art education take place. (2) We also try to decentralize workshops for children, cultural activities buildings, art studios, etc. An outstanding example of an art centre, working far from the inspiration of the art life of the capital, is in a miners' town in Komlo. Here, under the leadership of some devoted art teachers and educators, artists and craftsmen, an arts and crafts studio of gipsy children has been working very successfully for more than a decade.

The main organizer of the centre, Mrs. Magdolna Koltay, has recently prepared a magnificent exhibition of works reflecting a unique mixture of traditional gipsy folklore and Hungarian cultural elements, to be exhibited at the annual conference of American art teachers in Chicago. The gipsies, a much protected minority group in Hungary, face a lot of problems in becoming an active part of the country's working population, while still retaining their national identity. Art education is one of the most effective 'civilizing fa ors' - a humanistic means of fighting minority complexes as well as expressing fears and desires and creating a national artistic heritage which the gipsies can call their own.

'Decentralization' should also mean a more democratic way of deciding what should be taught as art in the schools of our country and how. A very interesting new project was launched recently by the Ministry for Culture and the Hungarian Society of Architects, to involve in the teaching of architecture all those who should and could do more for a better understanding of this special branch of art by uniting artistic qualities and utility. As a result of this co-operation, architects, designers, art historians and classroom teachers are now jointly engaged in curriculum design, publishing readers for children, designing teaching aids and visual games which should help pupils to come closer to architecture.

With regard to visual games, Hungary, the land of the 'magic cube', which won first prize at the 1980 London Toy Fair and is now 'invading' America in vast quantities, would like to retain its high position in the production of toys which develop artistic vision. We want to use them increasingly as teaching aids which by representing visual problems in the form of an enjoyable puzzle, teach art through playing.

VII. EDUCATION THROUGH THE ARTS IN THE CONFUSION OF THE POST-WAR WORLD

Takeshiki Manabe, NARA, Japan

Japan's history covers a period of one thousand, three hundred years. However, modern Japan really only dates from the end of the Second World War. Due to her defeat in 1945, Japan was given, for the first time, a chance to become familiar with Western culture. The great advancements in science, high levels of education, material affluence and deep respect for the arts which the Japanese found in Western culture, greatly impressed them. Above all, they were shocked to know how far they lagged behind Western nations in the field of industry and this shock had a strong influence on policy decisions relating to reconstruction. In the field of education, for instance, special laws were promulgated, such as the Industry Education Promotion Law and the Science Education Promotion Law, and for compulsory education, the curriculum was intensified, and the Government and local self-governing bodies increased the budget.

However, such an industry-oriented policy resulted in the neglect of art education. Periods for teaching art subjects were reduced to a minimum, and this has resulted in today's abnormal situation in education.

Through defeat, Japan was given a chance to see Western culture and realized that her spiritual civilization was quite different. This realization led to the Japanese denying their traditions. As a result, the old values were destroyed in the search for new standards, which they tried to find in Western culture. The traditional ways of living gradually disappeared, and people were eager to imitate Western styles, showing no hesitation in accepting that chemical or machine-made products replace artistic handicrafts, the manufacture of which had been cultivated throughout their long history. Everything peculiar to Japan was denied as being old and inferior to the things belonging to Western culture. People possessed, then as now, a blind yearning for foreign-made products. Education was no exception. Japanese traditional music disappeared from music classes and traditional Japanese painting and crafts from art classes, their place being taken by Western music and art.

In contrast to the cultural collapse brought by defeat, Japan achieved an astonishing post-war economic recovery. Through economic reconstruction and by seeking the way to recover from the

post-war poverty and confusion, people found spiritual support and regained confidence.

From the late 1950's to the early 1970's, many Japanese were involved in the insatiable pursuit of economic prosperity. Those who were critical of such a trend had no means to resist and were caught up in the frantic current of society.

Under these circumstances, Japanese art educators soon realized that arts education was facing a serious crisis, and they earnestly pleaded for its importance to the administration. Organizations and groups were founded for this purpose.

Rapid changes and economic growth created grave social contradictions, environment destruction and moral degradation. People began to realize that happiness created by economic prosperity is limited.

It was at this time that people began to show signs of returning to the traditional Japanese culture. Today the trend of looking back and learning from traditional ways of living, events, handicrafts, art and entertainment is rapidly growing, naturally influencing school and social education.

The Japanese are also uneasy because parents today belong to a generation brought up in the post-war period when the old values collapsed and they are worried about the children brought up in such families. They live in a society where the old standards have been destroyed without new ones being established.

