The history of youth work in Europe

work in Europe

Volume 2

Relevance for today's
youth work policy

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Introduction
In search of the sources of youth work and youth policy in Europe

Hanjo Schild and Jan Vanhee

Those responsible today for giving form and content to youth work and a policy in support of youth work can hardly avoid the questions: What is youth work? and What is a policy in support of youth work? Another question is: Which policies were pursued yesterday and are they being pursued concretely today with regard to young people in the member states and – increasingly – at supranational level, that is at the level of the European Union and the Council of Europe? What do we know about these issues today and how can we use our relevant knowledge and insight to further develop youth work and youth work policy?

The Blankenberge exercises – two workshops with approximately 40 participants each – invited experts to reflect on the history of youth work policy in their country and to look for its origins and roots. The point of these exercises was to exchange findings and experiences, and then confront and compare them with each other.

The first workshop on youth work history took place from 26 to 29 May 2008 and brought together a number of experts who gave their views on youth work evolution in their country. They represented a wide range of European countries. In line with the logic that we need to situate youth work histories in their socio-economical and political context, the workshop aimed to highlight youth work evolutions linked to different "welfare systems", ranging from so-called social-democratic systems (Finland) through to countries typified as liberal (United Kingdom) to more conservative welfare regimes (Germany, France and Flanders). Poland gave us input from a post-communist country (as did Germany) and Malta exemplified a more southern-European welfare type, although one strongly influenced by the United Kingdom.

In the second workshop on youth work history, held from 25 to 28 May 2009, there was a need to complement this landscape and pay explicit attention to eastern Europe. After the introductory session on the role of historical research in youth work policy, research and practice, a more general presentation from outside Europe (South Africa) and on the history of youth work policy at European level opened the scope of reflections. The following sessions focused on seven different presentations on the history of youth work in the Flemish-, French- and German-speaking communities of Belgium; the Netherlands; Hungary; Wales (United Kingdom); and Ireland. These mainly dealt with the relationship between youth work and youth policy. In a last session, special attention was paid to a preliminary summary of the most important findings and conclusions. Key questions such as:

• What is youth work?
• What does youth work mean for young people?
• What does youth work mean for society?
• What is youth policy?
• What does youth policy mean for young people and society?

came up regularly for discussion. Searching for the answers to these questions by exploring the origins and traditions of youth work also challenges us to acquire

historically relevant knowledge and, if desirable and necessary, integrate it into the policies we are formulating today. It also invites us to give heritage and cultural policy a historical dimension in so far as they are focused on youth work and related issues such as the development of civil society.

Each policy level should raise awareness of these issues, first of all at national and European level. Consequently, more and better resources and tools should be made available in order to provide relevant knowledge on the historical dimension of youth work, thus contributing to our efforts to develop policies and practice that are based on knowledge and evidence.

In non-formal learning and training activities in the youth field, particularly in relation to management skills, sufficient space and emphasis should be systematically allocated to this issue. It will help us to reflect more clearly on our work today and it will produce innovative ideas on how to tackle today's challenges, primarily related to the identity of youth work, the problem of access, professionalism and the quality of our work, methodologies and strategies used, the types of youth (work) research and so forth.

As organisers of the workshops we are well aware that the search for the origins has only just been launched – at least at European level. The two Blankenberge workshops marked the start of this search.

The partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth has built up a tradition in international exchange, and knowledge production and provision. The Flemish Community of Belgium has a longstanding tradition of youth work and voluntary engagement in Flemish youth movements, and it will exploit the results of the two workshops as a starting point to organise a bigger conference on this theme under its European presidency in the second half of 2010.

The time has also come to entrust our existing knowledge and understanding to a larger forum and share it with as many relevant youth actors as possible in Europe. The European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy is the ideal platform to collect our insights in a more systematic way and put them at the disposal of each and everyone who wants to look for the origins of youth work and youth policy in Europe. Publishing the results of the two workshops in print versions will also contribute to this exercise.

We invite you to join in our search and further activities.

Ulrich Bunjes,
Council of Europe

Key points of the opening address

I share these thoughts with you not only as an "institutional representative", but also as an ex-youth worker, active in various functions and contexts since the 1960s – including some of the historically perhaps most interesting and challenging periods such as that of the "All-European Youth and Student Co-operation" in the 1980s.

Looking at the history of youth work is useful and can be a rich source of inspiration when conceiving future approaches. It should be said, however, that the youth policy of the Council of Europe in the 1960s and 1970s was hardly based on a historical analysis. These initiatives responded to an immediate need: they were functionalistic. On the other hand, only historical reflection can alert us to the pitfalls and possibilities of the future, to challenges and options for change.

The history of European youth work is part of the history of Europe. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Europe's history changed fundamentally. However, our approach to youth work – the institutional set-up, the target groups, the objectives – changed only marginally if at all. Historical analysis should advise us whether this approach – this "non-change" – was justified or not. After all,

in many European countries there was a need for abrupt and traumatic change. Were the "western" models adequate to meet this challenge?

Our blueprint for the future of youth work and youth policy development in Europe is "Agenda 2020". I am convinced that historical reflection can help us to meet these new challenges, described in "Agenda 2020". Let me point out three areas where youth work can surely provide inspiration:

• *Cultural diversity*: how has youth work dealt with comparable situations in the past, for example in post-conflict situations where new majority/minority relations appeared?
• *Child and youth policy*: how has youth work historically viewed the relationship between the two? Which historical roots are at the basis of the separation between the two that mark parts of the current youth work landscape?
• *Intergenerational dialogue*: from a historical perspective, is this not a very serious challenge, since youth work has often been seen as the path towards emancipation from the older generation, if not a total counter model to mainstream society? Has youth work, in the past, developed models for intergenerational dialogue that could be made fruitful today?

The Council of Europe attaches great importance to this workshop, and to the workshops and initiatives to follow. We thank Jan Vanhee and the Flemish Community Agency for Socio-Cultural Work for Youth and Adults for organising this event with us as part of the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth. We will study the results of this workshop with immense interest, and look forward to future initiatives to analyse our historical heritage in this important, albeit not very well documented field.

The history of youth work – Re-socialising the youth question?

Filip Coussée

So that we may learn from our past, the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth, together with the Flemish Community of Belgium, organised a second workshop on youth work history in Europe. As the first workshop (see Verschelden et al., 2009), this second one did not aim at purifying an essential youth work concept irrespective of a historical and cultural context. Rather it endeavoured to identify the close links between youth work developments and broader social and cultural trends. Tracing back the roots of youth work and identifying different evolutions within and between countries must help us to feed a fundamental discussion on youth work's multifaceted and multilayered identity, and to cope in a constructive way with recurrent youth work dilemmas.

Historical consciousness enables us to go beyond restrictive discussions swayed by the issues of the day. In that sense the Blankenberge history sessions aimed to clarify what youth work is, without confining youth work's identity to a description in terms of current methods. Youth work is a "social" animal (Williamson,

2009). The current discussion, however, is mainly coloured by rather technical discussions on excluding some methods and including others, on defining boundaries between youth work and school or social work, or on (supposed) new methods to contribute to the social integration of vulnerable young people. This restriction of the discussion to rather methodical questions with a direct relevance for today's policies makes youth work a vulnerable practice to those "who would foist on it warmed-over policies that have been tried and found wanting in the past" (Gilchrist, Jeffs and Spence, 2001).

