

REPORT OF THE 1st MEETING OF THE
INTERNATIONAL STANDING WORKING GROUP
FOR THE HISTORY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

I.

At the first session of the Advisory Council of the International Standing Working Group for the History of Early Childhood Education September 6, 1983, Westminster-College, Oxford, Great Britain, on proposal of Dr. G. Erning the resolution was passed to hold the first meeting of the Working Group at the University of Bamberg, FRG, from August, 29-31, 1984.

The meeting was organized by Dr. G. Erning. The preparation of the meeting was carried out in close co-operation with Prof. Dr. L. Erler, Professor of Elementary Education at the University of Bamberg.

II. Organization

The first meeting was kindly supported by the University of Bamberg, the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG (German Research Foundation), the Working Group for Toys, Bamberg, and the Bamberg Corporation, which granted large financial and material aid.

The public announcement of the meeting took place on January 10, 1984 and was delivered to all members of the International Standing Working Group. To inform the specialist audience it was published in 'Informationen zur Erziehungs- und Bildungshistorischen Forschung' IZEBF (Information about the Research on the History of Education), in 'International Newsletter for the History of Education' and in 'Histoire de

l'Education'. The meeting was held in the rooms of the University of Bamberg from August 29-31, 1984.

III. Subject

The subject of the first meeting was:

"Comparative Research on the History of Early Childhood and of Formal and of Informal Early Childhood Education with Special Regards Since the 18th Century"

within which special emphasis was put on:

"The Child in its Family in Historical Context" and

"Factors of Spreading of Public (Institutional) Early Childhood Education in Europe".

IV. Participants

After the public announcement 41 registered for attendance, four of which as non-present participants. Out of these registrations 30 were realized by personal attendance. The participants came from 12 European countries and the U.S.A. A total of 28 discussion papers was handed in by the participants. These papers were photocopied and sent to all the participants. Subject list of the contributions:

Balke, Eva / Norway:

Grønland Children's Asylum, Christiania, Norway 1839

Bradshaw, John (Great Britain:

Either Sink or Swim: An Oral History of Working Class Childhood in the Early 20th Century

Bradshaw, Margaret / Great Britain

Childhood in the Early 19th Century: Images from Contemporary Literature

Capcova, Dagmar / Czechoslovakia:

Comenius and Some Problems of Pre-School Age in Preparation for School in Czechoslovakia

Catarsi, Enzo / Italy:

19th Century Italian Childhood

Dajez, Frederic / France:

L'Institutionnalisation des salles d'asiles en France

Diaz, Hernandes Jose Maria / Spain:

Factors in the Development of the Public Infant Schools of Salamanca 1844 - 1874

Hager, Fritz-Peter / Switzerland:

Das Bild vom Kind, insbesondere von der frühen Kindheit bei Comenius und Rousseau

Heiland, Helmut / Federal Republic of Germany:

Kriterien der internationalen Fröbel-Rezeption der Gegenwart

Hewes, Dorothy / U.S.A.

The Kindergarten as an Assimilation Program for Immigrants to the U.S.A., 1880 - 1900

Köhler, Eva-Mari / Sweden:

The Child in its Family in Historical Context

Macha, Hildegard / Federal Republic of Germany:

Kindheitsmuster bahnbrechender Frauen im 19. Jahrhundert: Sand, Lewald, Alermo

Manson, Michel / France:

L'Histoire du Jouet et du Jeu de l'Enfant

Misurcova, Vera / Czechoslovakia:

Das Kind und seine Erziehung in der Tradition des Tschechischen Volkes im 19. Jahrhundert

Oertel, Frithjof / Federal Republic of Germany:

Die vorschulische Erziehung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland seit 1945 - Eine Orientierungsskizze

Ojala, Mikko / Finland:

The Recent History and Present Situation of Finnish Home Education: The Changes in the Role of Family as an Education Agent

Plaisance, Eric / France:

Une Approche Sociologique de l'Histoire Recente de l'Ecole Maternelle en France. Definition de l'Objet de l'Etude

Schneider, Cornelia / Federal Republic of Germany:

Kurzbeschreibung des Forschungsvorhabens: 'Aspekte des strukturellen Wandels von Kindheit' beim Deutschen Jugendinstitut DJI

Sanchidrian Blanco, Maria Carmen / Spain:

Juan B. Virio's Donations: An Important Contribution to the Spreading of Public Infant Schools in Spain

Sebestyén, Istvánné - Bilibok, Péterné / Hungary

Anfängliche Institutionen der Kleinkindererziehung in Ungarn anhand der Kleinkinderbewahranstalt Tyrnau-Nagyszombat