A most important task in the 1980's is the establishment of a new system of values.

VIII. CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH IN ARTS EDUCATION: PROBLEMS, ISSUES AND PROSPECTS

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In this paper, I shall deal with five questions. First, what is the state of cross-cultural research in arts education? Second, what are the potential uses of such research? Third, what kind of problems might be studied? Fourth, what are the possible problems in conceptualizing, implementing, and interpreting cross-cultural research in arts education? Fifth, what are the prospects for cross-cultural research in arts education?

What is the state of cross-cultural research in arts education?

Perhaps the best way to begin to answer this question is to clarify the meaning of "research", since without at least a fairly clear conception of this, the significance of statements about the state of cross-cultural research is likely to be obscure. Although research in the United States typically conjures up images of statistical analyses and complex probability tables, activity need be neither empirical nor quantitative. If we conceive of research as any systematic, careful inquiry designed to further our understanding of the way the world is, the way it can become, or the way it ought to be, then clearly research activity is wider than quantification or empiricism. In my view, research includes the theoretical activities of scholars attempting to develop concepts, models or paradigms that explain, or in other ways foster, our understanding of the world. Examples of such research are the developmental theories produced by Jean Piaget, Erik Erickson, Abraham Maslow, and Sigmund Freud, as well as the models and concepts of perception developed by Rudolf Arnheim, Herman Witkin and Viktor Lowenfeld. Within the theoretical arena, I would also include not only descriptive or scientifically oriented theory, but normative or value theory as well. Thus, the work of John Dewey in the United States and R.S. Peters in England would count in my view as systematic and useful efforts to develop ideas that can help us understand the world or enable us to improve some aspect of it. While the theoretical work I have mentioned is empirical, in the sense that it is referenced to the world, it is not empirical in the sense that the data it uses were intentionally collected and systematically analysed in order to create or verify theory. The theories that these individuals have created

are attractive maps; their function is to guide perception and to direct inquiry, it is not necessarily to explain specific experimental results.

A second type of research is directly empirical. It is activity, generated by theory, that tests theory and expands and refines it through the investigation of specific empirical phenomena. Studies of the relationship between forms of socialization and aesthetic attitude, studies of the characteristics of children's visual images as a result of different forms of motivation, studies of classroom teaching practice in the arts and their effects upon children - all these are examples of empirical inquiries, guided by theory of some kind, but directly related to specific populations and particular contexts. It should also be noted that although all such research is empirical, not all empirical research is quantitative. Research also includes systematic inquiry that is qualitative in character. By qualitative research I mean studies that report the results of their investigations in terms that are verbally descriptive, expressive and even metaphorical. Historical and ethnographic studies of schools and classrooms are examples of this. In England, the work of Rob Walker, in Scotland, the work of David Hamilton, and in the United States, my own work and that of my students, are examples of qualitative empirical research.

The final distinction I wish to make is between descriptive, as contrasted with experimental research. In descriptive research, whether quantitative or qualitative, the investigator makes no attempt at intervention. His or her role is to describe, interpret and appraise, but it is not to intervene in the setting being studied. In experimental research this is not the case. In experimental studies, variables are manipulated in order to determine their effects on students and teachers. The end-in-view is to identify those experimental treatments that are both sufficiently robust and reliable to enable a teacher to reproduce the desired results in the classroom.

In making the distinction between experimental and non-experimental (or as I have called it descriptive) research, one important caveat should be entered. Non-experimental research studies can be undertaken in school or classroom settings that are themselves 'natural' examples of pedagogical variation, the effects of which can be related to the differences between treatments in different classrooms - i.e. one can secure experimental-type conclusions doing studies that require no experimental intervention by the investigator.

I have taken the time to discuss the meaning of the term research because unless we have a shared view of its parameters and the species that fall within its scope, we are likely to have significant problems in communication. I have pointed out that research includes both theoretical and empirical investigations, that in the

theoretical domain research can be normative as well as descriptive and that in the empirical domain research can be qualitative as well as quantitative. Finally, I have pointed out that research can be non-experimental as well as experimental in nature and that experimental-like results can be obtained from non-experimental studies.