➜ The social nature of youth work

Although the organisers did not explicitly ask to do so, all contributors started their presentation with the questions: What was/is youth work? and Why did/do we need youth work? Throughout the presentations, youth work was shown as a social practice varied in shape and form. The flashback position obliged all contributors to sketch the broader social, cultural and political ideas and evolutions that determined the birth and growth of youth work. It soon became very clear that two societal features are of tremendous importance for the position and function of youth work in a given society: the social construction of youth as a specific section of the population and the type of welfare regime of a society. They both refer to questions concerning social integration and inclusion. The first has to do with integrating a younger age group in adult society. The latter refers to the question of how to foster social cohesion in a society that in the same time is based on exclusionary mechanisms inherent to capitalist market societies. The mandate and profile of youth work is not and cannot be the same in social democratic welfare regimes as in liberal or totalitarian regimes. Many speakers emphasised the close links between the conception of youth work and the making of democracy. This is an observation that will be repeated in this second workshop.

The conceptions of "youth" and the conceptions of welfare and social cohesion are closely interconnected and both reflect a desirable relationship between individual and society. Nevertheless, various contributors pointed at the fact that youth work practice and policy have been increasingly underpinned by ideas on the desired development and behaviour of youth and less by ideas referring to the democratic shaping of a society. As we concluded after the first Blankenberge workshop: the social question has been framed into the youth question (Verschelden et al., 2009). Developments in youth work were increasingly inspired by the ideas that live in the minds of policy makers and youth workers (and often in the minds of young people themselves) on the potential, desired, imagined meaning and significance of youth work for the positive development of young people. The individual, harmonious transformation of young people into creative and autonomous adult citizens finding their place in society became of utmost importance. These ideas were increasingly underpinned by academic research, mainly in developmental psychology (focusing on youth as a life stage) and youth sociology (focusing on youth as a social category). Policy makers, youth workers and researchers found each other in the construction of ideal developmental trajectories and transitions for the young. And so, as other forms of social work (in a broad sense), youth work has increasingly been constructed as a tool to integrate young people in the prevailing adult society. It is striking how in many European countries "social inclusion" (or exclusion) was constructed as an individual asset, not as part of the social quality of society.

➜ Managing "the social"

A collection of harmonious and healthy people does not necessarily and in itself result in a just and social cohesive society. This implies that the social nature of youth work encompasses much more than a "holistic" view on the individual development of children and young people. Moreover, the emphasis on youth work as a tool for individual development and inclusion of young people obscures two fundamental discussions: first, it obscures the question of how youth work functions or can function as a part of our "democratic infrastructure" as a forum to give a voice to young people in the making of our society; second, it leads to the obsession that young people must be given "access to youth work" and therefore no longer questions the underpinning idealised conceptions of "youth", which are exactly at the basis of the inaccessibility of youth work.

In that sense, the historical insights from the first Blankenberge workshop reminded us very strongly that young people are not a homogeneous group and also that they are social beings and not merely social becomings. Therefore youth work policy and practice should be guided as much by (forgotten) "social questions" as by "youth questions". These insights are highly relevant for all European countries. Youth work is a part of the social infrastructure of a society. In most eastern European countries this social infrastructure has to be renewed after a period of state socialism in which the "social" was reduced to the state. In most western European countries neoliberalism has eroded the "social" by stressing the force of "the individual, autonomous, creative, independent citizen" investing in his or her own life. The social power of the different "pillars" (such as Catholic, socialist, liberal, nationalist) and all their associations organising social life (sports, schools, health care funds, trade unions, youth organisations, adult associations and so forth) have been questioned very critically. These criticisms were to a large extent legitimate, because the pillars divided people in social categories and avoided contact between them. Moreover, the enormous influence of the pillars on social life was not very transparent and was insufficiently subjected to democratic control.

It seems, in the West as in the East, that the "social" in society is currently more open-ended than ever, but this also means that it is more uncertain and vulnerable. Some (young) people are increasingly left to their own devices. The reorganisation of the social is increasingly being taken over by a-pedagogical and seemingly apolitical structures, subdivided in manageable sectors and controlled by social engineers. Just as the former pillarisation, this compartmentalisation has a dividing effect, although it is less problematised. "Problematic" people are divided from "normal" people. Whilst in the "pillarised" period "social and cultural work" was unified in one pillar, social work is distinguished from "regular" cultural work, which also means that deviant young people are increasingly separated from "regular" young people.

In the concluding reflections and discussions all participants agreed that these insights on the "management of the social" should feed the youth work discussion much more than they do nowadays. In our conclusions (Verschelden et al., 2009), we tried to grasp the gained insights by framing the discussion in a social pedagogical perspective.

➜ The social and pedagogical identity of youth work

Various speakers shed light on some of the core principles of youth work identity. Bernard Davies (United Kingdom) was the most explicit on this point (see also

Davies and Merton, 2009). He referred to key principles as voluntariness, group work, building relationships with young people and with their communities, participation, starting where young people are and going beyond, strong emphasis on recreation and association and so forth.

These features were confirmed in other contributions. At the same time it was recognised that a characterisation of youth work in these terms remains on a rather methodical level. It does refer to the pedagogical nature of youth work, but it does not explicitly connect these principles to the social question and the significance for society. Even if youth work meets all these core features, it can be underpinned by very diverging assumptions and aims. Throughout history we have identified conservative forms of youth work, but also youth work that was developed starting from progressive, restorative and radical ideas on the relationship between individual and society.

These are not mere arbitrary choices. Of course, if we accept that there is no best way to organise society, then we have to accept that there is no "best" way to organise youth work. Nevertheless, we have to make the underlying assumptions to youth work practice and policy much more explicit. If they are not made explicit (or even not consciously known any more), then it is impossible to discuss youth work in its broader social functions. Perhaps that is why discussions on youth work so often stick to methodical questions focusing on how to do things in a better way. We tend to forget to ask if we are doing the good things.

The social pedagogical framework shifts our attention from the organisation of youth work as a pedagogical practice to the tight relationship between pedagogical practices and views on the desired social order. History made this relationship very concrete. All histories identified a kind of social pedagogical "embarrassment" (Mennicke, 1937), although most contributors did not explicitly call it that. The key question thrown up by this social pedagogical embarrassment is: How can we prevent social disintegration and preserve social cohesion without eliminating diversity? This question was answered in the creation of social practices bridging the gap between individual and society. As argued above these social practices increasingly transformed social questions into educational questions.

Youth work, being such a social practice, facilitates the negotiation between individual aspirations and societal expectations. That is why the rapporteurs of the first Blankenberge workshop explicitly chose to describe youth work as "social" work". So youth work respects diversity and difference and at the same time has to strive for equality and cohesion.

This kind of tension – open, but not without engagement – is inherent to all practices in the "social". Because this is the sphere where the relationship between individual and society or between lifeworld and system (Lorenz, 2009) is constantly questioned and constructed. The intensive discussions we had in May 2008 on youth work as a practice full of tensions taught us that youth work has to be open-ended, but not asocial. Youth work initiatives that are externally shaped and where activities and purposes are defined from above, fail to appreciate that it is not possible in a democracy to define in advance the final destination of individual and societal processes. These kind of "closed" practices could be defined as asocial work, they leave out the social and emphasise the work (Bradt, 2009).