Simon, Joan / Great Britain:

Interpretations of the State of Childhood in Early Modern Europe

Simmons-Christenson, Gerda / Sweden:

Development of the 'Folk-Kindergarten' in Sweden

Sutherland, Neil / Canada:

What Reliability Can Historians of Childhood Place on the Memories of Their Subjects

Szabolcs, Éva / Hungary:

Ideas on Middle-Class Children in an Educational Periodical in Hungary in 1875 - 1898

Vág, Ottó / Hungary:

Organization and Educational Work at the Westminster Infant Asylum in London

Vedeler, Liv / Norway:

An Account of an 18th Century Children's Charity School in Trondheim, Norway

Vejleskov, Hans / Denmark:

Some Remarks on Autobiographical Material in the Study of Development and Education

V. Program of the First Meeting

Wednesday,	10.00	Working Session of the Advisory Council
29th August	13.00	Registration, informal meeting
1984	15.00	Opening session
	16.00	Public lecture: Sterling Fishman
	19.30	Dinnerparty
Thursday,	9.00	Working session A
30th August	11.00	Working session B
1984	14.30	Working session C

	17.00	Visiting tour: the old town of Bamberg, connected with a visit of an old Franconian inn
Friday,	9.00	Working session D
31th August	11.00	Working session E
1984	14.30	Working session F
	16.30	Plenary session of the Working Group: Further activities of the International Standing Working Group
	19.00	Dispersal

Saturday, 1st September 1984: Additional excursion to Nuremberg, including a visit of the 'Toy-Museum of Nuremberg'.

During the meeting 2 exhibitions were shown within a scientific frame programme, which were open to the general public, too:

a)
Heinz Plasa, Teacher at the Chair of Art Education at the University of Bamberg organized an exhibition under the headline: "Bildschöne Unverbindlichkeit - Schwarz-weiße Wirklichkeiten" (Beautiful vagueness - black and white realities) in children's drawings of the years of 1939 - 1942 on the subject 'World of the Village'. These drawings were interpreted and compared to respective works of 3rd-form primary pupils in 1984.

b)
Together with a student working group of the Chair of Elementary Education Dr. G. Erning organized an exhibition about: "Public Infant Education in Bamberg 1839 - 1984", in which the structures of the first Bamberg infant school of 1839 were compared with those of its direct successor, today's Kindergarten St. Martin, Bamberg.

VI. Course

The opening speech of the meeting was delivered by Professor Sterling Fishman, University of Wisconsin - Madison, U.S.A., who in his lecture on the Subject: "Changing the History

of Childhood: A Modest Proposal" outlined desiderata of the historical childhood research and, in particular, made reference to a 'History of Adulthood', which has not yet appeared. The presentation of the papers handed in, their commentary and discussion was carried out in three subject groups:

- 1) History of Institutional Early Childhood Education
- 2) History of Family Education
- 3) Sources and Methods

The individual working sessions were led by members of the 'Advisory Council' of the International Standing Working Group for the History of Early Childhood Education:

J. Bradshaw, England - E. Catarsi, Italy - G. Erning, FRG - F.-P. Hager, Switzerland - M. Manson, France - V. Misurcova, Czechoslovakia - O. Vag, Hungary and K. Neumann, FRG in substitution of E.-M. Köhler, Sweden.

VII. Result

The meeting of the International Standing Working Group for the History of Early Childhood Education received a broad variety of contributions, by which an insight was gained into the research activities and the different methodical research approaches of the participants.

The methodical range of the individual contributions to the subject comprised the interpretation of social-demographic data, classically orientated historical works, the hermeneutic interpretation of literary texts, methodical approaches to autobiography and oral history research, social statistic analyses, as well as research reports on the latest developments within the literature of historical childhood research.

Although this diversity among the participants was the reason for intensive talks, it, however, made obvious one difficulty, too: As the first meeting of the Working Group was necessarily organized under a collective topic, we succeeded in documenting the range of research interests of the participants in a first step. This, however, did not lead to a

a consensus about the future subjects of research focussing on a spectrum of methods, which should be given priority by the Working Group.

The discussion of these problems resulted in the conclusion that a stronger orientation concerning subject and method was absolutely necessary, and that an agreement will have to be reached already at the next meeting.

In accordance with this vote of the final discussion the board and the 'Advisory Council' of the Working Group were invited to prepare papers of principle ready for decision.

VIII. Continuation

From April 3-5, 1985 the second meeting of the International Standing Working Group for the History of Early Childhood Education will take place in Empoli, Italy, at the 'Centro Studi Bruno Ciari' under the chairmanship of Dr. Enzo Catarsi.

Günter Erning