Now let us turn to the state of cross-cultural research in arts education. Compared to what was available a quarter of a century ago, a great deal of research in arts education is currently being published in the United States. Yet the number of studies that are cross-cultural in character is very limited. By cross-cultural research, I mean efforts made by the investigator to compare or contrast ideas and/or practices in more than one culture; I do not mean an investigator from one culture simply going to another culture to collect his or her data. An American going to Japan to study the influence of Japanese culture on the attitudes of Japanese adolescents towards traditional and contemporary art in Japan would not be engaged in cross-cultural research unless explicit efforts were made to draw parallels or contrasts between Japanese and, say, American cultures. Using this criterion, in the American research journal Studies in Art Education, only one study that might be legitimately referred to as cross-cultural has appeared since the journal was started in 1959. The availability of cross-cultural research in the field of music education, while somewhat greater, is also very limited. The reasons are not difficult to discern.

When it comes to cross-cultural empirical research, whether quantitative or qualitative, investigators must have access to a culture other than their own. This requires either the ability and resources to travel or a communication network with scholars in other cultures who would be willing to collect the necessary data or provide the resources for the study to go forward. In arts education, research funds have been scarce, and although inter-national communication with scholars in the field of arts education has increased notably during the last decade, it is still limited compared to what takes place in the scientific community.

The scarcity of fiscal resources and the tenuousness of communication networks are only two of the factors that have mitigated against cross-cultural research in arts education. Perhaps the most significant factor is the fact that systematic disciplined inquiry in arts education is scarce in general, whether cross-cultural or intra-cultural. I believe that it is accurate to say that my own country has the most extensive training programmes for the preparation of educational researchers in the world. In the United States, in the field of visual arts education alone there are over twenty universities that have programmes leading to the doctor's degree in art education and an equal number in music education. These degree programmes

are designed to train individuals to do research. All programmes require a doctor's thesis which entails the conceptualization of a substantial piece of research, whether theoretical or empirical, qualitative or quantitative, experimental or descriptive. Yet only a few of those who receive doctorates in arts education each year do research after completing their degree. The paucity of active, research-orientated scholars increases the difficulty of securing cross-cultural research in arts education, a kind of research that is even more demanding than the conduct of a research study in one's own community. I am suggesting here that the paucity of cross-cultural research in arts education is related not only to the scarcity of funds and the limited forms of communication across cultures, but also to the shortage of researchers in arts education. Let us turn to the work that has been done.

Surely the most extensive cross-cultural research studies that have been undertaken in the context of education are the International Studies of Educational Achievement. This research programme, involving over thirteen countries, was initiated in 1967 and is still under way. Its major aims are to determine the level of achievement in a variety of academic subjects by students in the countries that participated in the study. It has also attempted to measure the students' attitude towards the subject, the amount of time allocated to it, and to identify other variables related to achievement, in order to explain why a nation's youth perform as they do. Some individuals associated with the study in Europe have expressed the hope that through the IEA studies it may be possible to develop a common unified and coherent curriculum for European schools. In the curriculum areas in which students have been examined, the arts are nowhere to be found. Unlike many other areas of school achievement, the arts tend to frighten non-arts researchers and evaluators because of the formidable problems they pose in judging the quality of performance. Mathematics achievement has no comparable difficulty. I mention the IEA studies because it is the most ambitious effort that has ever been undertaken to assess academic achievement cross-nationally. We need not, in arts education, emulate either its design features or its aims, but it does provide one model of the kind of collaboration that is possible.

There have, of course, been cross-cultural studies undertaken specifically in the arts. Irvin Child's work in the United States is one of the most impressive examples of such research. However, Child's research was undertaken largely to determine the extent to which aesthetic values were common across cultures and to identify the relationship between the perceived aesthetic value of art forms and the kind of training and experience individuals have within their respective cultures. His research was not conceptualized for purposes related to arts education. Indeed, as I have suggested,

although the potential for such research is great, it largely remains to be done.

What are the potential uses of cross-cultural research in arts education?

The major assets that flow from the conduct of cross-cultural research emanate from the fact that the context in which problems are studied varies so radically, thus making it possible to regard the differences in settings as natural laboratories whose experimental treatments cause the differences found. If two countries were culturally identical but politically distinct, studies across such nations would not be examples of cross-cultural research. What makes research cross-cultural are the differences among the cultures studied. This means, of course, that such research can, in principle, be pursued within a single country if the differences between one cultural group and another are sufficiently great. In Australia, for example, studies of the arts education received by aborigines in the bush and the arts education received by Australian Anglo children living in Sydney or Adelaide would constitute as radical a cultural difference as any to be found between countries anywhere on earth. More often, however, studies must be undertaken across national boundaries to secure the cultural differences that make it possible to achieve the aims of cross-cultural research. What are those aims, and what are the uses of such research?