On the other hand, youth work initiatives that fail to connect their activities to the broader society may be very open, but they could also be asocial. They tend to

restrict participation to participation in youth work and not participation through youth work. The first Blankenberge workshop showed that many youth work forms throughout history disconnected themselves from their social context and more specifically from the construction of a democratic welfare state. Those initiatives are youth-centred, but fail to question their significance for society.

The dialectical relations between openness and engagement are grasped in the inextricability of the pedagogical and the social nature of youth work. Through the pedagogical, youth workers foster individual learning processes and deliberately aim to go beyond young people's lifeworlds. Through the social, youth workers are mediating between lifeworld and system and aiming at societal learning processes.

➜ A sustainable practice and a supportive policy

These inextricability and dialectical tensions make it very hard to build up a clear identity and therefore also to develop a sustainable, supportive youth work policy. Throughout many histories it was shown how policy makers (and also youth workers) often neglected these tensions. Dialectics seem to tempt to choose between two poles. We were given different examples of youth work policies and practices overemphasising one aspect of the work and neglecting the other:

• either cutting off the social aspects of youth work: pedagogical action is then reduced to a set of methods or techniques which may well be fed by holistic, caring assumptions on children and young people, but disconnect pedagogy from society (Coussée et al., 2008). This implies that the societal function of youth work (negotiating between lifeworld and system) is obscured and therefore unquestionable;
• or cutting off the pedagogical aspects of youth work: social action then is disconnected from pedagogical questions. In these views on youth work we sense a strong plea for democratisation of society and radicalisation of youth work, but youth workers themselves get no pedagogical perspectives to bring these principles in practice in their work with concrete young people.

It was the aim of the second Blankenberge workshop to make the picture of youth work histories in Europe more complete. In addition to this we hoped to elaborate further on the social identity of youth work. We tried to develop the above described social pedagogical framework as a productive frame to fertilise the identity debate rather than to sterilise it, convinced that it had the potential to accommodate the existing diversity of youth work methods, strategies and definitions and to make it manageable without trying to eliminate it. It must help us to discuss youth work identity:

• starting from a shared mission and position for all youth work forms;
• with respect to the dialectical tension between diversity and universality;
• grounded in youth work practice and not externally defined;
• based on what youth work does, not on what youth work pretends to do;
• without drawing dividing lines between youth work with young people and youth work for young people;
• in a flexible and open way;
• without neglecting the need to develop practical perspectives for practitioners and policy makers.

We elaborated further on these insights and frameworks in this second workshop on the history of youth work in Europe (and its relevance for youth work and youth

policy today). We hope that these insights might further add to a fruitful discussion on youth work and its significance for young people and for society.

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The relevance of history in youth work

Tony Jeffs

To remain ignorant of what has been transacted in former times is to remain always a child.

Cicero

The present always depends on the past, something that conspires to make the past an essential object for our study. Knowledge of what went before is therefore always potentially beneficial because the past makes a difference to the present. This volume like the one that preceded it (Verschelden, 2009) exemplifies a belief in the intrinsic benefits that flow from a knowledge and understanding of the past and the events, movements and individuals that fashioned the contours of contemporary youth work practice. The *History of youth work in Europe*, like so much work currently being produced on the origins of youth work, embodied a faith in the value of history as a guide to action. The tenor of the bulk of the material encased in that volume, although serious and measured, endeavoured to draw lessons for current policy and practice via an examination of earlier forms of intervention. Here were examples of what might be termed "applied history". Scholarship sustained in part by the premise that history offers "a dividend", encouraging contributors to turn to the study

of the historical antecedents of contemporary policy as a means of securing a heightened insight into the currents and undertows of present-day practice. In other words, what Hobsbawn terms "the history of the present" (Hobsbawn, 1993 cited Tosh, 2008: 111).

Although the quantity of historical material relating to the field of youth work appears to be multiplying at an exponential rate, certainly the profusion of conferences, texts and articles is impressive (see Smith, 2009), we should not be misled into thinking this arena of study is itself devoid of a past. Indeed we remain dependent upon historical texts written around a hundred years ago for material on some of the pioneering youth work agencies and personalities. For example, a cursory examination of the two oldest young women's youth organisations still in existence, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), founded in 1855 and the Girls' Friendly Society, launched in 1875, provides an insight into this phenomenon. Lucy Moor's history of the YWCA which appeared in 1910 remains the only published account of the first national YWCA, which was British, and although histories of a number of national YWCAs subsequently appeared we still await a narrative of the YWCA as an international agency. Likewise regarding the Girls' Friendly Society, for which our only substantive histories remain those of Money published in 1897 and Heath-Stubbs (1926). These, like Moor's, are "insider" chronicles, written with undue deference to the founders and prone to overlooking uncomfortable episodes and tensions.

Even the Ragged School movement, which pioneered not merely school-based youth work but almost every form of community-based practice from 1844 through to the introduction of compulsory public education in England and Wales in 1870, is still served only by Montague's 1904 history. Irrespective of the growth in output, substantive gaps remain regarding not merely national histories of youth policy and practice, but also national and international organisations. Equally there are serious spaces relating to our knowledge of the experience of being the youth work "subject".

Overwhelmingly, the historical material focuses on policy and agencies, and far too infrequently on what it meant to be a member or a "client". Few historians have moved beyond the study of youth work as an ongoing process to undertake the primary research required to understand how boys' and girls' clubs, uniformed groups, youth projects, and detached and outreach programmes worked in practice. We ought to know what it was like to be a member of a girls' club or YMCA and how if felt to be a "client" of a detached youth project 10, 20 or 50 years ago.

With greater frequency we must augment our study of archival material with a heightened willingness to collect anecdotal and other material relating to the experiences of those who belonged to youth groups, organisations and movements. Yet despite these reservations it remains the case that the recent surge in the generation of new material has meant that grounded discussions relating to youth work and youth policy have become more, rather than less, possible during the last few decades both within and between the citizens of different national states.

This welcome accumulation of material relating to the origins of youth work practice does not mean we can simplistically "read off" the past. Those who went before were not like us, nor was the world they inhabited the same as ours, minus the odd gadget or gizmo we now take for granted. As Hartley (1953: 7) so tellingly put it, "the past is another country, they do things differently there", and therefore

must be approached with due care and reverence. The worlds that provided the breeding ground for the Sunday School and Wandervogel movements no longer exist. Robert Raikes, the founder of the former, and Hermann Hoffmann, the early leader of the latter, cannot therefore be simplistically paraded as exemplars. Their ways of working could not be replicated nor can these movements be resuscitated for their moment has passed. However the work, ideas and approaches of both deserves careful study. Each, in their own ways, responded to the challenge posed by industrialisation and urbanisation. For both set out, in differing circumstances, to offer young people an educational experience, based upon a voluntary rela-tionship, that sought to help them acquire the intellectual and cultural resources needed to confront and survive the challenges posed by a harsh and unforgiving social and economic system. If nothing else their stories tell us that there are always alternatives, that workers whatever the circumstances possess a measure of agency and there are always at hand ways to seek differing ends.

