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Deputy Secretary-General of the French National Commission for UNESCO. After serving in the French Ministry of Education for twelve years, Mr Regnier joined the French National Commission for UNESCO in 1986 as representative for educational affairs. At the international level he was, *inter alia*, General Rapporteur for Commission II on the theme of education at the 1993 UNESCO General Conference, Secretary-General of the French Delegation to the 1995 General Conference, and Executive Secretary of the preparatory working group for the forty-sixth session of the International Conference on Education, 2001. He has contributed to the publication of two works, one on 'adult education' (1998) and the other on the 'new professional role for teachers' (2000).

PROFILES OF FAMOUS EDUCATORS

YVES BRUNSVICK

(1921-1999)

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A life in the service of international cultural co-operation

As Yves Brunsvick himself said in 1997, at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the French National Commission for UNESCO, his entire life had been devoted to being the secretary-general and vice-president of this Commission—a crossroads post. To which he added, somewhat mischievously: 'but some crossroads are unavoidable. What really matters are the roads leading away from those crossroads'.

Roads—or, to use an even more apt word, trails—Yves Brunsvick was constantly opening them up, tracing them, exploring them, and passionate about crossing the national with the international in the fields entrusted at the end of the Second World War to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

The way had been prepared well in advance: as a young teacher he joined the French Resistance against the Nazi occupation. Against the onslaught of totalitarian barbarism he was already brandishing the ideals enshrined in UNESCO's Constitution, namely, to contribute to the

advancement of democracy, human rights and peace through the development of international co-operation in education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication.

Once peace was restored, he very quickly grew interested, doubtless inspired by an initial experience of cultural relations at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the new international organization and the possibility it offered—and still offers despite internal and external transformations since that time—of uniting States in the accomplishment of an ethical mission. For the founders of UNESCO, as no doubt for Yves Brunsvick, the Organization's originality lay principally in the fact that it was not meant to be an academy of experts or of women and men of culture, nor was it intended to be a mere intergovernmental organization. Desiring to reach out to and involve intellectual communities and even civil society as a whole in its efforts, UNESCO, in accordance with its Constitution, encouraged from the start the creation of national co-operation bodies, which would become known as national commissions for UNESCO, and international non-governmental organizations composed of experts and volunteers.

Once launched, the network of national commissions grew even larger with the admission of new States to UNESCO, notably in the wake of the independence movements, and was able to take advantage of developments in international cultural co-operation. Yves Brunsvick was fully aware that the national commissions represented an attempt—unique even today in the context of inter-State co-operation—to combine the national with the international, the governmental with the non-governmental. Tirelessly, he not only met with numerous national commissions but also took the initiative of bringing them together at meetings, in particular just before the sessions of UNESCO's General Conference.

The French National Commission

The French National Commission, the commission of the country which is host to UNESCO Headquarters, was the first to be established. Yves Brunsvick joined the Commission in 1948,

serving first as assistant to the Secretary-General, Louis François, and then, starting in 1958, as head of the commission, working closely with several successive presidents.¹ He therefore had the opportunity not only to ensure that eminent French personalities participated in the Commission's work but, even more importantly, to be the architect of projects with which those personalities were closely associated.

For example, in 1958, with the philosopher Gaston Berger as President of the French National Commission, Yves Brunsvick organized a debate at UNESCO on the challenge of scientific progress, which brought together five Nobel prizewinners and garnered an enthusiastic response from the press and the media of the day.

On the initiative of Gaston Berger, who sadly would not live to see its accomplishment, a project to combat illiteracy at the global level using ultra-modern techniques, including space technology, was submitted to the UNESCO General Conference in 1960. Yves Brunsvick took pains to draw attention to this innovative scheme and to keep abreast of its principal achievements, in Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire (the Bouaké project) and, in the following decade, in other countries and regions of the world. Recent international efforts to develop education for all and the growing number of distance education projects prompt us to take a fresh look at the 'Gaston Berger project' and the pioneering role played by people like Yves Brunsvick.

Some years earlier, Yves Brunsvick was associated with a UNESCO project, praised by Jean Cocteau and Jean Giraudoux among others, organized in Limoges, France, on the theme of art and sport. Here, too, this eminently educational project, aimed at finding common ground between the museum and the stadium, might be a source of inspiration for our efforts today.

One need hardly stress that Yves Brunsvick took a particular interest throughout his life and career in culture and cultural relations. As Augustin Girard, president of the history committee of the French Ministry of Culture, said at the fiftieth anniversary celebration mentioned above, 'At the Commission we were immediately welcomed with open arms by Yves Brunsvick, and we quickly discovered a shared intellectual outlook on which we could always rely.'

Mr Girard added: ‘What struck us immediately at the Commission was the spirit of innovation, rare in those days [the 1960s], sustained both by the heady mixture of exchanges at UNESCO and by the unwavering attitude of the Commission’s Secretary-General, whose intellect instinctively inclined towards reform and the new’. Several significant innovations introduced subsequently are worthy of mention here: the concept of ‘cultural policies’ adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 1966 and 1968 sessions, the idea of equal sharing of cultural property, developed between 1964 and 1970 at the Avignon meetings under the presidency of Jean Vilar, the emergence of the concept of cultural development, the birth of the idea of ‘cultural administrator’ and the creative Utopia aimed at associating artists with the measures concerning them.

The late 1970s and the 1980s were a fertile period for cultural reflection under the aegis of the Commission and its dynamic leader, Yves Brunsvick, whether through the international training days for cultural affairs administration, held in Paris, Grenoble and Nice in 1977, the international seminar on creativity held in Arles in 1982 with the participation of the writer Georges Emmanuel Clancier, or, above all, the meetings among the cultural communities of Africa, Europe and the Arab world held, at the request of the President of the French Republic, from 23 to 27 March 1982 in Avignon with a view to contributing to the study of the cultural foundations of a new international order. One of the roads starting at the Avignon crossroads—to use Yves Brunsvick’s striking metaphor—would lead to a project for the rebirth of the library of Alexandria, which might well be called: how an ancient myth can help construct the future.