Perhaps the most significant use is the generation and refinement of theory. By having access to different settings, research that is theory-generative on such matters as the character of children's artistic development, their perception of expressive qualities, their aesthetic preference at different levels of development, can be undertaken. Assuming one has some firm sense of what the cultural variables are, differences in levels and types of performance in these and other areas can be generative of theory or can be used to refine and verify theory. There are many ideas and beliefs that are held by arts educators almost as dogma - the virtue of non-intervention in the artistic activity of primary school age children, for example - that could be tested and possibly altered with theory that cross-cultural research might generate. Similarly, the relationship between the status hierarchy of subjects within the school curriculum and the values students believe the arts to have in their own lives in general, and in school in particular, could be made possible through such work.

Because all of us operate with certain beliefs about the role of the arts in education, and because we conceive of the child's optimum development in particular ways, all of us are guided by theoretical ideas. Within a culture, these ideas or theories often become so

ubiquitous and widely accepted that we lose the distance needed to criticize them adequately. Cross-cultural research has a potential contribution to make by taking us out of our familiar context and by showing us settings that differ from our own - settings guided by other ideas, practices based upon other assumptions. Such a view has the potential of providing another platform from which to view the theories we hold and with which to reconsider our own practices. Thus, the potential utility of cross-cultural research is that it affords us an excellent opportunity to test and refine our theoretical beliefs by checking them against the performances of individuals functioning within different cultures. It does this by bringing us face to face with different theories and different pedagogical practices and in this way gives us another vantage point with which to examine our own assumptions. As Goethe said, 'A man who knows only one language does not know his own.'

In discussing the potential utilities of cross-cultural research in arts education, I have used examples that are primarily empirical and to some extent quantitative. I have not discussed value theory explicitly, but this is not because the parallels in this area cannot be made; it is simply because I am mindful of time. Historical and normative cross-cultural research can be justified on grounds comparable to those I have described relative to the more traditional social sciences research I have discussed.

What kinds of problems might be studied?

I have already suggested some of the problems that might be formulated for cross-cultural research. But first, at a more generic level, let me simply reiterate what I said at the beginning of this paper regarding the meaning of research. Cross-cultural research problems can be formulated that are theoretical as well as empirical, qualitative as well as quantitative, that are experimental as well as non-experimental. I shall not try to provide an exhaustive list of the potential research problems that can be pursued, but I will briefly provide one example for each of the types of research I have just mentioned.

With respect to theoretical research, let us consider the following question: Why in industrial societies do school structures develop what assign a low status to artistic learning while in non-industrialized societies it tends to be significantly higher? Theory that could adequately account for such a set of fact would at once be sociological and political in character and would, in principle, help educators understand the facts that relegate the arts to marginal positions within a school curriculum. Presumably, with more adequate understanding of these factors, arts educators would be in a better position to alter them.

The creation of such theory - theory that would require empirical data - might alter our view of what we consider appropriate content for arts curricula. The use of such theory would require familiarity with different cultures and it would find support to the extent to which it made the facts intelligible or brought new considerations to our attention. An example of such theory is found in Herbert Marcuse's An Essay on Liberation.

In the realm of cross-cultural quantitative empirical research one could ask what the effects are of different reward systems within schooling on the content and form of teaching in the visual arts at secondary school level. This question could, it should be noted, be treated either quantitatively or qualitatively, or both. It is based on the assumption that the reward system within a school - an examination system for example - influences the ways in which teaching occurs. By locating cultures with substantially different reward systems (assuming other significant variables are taken into account) one could begin to secure data on the ways in which such influences emerge. Sufficiently well understood, it would make it possible, in principle, to create school structures that supported the educational ends one embraced in the arts instead of sustaining school structures that often mitigate against the achievement of those ends.

In the qualitative domain, one could ask in what ways the styles of teaching used in different cultures reflect the values of those cultures and what influence do such teaching styles have upon the content and form of children's artistic performance.

Such a study could, like the previous one, be handled quantitatively or qualitatively. However, if one were doing it in a qualitative mode, the format or approach one might use is what we call at Stanford University 'education criticism'. This approach is in some ways analagous to what literary and film critics do. The task of the critic is to illuminate through description, interpretation and evaluation what he or she attends. Criticism is, as Dewey said, aimed at 'the re-education of the perception of the work of art'. The critic's function, as it were, is to serve as a midwife to perception by describing vividly and by intelligently interpreting what his connoisseurship allows him to perceive.