The study of these and other youth movements and youth work agencies offers a potential route to a deeper understanding of contemporary practice. Once we have acknowledged and paid due deference to all the essential caveats relating to time, place and setting it remains the case that exploring the history of youth work gifts an opportunity to formulate ideas, insights and even templates relating to how our practice might develop in the future. Adorno asked: "Should we consider it pathological to burden oneself with the past, while the healthy and realistic person is absorbed in the present and its practical concerns?" (1986: 117)

Given the tenor of those contributing to this book and the previous Council of Europe text the answer of many engaged in the study of youth work history will be that however great the temptations to focus on the here and now we must seek to understand the past. For as Hannah Arendt, who worked for Youth Aliyah at the end of the 1939-45 war, reminds the unwary: "Since the world is old, always older than they themselves, learning inevitably turns one towards the past, no matter how much living will spend itself in the present." (1961: 192)

As we turn to that past it is perhaps worth asking what we are looking for and why. In the following sections it will be suggested the immediate focus might most use-fully be upon biography; the assemblage of collective memory in relation to forms of practice; and the employment of historical material to help foster the formation of alternative and radical youth work practice.

➜ Recognising the past

Isaac Newton, in a letter to his fellow scientist and rival, Robert Hooke, reminded him, and us, that one can see "a little further" by "standing on the shoulders of Giants" (5 February 1676: see Iliffe 2007). It is a maxim that applies with equal force to youth work as much as it does to science. Reflective study of the lives of the pioneers of youth work promises much in the way of insight. Biographies of those who went before can gift unique opportunities to better understand the role played by individuals in the development of practice. As might be expected, some of those who blazed the trail of youth work, informal education and community work have received disproportionate attention whilst others, equally deserving of consideration, remain largely, if not totally, overlooked.

Jane Addams is probably the most studied of all. Besides her own two volume autobiography (Addams 1910, 1930) she has already been the subject of over a dozen biographies, all incidentally penned by fellow Americans. Almost unknown

outside the United States, despite being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931, Addams was a pioneer of girls' work, as well as a key figure in the development of community work, and in the American context, juvenile justice and housing policy. Even now, over three quarters of a century since her death, one can confidently predict that virtually all American social and youth workers as well as students of welfare policy possess some understanding of her contribution.

Apart from Nikolai Grundtvig in the Scandinavian countries and Baden-Powell in the parts of the English-speaking world it would be difficult to cite someone of comparable national standing within our arena of practice. Samuel Barnett, who encouraged Addams to open Hull House and who six years earlier in 1883 established the first settlement house, Toynbee Hall located in East London, has never been the subject of a biography, although three histories of the institution he founded have been written and his widow did publish a collection of his scattered writings and a two-volume memoir based on their respective diaries shortly after his death in 1913 (Barnett 1918a, 1918b).

Hannah More, frequently credited with setting up the first youth club in the 1780s, has been the subject of over half a dozen biographies (the most recent being Stott, 2003). However, these devote scant attention to her educational work, opting instead to focus on her novels, plays and religious tracts; friendships with famous contemporaries – such as David Garrick the actor; Samuel Johnson the author and compiler of the world's first dictionary; William Wilberforce, leader of the anti-slavery movement; and Hester Thrale, writer and diarist; and her work as an abolitionist and religious reformer. George Williams, founder of the first national and international youth organisation, the YMCA, has been the subject of a biography written by his nephew, and a much more rigorous academic study (Binfield, 1973). Predictably William Smith, who established the first national uniformed youth organisation the Boys' Brigade, has been the subject of a number of hagiographies but no serious biography although an excellent history of the organisation is available (Springhall, Fraser and Hoare, 1983). Baden Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts and a far more controversial figure than Smith, has been the subject of two serious biographies offering competing interpretations of his contribution (Jeal, 1989; Rosenthal, 1984).

Other leading figures such as Kurt Hahn, Nikolai Grundtvig, Joseph Cadijn and Don Bosco have deservedly attracted the attention of biographers. What the published biographies tend to convey is the extent to which their subjects made a contribution beyond the immediate spheres of youth work, informal education and community work. These were not career-path professionals, but frequently outsiders, even mavericks, who saw within youth work and informal education an opportunity to express themselves in ways denied them within other fields.

Coverage has been patchy. Within recent years there appears to have been a reluctance on the part of youth work historians and academics to explore the contributions made by individuals to the development of practice. Biographical studies in this arena have become somewhat passé. One consequence of this relative indifference has been that practitioners have not been either encouraged or enabled to scrutinise the contribution eminent pioneers have made. This absence of textual material results in a lack of awareness of the extent to which contemporary practitioners now carry a baton fashioned by those who went before and which was passed to them in good faith.

However, of perhaps greater significance is that a corollary of this failure to stand on the "shoulders of the Giants" who went before is a downplaying of the potential impact of personal agency. In an age when we are encouraged to view ourselves as individually weak and isolated, powerless before the great global engines of change shaping our lives and communities, it is conceivably more important than ever to set aside the image of the diminished self. To realise that individuals and small groups can make a difference and are able to challenge and tame the power of giant corporations and nation states. To recall that Hannah More was once one of a tiny minority of reviled abolitionists, that Gisela Konopka (Andrews-Schenk, 2005) embarked on her youth work as part of a small oppositional group in Nazi Germany or that Eduard Lindeman (Leonard, 1991) lost his teaching job and was driven from his home by the Klu Klux Klan for inviting a black woman to attend a party at his home.

These and a myriad similar examples help to convey the continuous relationship between youth work and social action, and the ways in which those committed to reform have seen youth work, adult education and community work as both a means of giving expression to their beliefs and as a way of clarifying their ideas via dialogue with young people and others. The limited range of biographical studies is a hindrance, and every encouragement needs to be given to those willing to embark on this essential work. Although one hopes that they will take care to avoid what Callan (1997) categorises as a "sentimental" approach to such endeavours that elevates emotion over reason and thereby induces a narrow moral sensibility. Practice will not be served by yet more hagiographies when what are needed are critical but fair-minded accounts of the contribution of those who led the way.

➜ Searching for clues

Carr tells us that "history is an unending dialogue between the past and the present" (1964: 30) and if for youth workers and those in adjacent professions this dialogue is to enjoy a sustained relevance, it must partially focus upon the progress of key "organising ideas" and "themes". The continuities of practice, although too rarely acknowledged, have been remarkable in terms of their longevity. Therefore practitioners would be well served by the appearance of "biographies of ideas" to sit alongside those of personages and organisations. Hopefully three examples will suffice to convey the durability of certain staple forms of intervention and justify the need for such "memoirs".

First, the community school and its adjunct school-based youth work which has been regularly re-invented since the second decade of the 19th century. Designed, and initially managed by Robert Owen, the Institution for the Formation of Character and the school attached to it sought to cater for the social and educational needs of the entire population of the township of New Lanark. Although this prototype, which consciously sought to integrate formal and informal educational provision within one setting, attracted a great deal of attention during its brief life, it collapsed after little more than a decade amid considerable recrimination involving Owen and his business partners. During the following half century Chartists, co-operaters and organisers of ragged schools all independently organised community schools and what we would nowadays recognise as school-based youth provision, but again each in succession failed to sustain this form of intervention for more than a few years.

Right up to the present day this concept has been rediscovered at regular intervals by administrators and practitioners in Europe, North America and elsewhere.