Yves Brunsvick was, of course, involved in all UNESCO’s major cultural heritage projects: the creation during the earliest decades of UNESCO’s existence of the two non-governmental organizations devoted to world heritage activities—ICOM² and ICOMOS³; the heroic campaigns carried out in Nubia and Venice; the elaboration and implementation of the World Heritage Convention, whose success is clear from the fact that nearly 600 cultural and natural sites feature today on a list that places them under the protection of humanity.

These major cultural operations, to which Yves Brunsvick contributed tirelessly, undoubtedly laid the foundations for today's international debate on the meaning of public cultural property and the importance of promoting cultural diversity in an era of globalization.

Always eager to understand the developments of his time, Yves Brunsvick was fascinated by globalization. As a humanist, however, he feared its effects, knowing that the globalization of the economy was little more than the prelude to a metamorphosis of civilization whose cultural consequences were, and are still, difficult to predict. In that spirit he wrote, with André Danzin, *Birth of a civilization: the shock of globalization*, published in 1998, which described globalization as the consequence of a profound evolution in world view, living conditions and relations among peoples. The book gives particular prominence to education, which must 'satisfy the new conditions of professional competence and personal culture required by the emergence of the civilization of communication in a global economy'.

The educational practitioner

Yves Brunsvick was genuinely passionate about education. The ideas of Jean Guéhenno on the need to reconcile scientific thought and popular instinct, of Henri Laugier, who urged intellectuals to adopt an international perspective, and of Gaston Berger, mentioned above, surely influenced this committed teacher, who, eager to keep in touch with educational practice, taught for thirty years, in parallel to his national and international responsibilities, at the Centre d'Études de la Civilisation Française at the Sorbonne.

Not surprisingly, in the 1950s and 1960s he fostered intellectual attitudes that helped develop within the French National Commission a broader view of basic education, proving very valuable at the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All in 1990 and more recently at the Dakar World Education Forum in 2000. The aim was, and still is, not to accept cut-price education, a source of frustration for individuals and disillusionment for the countries involved. Yves Brunsvick plunged

into the Jomtien adventure with his usual energy, defending the idea of a basic education that would serve as a springboard to other levels of education and training with a view to helping countries achieve complete and integrated development.

For this, we need not only education but also training. The demand for training, a constant factor since the founding of UNESCO, grew even stronger in the 1960s and 1970s in response to the pressing training needs of young professionals in recently independent countries, who were confronted in addition with the task of revitalizing and developing their education systems. On the initiative of Yves Brunsvick, the French National Commission placed its knowledge and skills at the disposal of UNESCO by launching, parallel to specific individual programmes, broad training operations, notably in Africa, aimed at the establishment of institutions with multiplier effects, such as teacher-training institutions, engineering schools and various universities, vital to the economic and social development of the countries involved.

This training operation, representing a substantial investment, entered a new phase in the 1970s with the setting up of specialized post-graduate courses based on the international scientific priorities identified by UNESCO.

Today, as in the past, we must always strive to view education, training, scientific research and progress in economic and cultural development as indissociable. The life and work of Yves Brunsvick bear witness to this.

Yves Brunsvick and the International Bureau of Education

As an educator, Yves Brunsvick was naturally quick to take an interest in the International Bureau of Education (IBE), fruit of the pedagogical movement flourishing in Geneva in the early decades of the twentieth century. He was particularly devoted to this institution founded during the League of Nations era, at a time when, even though UNESCO had not yet come into existence, the need for international educational co-operation was already considerable.

The establishment of UNESCO at the end of the Second World War confirmed the wisdom of the process set in motion by the founders of IBE, while giving rise at the same time to an identity crisis for the Bureau, confronted with the closely related mandates—at least in education—of the two organizations. Today, the storm has apparently been weathered, with the transformation of the International Bureau of Education into an international centre for educational content.

Yves Brunsvick, a man of conviction and commitment, understood that the IBE had to keep up with the times. Accordingly, the presidency of the IBE Council, which he assumed from 1986 to 1989, marked a period of renewal. Thanks to Yves Brunsvick, the Bureau began to win back the international influence it had wielded under the leadership of Jean Piaget. To achieve that entailed combating a certain tendency towards Eurocentrism, encouraging the decentralization of activities, promoting the development of regional and sub-regional networks, encouraging the return of educators and other education specialists and reaffirming the role of IBE as the analyst of major educational trends worldwide.

The momentum brought by Yves Brunsvick left its mark on IBE as it did on UNESCO, which he loved and served with conviction and enthusiasm. His confidence in the human spirit (one of his books was about Gandhi), his attachment to the spirit of the Enlightenment (he was a contributor to studies of Rousseau and Diderot and at the end of his life was still engaged in research on Montesquieu), his belief in universality, his humanism marked by generosity—all of this bound him closely to an organization with an ethical mission: ‘Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed’.

Although his voice has been silenced, the message of his work endures—the message of a man of education and culture, open to scientific and technological change, defender of freedom of expression and critical thinking, conscious of the significance of the major intellectual movements while solidly anchored in reality.

At the forty-sixth session of the International Conference on Education, held in Geneva in 2001 on the theme ‘Learning to live together’, the Comenius Medal was awarded posthumously to

Yves Brunsvick in recognition of his devotion to the causes of education throughout the world and his loyal, enthusiastic, generous and discreet support from which UNESCO, IBE and the International Conference on Education have greatly benefited.