To carry out such a research project one would, of course, need to be able to recognize the subtle but creative values of two or more cultures. One would then need to perceive teaching in such a way as to make it possible to locate expressions of those cultures (if they manifest themselves) in the practice of teaching. Once having located those expression in teaching related to cultural values, one would then examine children's artistic activity and their art products to find manifestations of the culture's values in them. Thus, in such an investigation three levels of phenomena would be

identified: those within the cultures at large, those within teaching, and those within the student's work. All of this could be done using qualitative methods of research of which educational criticism is an example.

Regarding descriptive or non-experimental research, one could ask what relationships exist between artistic performance and aesthetic preference among children in different cultures. Such an investigation would be aimed at finding correlates of what children and adolescents prefer and the kinds of images they create. Put another way, it is a method of asking whether preferences for particular styles or forms of art have any bearing upon the kind of images children create when they have the opportunity to choose. Such an investigation could shed some light on the discrepancies within and between cultures on perceptual preference and artistic performance. From such data one could begin to investigate the satisfactions and dissatisfactions students have with their own artistic activity in the light of the images of artistic virtue they hold.

One might hypothesize that the larger the discrepancy between the child's preference and his performance, the greater the likelihood of antagonistic feelings towards art and the lower the child's estimate of his ability as an artist.

Finally, regarding experimental studies, one might ask: Given the same three forms of motivation for children of the same age and social class, living in different cultures, what is the degree of variability that results in the kinds of artistic images those children create? To conduct such an investigation would require, of course, a rather elaborate research design. One might, for example, use stories that elicit imaginative processes, emotionally loaded experiences secured from the 'real world', or simple still life set-ups that children might be asked to draw or paint. Whether these specific methods are used is not the point. The point is that it is possible to create forms of motivation, designed to elicit different kinds of experience and thinking. Research on the kinds of artistic variability that different forms of motivation generate could begin to provide some clues as to the ways in which cultures influence children's cognition. One might speculate that the wider the variability, the greater the latitude the culture provides for children to exercise their imaginative capacities. From such data, one could move to an analysis of the macro-structures that might account for such variability.

I have not, in the examples I have provided, attempted to be detailed or exhaustive, but simply to illustrate the kinds of research questions that could be raised within each of the types of research I have identified. Obviously, the adequate execution of such research would take considerably more specification regarding both the questions themselves and the methods that might be used to deal with

them. It is to the problem of conceptualization, implementation, and interpretation to which I now turn.

What are the possible problems of conceptualization, implementation and interpretation in cross-cultural research in arts education?

The problems of conceptualization in cross-cultural research when such research is a collaborative venture of scholars in different countries working together, are those that centre upon the questions and phenomena worth attention in the first place and the meaning of the concepts and theories being employed. While such problems are present in collaborative efforts within one's own culture, the problems are excerbated when collaboration is cross-cultural. The intellectual context within which individuals operate, particularly in a field such as ours, are diverse and difficult to operationalize. Thus, the meaning we confer upon ideas, not only those with which we choose to work, but the meanings we extract from the data we interpret, are fraught with a great many potential difficulties. To minimize such difficulties, shared frames of reference are necessary, and the wider the differences among the cultures studied, the greater the likelihood that differences in meaning will occur. Americans and Japanese, Armenians and Brazilians do not necessarily view the world in similar ways. Although such differences can become strengths in cross-cultural research, they can also become formidable obstacles as well. At the very least, communication must be good enough to know when it is lacking. Commenting on some of the problems in cross-cultural research, Ray Birdwhistle writes: "For more than fifty years, ethnologists and social and cultural anthropologists have sought to develop and try out carefully ordered cross-societal and cross-cultural methodologies that could secure data that would become evidence about the extent of human social malleability. An essential question for most anthropologists has been whether it is even possible to develop methods that would make cross-cultural comparisons feasible and reliable. It has been an essential doctrine of anthropology that no comparison can be any more reliable than the ethnographies upon which the comparisons are based. Any investigatory technique which cheapens the data enervates cross-cultural comparison. The establishment of either ranges of cross-cultural variation or human universals, requires the most rigorous caution in establishing the comparability of data. One of the most serious developments in recent years has been the resurgence of the version of universalism that maintains that since any human is so similar to all other humans physiologically, there is a reduced need for the development of safeguards that would enable us to detect and comprehend the social significance of seemingly identical acts. Theory and training in cross-cultural investigation

give way before the destructive assumption that however noncomparable the data, it can always be generalized significantly by statistical procedures or computers. It requires very little training to count; a very intensive training is required to develop significant units for the counting.[1]