Usually the appellation changes; the latest manifestations are "extended" and "full-service schooling", and at each occasion advocates assert "it to be a new idea and a fresh approach", seemingly ignorant, or wilfully indifferent, of earlier attempts to create a community school with an integrated youth work element. Invariably these attempts to locate youth work, and adult education, within formal educational institutions implode and the youth work and adult education elements are jettisoned, leaving the remnant to become a typical inward looking school. The existence of an historical account of these endeavours would not guarantee that further attempts to achieve this synthesis will not be made. However, at least it might forewarn youth workers as to what pitfalls they can expect to encounter and encourage more thoughtful discussion of the tensions and contradictions that have generated earlier failures.

A second example is detached youth work and again this form of practice dates back to the beginnings of modern youth work over two centuries ago. Unlike the story of the school-based variant, the history of detached youth work is not a chronicle of failure; however it is a story of "short-termism" as the life-span of detached projects and programmes is generally brief. Although the social context has dramatically changed since Hannah More, clutching a Bible, met with young people on village greens and John Pounds went out into the streets of Portsmouth to make contact with homeless, hungry and disposed young people, carrying hot potatoes to help convince them of his good intentions, the essentials of detached youth work have remained constant. Still workers are obliged to go to where the young people are; as before they must find ways to win the trust of groups often apprehensive of adults intruding upon their territory, and in time-honoured ways they have to discover the means of communicating with those they encounter. Scattered accounts of specific detached youth work programmes exist, but no longitudinal study of the long march of this form of practice is available.

The relative short life span of detached projects, which lack the durability of uniformed youth groups and building-based provision, means that links between generations of practitioners are rarely forged. Knowledge of what went before, what worked and what did not is acquired, if at all, via anecdote and accidental encounters. Consequently each generation tends to find itself obliged to formulate afresh a theory of practice. Therefore the value of a substantive account of the development of detached youth work would be twofold. Firstly, it would help raise the status of detached youth work, not least by bringing to the attention of a wider audience the long history and achievements of this mode of intervention. Secondly, by highlighting the continuities of practice, it would foster a sense of professional identity amongst what is generally an isolated and disparate group of practitioners, and enable them to more easily "borrow" theory from those who went before.

The final example relates to work with girls and young women. For various reasons youth work has always been disproportionately obsessed by a desire to prioritise the needs of young men. This imbalance is reflected as much in the availability of historical material as it has been in the daily round of practice (Spence, 2006). One has only to compare, for instance, the substantial volume of published material on the history of the YMCA with the meagre amount devoted to the rise of the YWCA or the Young Women's Christian Association; likewise the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides and the boys' and girls' clubs, to instantaneously comprehend the magnitude of this disparity. When Lily Montagu, a pioneer of girls' club work, in one of the earliest articles on the subject spoke of the "girl in the background" (1904), she was highlighting a discrepancy that survives virtually intact up to the present. Increasing the number of historical studies of work with girls and young women

will not rectify this imbalance but it would assist the process of realignment. Like detached youth work, provision for girls and young women has in crucial respects always been a discrete form of intervention, in particular the content and focus of programmes has generally differed from that encountered within boys' clubs and even to a large extent mixed clubs and projects. Overwhelmingly such differences remain hidden as does our knowledge of the class and social backgrounds of members and staff. The paucity of historical research in this area means not merely that we have few substantive histories of youth organisations seeking to meet the needs of girls and young women, but hardly any accounts of individual units and projects. Consequently contemporary workers within this sector are largely unaware of their relationship to a partially lost and hidden tradition. Something that is far less the case of for those who are a part of organisations established to meet the needs of young men and boys.

You cannot "make history pay a dividend" (Galbraith, 1964: 59), but you can offer it up as a guide and potential source of strength. Ideas and modes of practice have long shaped practice and the contours of youth work organisations. Histories of the latter tend to underplay or overlook importance of these "meta-narratives" as do biographies of individuals. For that reason we need studies such as Koven's (2004) on "slumming" – the custom of members of the upper and middle classes visiting poor districts to undertake charitable works – that pay specific attention to the continuities of practice, the ideas and foci that provide an often unacknowledged thread linking past and present.

➜ Reallocating power

We find ourselves living in an era of what Leys (2001) calls "market-driven politics". Incessantly informed that there is no alternative to the power of the cash nexus, which we are told will unaided decide the value of everything, workers find that what they do is increasingly cash-led, funding rather than value driven. Although local factors produce variations between and within nation states the overwhelming trend has been for the strength and vibrancy of civil society to be reduced as a result of the growing power of the market and heightened reach of the state apparatus. The big issues are pre-determined in relation to youth work as much as in other areas of our lives, therefore the conflicts occur at a micro-level. These manifest themselves on the fringes usually in the form of intense competition for resources; a contest fuelled and sustained by competitive funding mechanisms that deliberately set youth organisation against youth organisation. Within this competitive milieu "all that is solid melts into thin air" and insecurity becomes the norm and change the only certainty. As Furedi explains, the naturalness of ceaseless change appears to subject humans to its will, becoming a "force that annihilates the past and demands that people learn to adapt and readapt to radically new experiences". Within this context "human beings do not so much make history as adapt to powerful forces beyond their control" (2009: 27). Politically within such an environment the past therefore becomes "an embarrassment, a burden to be escaped rather than a patrimony to be reclaimed" (Samuel, 1992:14). For what went before speaks to us of choices made, individual agency and, if we care to look, the possibility of meaningful and radical change, as opposed to a constant adaptation to the demands of the powerful. Little wonder then that welfare professionals, including youth workers, are no longer taught the history of their arena of activity. It has no place in training programmes designed to manufacture the operatives needed to deliver outcomes and preordained agendas. In nation states where politicians have ceased to offer competing visions of society, they have little reason to invoke the past (Tosh, 2008: 9), and so is it also inside the compressed world of

youth work where managers and funders see no value in history for themselves or for those who are merely meant to deliver not create policy?

The increasing expulsion of history from programmes of professional training is not an act of God like a snow storm at a sporting event, but the end product of a series of decisions made by men and women. Therefore to consciously decide to study the history of youth work and allied areas of welfare activity becomes an oppositional act. Albeit a somewhat minor one first because it offers individuals an insight into alternatives to what now exists, a way of articulating difference. Second, on the grounds that it helps individuals and groups construct critiques of contemporary policies by exposing for examination the origins of those policies. It gifts a cultural and intellectual resource that practitioners can employ in order to create theory and formulate policy. A study of history provides a moral and intellectual grounding for practice. A means whereby practitioners can preserve and assemble their inheritance, in order to help themselves as well as upcoming generations of workers face the challenges of the present and future. As Simon put it "a hopeful present requires a continual reopening of the past" (Simon, 2005:112), contemplation of our roots is a crucial aid to the learning of hope. For example, the history of the Folk High School movement offers one an entree into a radically different model of post-school education. Much as a study of the George Junior Republics (George and Stowe, 1912) or work of Homer Lane (Stinton, 2005) cannot but stimulate a radical critique of contemporary juvenile justice policy. Likewise, familiarity with the self-governing boys' club movement (Buck, 1903) or the Wandorvogel requires one to confront difficult contradictions concerning the present-day obsession with the manufacturing of "participation". All these examples and many others, known and as yet unknown, bestow the gift of optimism and proffer a vision of a better future for the taking.

A shortage of material makes such study difficult, but not impossible, just as the absence of a longitudinal account of the development of work with girls and young women hinders our attempts to reinvigorate this tradition. The random collection of historical material relating to the history of youth work may have some value but more importantly we need to open a dialogue that encourages practitioners to "make a case for what should be remembered, and how it should be remembered" (Hartman, 1989: 80). To develop forums, similar to the one which led to the production of this text and its predecessor, that will encourage the charting of the history of youth work and offer a means of fostering a sense of collective purpose. Forums, conferences and networks that will "involve people in exploring what it means to remember" and help those engaged in this pursuit make those memories "active and alive, as opposed to mere objects of collection" (Frisch, 1990: 27).

➔ Conclusion

The study of history educates in profound ways. Wineburg argues that of all the subjects within the secular curriculum: "it does the best in teaching us those virtues once reserved for theology – the virtue of humility in the face of limits to our knowledge and the virtue of awe in the face of the expanse of human history" (Wineburg, 2001: 24).

This sense of awe regarding the achievements of those who went before applies as much to youth work as any profession or area of endeavour. Our history is a deep well and if studied with diligence a relentless and affirmative teacher. For history is "a political and psychological treasury from which we draw reserves" that can enable us "to cope with the future"(Lasch, 1979: XVIII).

Youth work as an educational endeavour ceaselessly generates opportunities for practitioners to share their historical understanding with the young people they work with and colleagues. It is a form of education rooted in conversation and dialogue which lends itself to the promotion of a reflective examination of past and contemporary practice. Gateways abound for us to enter with others to mutually explore our shared histories. If we delegate the task of collating and sifting the historical roots of youth work to others not least professional historians it is unlikely it will be undertaken. Therefore the immediate task is to encourage colleagues to join together and give expression to their belief in the inherent value of education by collectively embarking on a journey of discovery to unearth and celebrate the history of a great enterprise – youth work.

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Gauthier Simon

The evolution of public policies for youth work in the French-speaking community of Belgium

The objective of this account is to present the history of youth work policies in the French-speaking community of Belgium. In this context, and due to the excessively broad nature of this issue, I have chosen to place the accent on public policies. More specifically, I will address the development of the institutional framework that surrounds youth work in our community. This will allow me to limit the topic. But this analysis of the institutions also has the merit of highlighting certain characteristics of youth work in our regions.

I should immediately explain that my account runs the risk of overlapping with the presentation of my colleagues from the German-speaking and Flemish communities. In fact, for a long time Belgium remained a unitary state. During this period public policies were adopted without a real distinction. However, in the area of youth work the differences between our regions have always been noticeable in the field. To take one example, regionalist aspirations were strongly linked to the origins of youth movements in Flanders. In the French-speaking community this was never the case.

➔ 1850-1914: the origins

The Industrial Revolution: a different world

A long process was required for youth work, as it is currently conceived of in the French-speaking community, to emerge. The beginning was connected with the unprecedented upheavals that Belgium experienced, more specifically in its French-speaking part, at the turn of the 19th century. This was the time when the Industrial Revolution was spreading into our regions. Following the mastery of steam energy, little by little factories were established in the country, resulting in a radical transformation of society and the landscapes. Rapidly expanding urban centres such as Liege and Charleroi attracted populations from the surrounding countryside to work in the mines, textile factories, metallurgy and so forth.

Working conditions and family life changed rapidly. We witnessed the emergence of a bourgeois class enriched by industrialisation and trade. More and more, they developed education plans for their progeny. But there were also a great number of families in the working classes in which everyone worked hard for miserable pay, including children from a very early age and under very trying conditions. This transition from a rural, communal life towards more complex societies led to numerous social problems.

First approaches to youth work: the patronages

This was the context in which the first youth initiatives came into being: the patronages. Appearing first in Flanders in 1851, these youth clubs spread quickly over the whole territory of Belgium. They originated in an institution founded in Marseille by the abbot Lallemand. They were also inspired by different *œuvres de jeunesse* or youth works (*œuvre* being the French word to designate both work and a charitable action) such as the initiatives of Don Bosco and of the Salesians. These Catholic actions aimed at leading young people to pray, play and grow up together. They were the first real collective approaches initiated with the idea of improving young people's situation. They were a rousing success, with more than 850 groups in Belgium at the end of the 19th century. The patronages ensued from an ideology that seems a little paternalistic to us today. The middle classes supervised the most disadvantaged classes and in so doing preached their moral values. However, they had the considerable merit of being concerned with youth, and more specifically with working-class youth who, until then, had been given very little consideration.

The social movements and the first laws on behalf of youth

For the Church as well, youth clubs represented a bulwark against socialist movements that were beginning to develop. Among the elements that favoured the appearance of these movements in French-speaking Belgium were the workers' strikes of 1886. Starting in Liege, they violently shook the country and caused the death of 14 people. These events led to the emergence of the Belgian Workers Party (the ancestor of our Socialist Party). As a result, the Catholic majority party in Belgium paid more attention to social problems. This was the era when, for the first time, social legislation was passed that was aimed at the problems of young people. In fact, following an initial text prohibiting child labour in the travelling occupations, a general law prohibiting work in industry by children under 16 came into being. The status of children was therefore changing gradually from an institutional point of view. From miniature adults, they became beings that the state

considered it should protect. The last 15 years of the 19th century then marked an important turning point in the way policies came to grips with youth. There was of course the influence of the social movements. But the *œuvres de jeunesse* also had a central role within this framework. This happened in the wake of the publication of the *Rerum Novarum* encyclical and the social concerns expressed by Pope Leo XIII. Thus in 1894, different patronages grouped together as the Commission royale des Patronages (Royal Commission of Patronages). They supported a bill aimed at protecting children classified as morally abandoned that the state had the duty to protect. This draft text also assigned a preventive role to the public authorities. However, this law was adopted by the national parliament only in 1912 and there were numerous reservations. The conservatives grumbled about state interference in family matters where, until then, the father had been all-powerful. Similar reservations were expressed in relation to another determinant law on a subject we are still concerned with today: that of compulsory learning.

While in France and the Netherlands similar laws were adopted in 1882 and 1900 respectively, the compulsory education law was passed by vote in Belgium only in 1914. As a consequence, the child labour law was logically extended to all work activities. This delay was due to the defence of the role of the *pater familias* in conservative Catholic milieus. Moreover, it was for this reason that learning was made compulsory but not school learning; the father of the family could decide to complete his children's education differently. The longer time period is also explained by the fight between liberals, who were partisans of secular and state instruction, and Catholics, for whom the independence of religious education absolutely had to be preserved. Legislation on youth was therefore far from covering the field of youth work as it is currently understood. It was limited to setting up measures that we consider basic today. It first covered formal education and youth protection. The field of non-formal education was left entirely to private initiative.

Even though it came slightly later than in other European countries and was still in its infancy, a new interest in youth legislation emerged before the war began in 1914.

The beginnings of Scouting in Belgium

It was also during this era – in 1909-10 to be precise – that the first movements inspired by Baden Powell made their appearance. Other organisations were already bringing young people together, such as the patronages, and there were youth groups within the ideological families that made up the political landscape of the nation, such as young political party guards and student circles. However, Scouting left its imprint on the way youth work was later perceived in our community. The first troops of the Boy Scouts de Belgique were intended to be open to all, but instead were somewhat linked to the liberal political family. This at least was the point of view of the Catholics, who founded a Scout movement themselves in 1912. This showed that the potential of the movement was spotted very early on by the clergy. Besides the patronages, this new axis emerged just before the First World War.