Other difficulties, especially in research done in school settings, are in determining the comparability of the major variables studied. Seventh graders in one country may be the equivalent of fourth graders in another. Two years of instruction in one nation may be the equivalent of five years in another. Indeed, one of the difficulties with the IEA studies of educational achievement in mathematics is their failure to recognize the extensive array of after-school establishments which many Japanese children attend in order to increase their skills in mathematics. Without an understanding of the context, not only in the school, but in the culture, the probability of misinterpretation is great. Furthermore, the meaning of events and activities within cultural settings such as schools can differ radically from the meaning they hold for individuals in one's own culture. The emic and etic perspectives described in anthropological literature, provide a reminder to cross-cultural investigators that both the participant's and the spectator's view is needed to understand what has been experienced and what it signifies within a cultural system. Cross-cultural research in arts education calls for no less.

If one does not collaborate with others in cross cultural research but uses them to secure data only such as to find a suitable population, to secure permission to do the study, to administer instruments, etc., one places oneself in the vulnerable position of not knowing exactly how the populations were selected, how permission was secured, and how the tests were administered. Furthermore, one does not have the opportunity to secure the context cues that can enable one to make the data intelligible. In short, such a procedure leaves one somewhat in the dark and what one has not seen, one is not likely to know. In such cases the investigator suffers from the worst kind of ignorance: secondary ignorance - not knowing that one does not know.

These are not the only problems in doing cross cultural research, whether in arts education or in other fields. In arts education, however, the problems are particularly difficult because we do not have a body of experience to correct or help us anticipate them, and because criterion problems are more difficult in the arts than they are in fields where unambiguous standards can be applied. It was not for nothing that the International Study for Educational Achievement started its cross-cultural research with the study of achievement in mathematics. Who could imagine investigators

starting such an enterprise by examining the performance of students in the visual arts, dance, drama, or music?

What are the prospects for cross-cultural research in arts education?

Perhaps by now you are prepared to give up the idea of doing cross-cultural research in arts education. This was not my intention. I believe that it is far more promising in the long run to appreciate the complexity and the sources of error in doing cross-cultural research than to spend time and effort in naive attempts that result in shoddy work. The agenda of difficulties that I have identified are simply reminders of what to look out for. They are not intended to be either detours or road blocks.

Besides the problems I have identified, there are practical difficulties that need attention if cross-cultural research is to flourish. Without extensive elaboration I would like to conclude my remarks by identifying three of them.

First, there is the problem of money. It is not a theoretical, lofty consideration, but nevertheless has significant practical consequences. To do research that requires the collection and analysis of data requires also the availability of funds. One cannot rely upon one's own resources or the resources of friends to do what needs to be done to produce useful educational research. There might be some exceptional cases, but these exceptions demonstrate the truth of the rule. Money is important and money for research in arts education in the United States, at least, is scarce, even for problems that pertain directly to national interest. Yet without funding the likelihood of being able to do such research is small.

To say this does not mean that the necessary funds could not be secured, but simply that research is dependent upon them. It might very well be the case that with attractive conceptions and problems, some international agencies might be willing to support some initial efforts.

Secondly, there is the problem of communication through publication. Arts educators do not have an internationally read journal. Although the National Art Education Association's journal Art Education has a circulation of about 11,000 for each of eight issues and Studies in Art Education, our research journal, a subscription list of about 3,500 for each of three issues per year, the readership of these journals is largely American. What we need is a journal that would publish the fruits of our intellectual efforts on an international scale. Publication in obscure or professionally remote journals limits the very benefits we seek to provide. It is my hope that INSEA might initiate such a journal and that it would become a truly international publication read by people in the thirty-five countries attending the World Congress.

Thirdly, we need to establish a communication network among scholars interested in research in our respective countries. I am very pleased that Ewen Cameron has taken the initiative to start this, the first such international conference devoted exclusively to research in arts education. This conference is a beginning. It provides for contact, it facilitates communication, and not least, it cultivates professional friendship. While these conditions do not guarantee that cross-cultural research will be undertaken, they do at least aid its commencement. I, for one, am more than pleased to contribute to the start that we shall all make here.