The first hesitant steps of youth work gradually came into being in the mid-19th century, in particular in the Catholic sphere. The state still played no significant role. This can be explained in particular by two striking characteristics of our public policies in place at the end of the 19th century: subsidiarity and pillarisation.

The place of the state: the principle of subsidiarity and pillarisation

The principle of subsidiarity means that the state apparatus participates as little as possible as a direct operator but it recognises and encourages the action of operators that are essentially private, including associations. It takes care of the interests of different actors but intervenes only when necessary. This can largely be explained by the fact that in Belgium, two of the major dominant political families were opposed, for different reasons, to excessive state interventionism.

This can also be explained by the construction of our social system, starting from the major ideological and sociological families (Catholics and liberals, and then socialists), the bases of which ignored and opposed each other, but whose elites were engaged in dialogue with each other. This resulted in a relatively compartmentalised society, or what observers of political life in Belgium called pillarisation. In our national system, citizens evolved around politically marked pillars that determined the course of their whole life (their school establishment, where they spent their leisure time, their health care, their trade union association, etc.). This societal structure led to a culture of consensus and consultation. It also explains the importance of various associations connected with the ideological pillars, which constituted a network for political decision makers. As a result, the state tended to delegate a large part of its policies to them, especially concerning youth.

Other fracture lines have existed since the creation of the Belgian state, such as linguistic affiliation, differences in religion or income and so forth.

All these factors played an important role in the way in which public policies and therefore youth work and its institutional framework were structured. These two characteristic traits, subsidiarity and pillarisation, have been present since before the First World War.

➜ 1914-15: youth and movements

The First World War and its social consequences

When Belgium entered the turmoil of the war in 1914, the law on compulsory education had just been adopted and had not yet been put into practice. Moreover, our territories were the only ones to be almost fully occupied by Germany. This special situation created numerous problems, especially concerning supplies. It drove people from different ideological pillars to join together to set up a national relief and food committee. This became a place where people with different tendencies spoke together, and it led to numerous advances on the social and democratic level after the war.

Universal suffrage for men over 21 was adopted in 1919, the same year the Birth and Child Office was created to deal with the health of babies and small children. This made an official matter of something that until now had been reserved for the family.

The subjects of family, childhood and the birth rate were of great importance in policy making after the First World War, leading the state to establish the first child benefits in 1921 to encourage mothers to have children and stay home to raise them.

The great youth movements were expanding rapidly. The middle class, partly under the influence of refugees returning from the United Kingdom after the conflict, increasingly expressed a keen interest in Catholic Scouting. This movement was structured, in spite of internal quarrels between partisans of marked apostolic action and those for whom the religious dimension was less important. Finally, a federation was created in 1927 that was affiliated with the Catholic Association of Belgian Youth (Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Belge).

The Catholic Association of Belgian Youth

The Catholics were very much present in the field of youth, mainly through the Catholic Association of Belgian Youth, created in 1919. It was in this context that the abbot Cardijn founded the Young Christian Workers in 1925, with a goal of emancipating young workers using a method that he defined in three words: "see, judge, act". This movement met with very lively success in French-speaking Belgium, where there were numerous basins of workers. The crisis of 1929 and the unemployment that went with it gave an important echo to its actions with a social aim.

The creation of the Young Christian Workers also started a movement to reorganise the Catholic Association of Belgian Youth into a whole series of specialised youth movements (independent, student, agricultural worker, university, etc.).

The patronages also evolved. They came together in a national federation in the mid-1920s. Affiliated with the Catholic association, they took the name of "Patro" in 1931 to mark their distance from the first patronages, where the relatively rich supervised the poor.

In this way the Catholic association formed various organisations considered auxiliaries of Catholic action. One of their main objectives was to keep young people anchored in the bosom of the Church at a time when materialist and atheist ideologies were gaining ground. For some, these had a real effect and contributed to setting the stage for the youth movement with a pedagogical aim. Within this context, Scouting methods based on self-management by young people, assuming responsibility, life in nature, a positive vision of society and strong moral values also increased.

But the Catholic Association of Belgium Youth also had its shadowy area. It was within its sphere of influence that Léon Degrelle appeared. Pushing certain of its values to the extreme, he became the leader of the rightist populist party Rex. Rex met with a certain amount of success in Belgium in the 1930s before collaborating with the Nazis during the Second World War.

The socialist movements

Other youth movements attached to other ideologies, in particular in the socialist political family, existed alongside Catholic activity. A Belgian branch of the Red Falcons, a movement combining teachings inspired by Scouting with the ideals of the Left, was created in our regions in 1928. There was also the Jeunesses Syndicales (trade union youth) and the socialist Young Guards. The Young Guards were the first youth organisation with socialist political leanings, and were a spearhead of socialist militancy. At first oriented towards antimilitarism, their action was important above all during the post-1929 crisis and was marked by very radical speeches. In addition, in the field this movement was in direct competition with

the Young Christian Workers. However, it never had the influence of the latter. In fact, its radicalism frightened those at the very foundations of the workers' party, and its antimilitarism did not play in its favour at a time when the Nazi threat was becoming clear.

Tourism and youth

At the end of the period between the two wars, the first organisations concerned with tourism for young people appeared, including in our regions. The first youth hostels were established in Belgium in 1933. Here it is necessary to see the influence of the relationship with nature advocated by the youth movements, but also that of legislation measures which granted more and more free time to working people during that era. This was the beginning of social tourism. During this period as well and therefore very early in their development, numerous movements tended to separate into a Flemish wing and a French-speaking wing, in the image of the Scouts in 1927.

Growth without a legal framework

The initiatives aimed at youth therefore multiplied and took shape between the two major world conflicts. But although it was taking on true importance, youth work was not yet the object of specific legislation. However, the state was not completely inactive during this period. It adopted texts that affected the life of the movements and associations bringing together young people. There was the law on non-profit associations in 1921. In 1926, there was also one aiming at promoting popular education: "works complementary to school" as it was called at that time. But these were generalist texts that also affected the adult associations. They had an influence on the way in which the youth movements and organisations were structured, but during that era there was no specific policy for youth work.

However, newly stimulated by Baden Powell's methods, youth work carved out a place of choice for itself in our societies. Public authorities were still working in a framework of strict subsidiarity. They did not intervene in this area, in contrast to what was happening in other countries, such as Nazi Germany for example. Associations connected with the political pillars had complete autonomy in dealing with youth – a category of the population that was becoming increasingly distinct due to compulsory education. But the Second World War was soon to reshuffle the cards.

➜ The years 1940-68: recognition and expansion of youth work

Youth movements under the Occupation

The Second World War had many consequences for youth work and its institutional framework. Belgium was occupied from 1940 to 1944, and during this period, the activities of youth movements and organisations were turned upside down.

Socialist-inspired associations were immediately condemned to go underground. In contrast, the youth associations that had arisen in the sphere of influence of the Rex Party entered openly into "collaboration".

On the Catholic side, organisations continued to operate a little more normally. Scouts and Guides in particular assisted a population in need. At first the Catholic movements, to the extent that they supervised youth, were looked upon

somewhat favourably by the German authorities. But the situation deteriorated very quickly. Restrictions imposed by the occupying forces made organising activities increasingly difficult, especially for the Scouting movements. Trail signs, uniforms, meetings and then camps were gradually prohibited. In addition, these Catholic movements, often very patriotic, were considered candidates for resistance. It must be pointed out that the establishment of the compulsory work service in Germany drove many young people underground. Scouting gained numerous followers during this period. The Scout troops were indeed the only ones able to maintain activities for young people during the Occupation, even though with a great many difficulties.

The Young Christian Workers were very active in the resistance and took part in different networks. For example, they helped their members escape from compulsory work. Cardijn himself was arrested during this period. During his detention, he met another great figure of the youth movements of the time, Arthur Haulot. This future great politician was an eminent figure in the socialist youth movements, and was awaiting deportation to the camps. Together they discussed and developed plans for future youth work policies.

The post-war period and the first public policies

After the liberation, the Belgian state tried to bring together the nation's resources and invested in a number of major public works policies. Our social security system, based on mandatory insurance, was created in 1945, in consultation with trade unions and economic decision makers.

The immediate post-war period was also a turning point for public policies concerning youth work. In the spring of 1945, and further to conversations between Cardijn and Haulot, the public authorities created the Youth Service and a National Youth Council, whose goal was to raise awareness of society and the political classes of issues affecting young people. Consequently, there was real official recognition of youth work and its specific problems.

The Youth Service had a three-fold mission:

• to study the different questions relating to the general training of young people;
• to foster contact and co-operation between different youth groups;
• to assist these groups in their initiatives and supply them with the appropriate administrative resources.

These arrangements were made to avoid repeating errors that had allowed young people to be recruited into totalitarian structures. In addition, youth was perceived as a hope for renewal after the dark hours of the Occupation. Legislators wanted to give them a voice so that they could participate in the reconstruction of society within a democratic ideal. They felt that this could be done only by a youth population that was educated and open to others.

Organised youth

The state envisaged these actions only within the framework of associations. Therefore it took into account only organised youth and movements associated with an ideological tendency to bear the democratic ideal of youth. We are still working within the logic of subsidiarity and a pillarised vision of society.

Legislative measures were limited to giving support to already existing associations. These recognised and encouraged their work and diversity. At the end of the Second World War, the model of youth work was therefore that of a youth movement supported by an ideological network. This is what the public policies encouraged.

Within this context, it was above all the movements of the Scouting type that blossomed. Their membership continuously grew, and their approach, based on pedagogical principles inherited from Baden Powell, made a name for itself as the model for youth work. On the other hand, organisations such as the Young Christian Workers and the socialist Young Guards lost ground.

Internationalism

New associations connected with more internationalist tendencies also appeared in the post-war period. After the horrors of the war, it was time for friendship between peoples. Various associations pursuing this objective established themselves in our territory and organised work or meetings between young people. We can cite for example the Caravanes de la Jeunesse belge, the Compagnons bâtisseurs and the American Field Service.

Training courses and popular education

In May 1956, a second legal text (Decree of 1956) completed the 1945 text relating to the Youth Service. In particular, it set missions for it in terms of training. The service had to help voluntary associations to train their own managers and improve the technical framework for educators and monitors, in adapting new formulas for educational and active recreation.

Concern for training was also very much present in the sphere of youth work. Some organisations devoted themselves to it in a very specific way. Starting in 1946, the Centres d'Entraînement aux Méthodes d'Education Actives or CEMEA (Centres for training in active education methods) organised their first training courses. They were inspired by their French counterparts, and took as their basis concepts which were innovative at the time: the collective approach, the importance of practice in learning, residential work places and so forth. All these training efforts and their recognition must be connected with the principles of popular education, which, in the post-war years, appeared as a means of avoiding the absurdities of conflict. Within this framework, the state did not intervene directly in the training courses. It did not dictate any programme. It was committed to a pluralist approach and supported the initiatives of associations.

The maisons de jeunes (youth centres): another type of youth work

The Decree of 1956 contained another provision that was extremely important, because it reflected an evolution in how youth work was carried out in the field. The Youth Service had for its mission to contribute to the development of active recreation for non-organised youth by promoting the creation of youth centres and musical, literary and artistic organisations for young people.

Legislators were therefore interested in non-organised youth. This was something very new. It corresponded, with a gap of a few years, to the appearance of the first youth centres in Brussels at the beginning of the 1950s. Created within the Catholic circle of influence these centres were intended first to host young people

informally. The goal was to keep them from hanging about in the streets. Gradually the number of these structures increased. They formed a federation, and under the influence of education professionals, new methods of pedagogy were applied there. They took on importance as the public authorities recognised and encouraged their actions. They corresponded to a new state of mind that was arising within youth.

The youth culture

A real youth culture developed in opposition to the world of adults became apparent in the 1950s. School attendance was increasing, and young people were staying in school longer. This promoted the consolidation of their own identity. Young people came together around strong cultural markers – pop-rock music, magazines, James Dean, but also the existentialist philosophers. The world of young people born doing the baby boom was slowly breaking away from that of adults. New values appeared, especially in terms of sexuality. This trend became more pronounced over the course of the 1960s and led to the protest events at the end of the decade. In 1968, the turbulence of the young people was at its height in French-speaking Belgium, even though it was less strong than in France or Flanders where, in Leuven, it took on autonomist accents.

➜ 1968-2008: between emancipation and integration

This change in youth had a direct impact on youth work in our territories. New structures gradually appeared that could respond to the increasingly diverse and specific expectations of young people. This was an era of specialisation. For example, information centres, which offered young people relevant answers to their specific problems, flourished. In addition, the events of 1968 led to a new consciousness among youth workers. It was time for a change and this was reflected in public policies.

Federalisation and redefinition of cultural policies

Society questioned itself and new ideas arose. Overall, there was a new definition of the institutional framework. This affected cultural policy, in particular youth policy. Indeed, following the regionalist rebellion of students in Leuven, a revision in the Belgian Constitution, recognising three regions and three cultural communities, was voted on. From this time on, the French-speakers of Belgium could define their cultural policies autonomously.

From popular education to permanent education

A new idea asserted itself. Following the events of 1968 and the findings of field workers, a more active participation of the public, especially of young people, was advocated. We went from the principle of democratisation of culture to a principle of cultural democracy. This was the transition from popular education to permanent education: from then on culture was envisaged as a social field of participation. Transposed to youth work, this meant using young people's periods of free time to give them the opportunity to develop their creativity and to exercise new responsibilities.

Objective: responsible, active and critical citizens

Following the division into communities, the objectives of youth workers were more clearly defined in legislation.

The law on the Maisons de jeunes (youth centres). These ideas were found in a law dedicated to the youth centres and similar associations voted in 1971. It indicated the importance that this sector had taken on in a few years. It was drawn up, and this is important, after consultation with field workers. It determined the conditions for official recognition and subsidies. It put forward participation, but also the expression and the citizenship of young people. The text assigned youth centres the mission of helping young people to become "critical, responsible and active citizens". Therefore, it fit directly into the idea of permanent education and took into account the critical role of young people in society as a condition for democracy.

Professionalisation and diversification. Moreover, youth workers were part of an approach that was more and more professional. In the mid-1960s, the public authorities established a system allowing teachers to strengthen the pedagogical supervision of young people within associations. Other arrangements followed in the 1970s, in particular through the adoption of a decree that made it possible to support the training of the managers. The public authorities therefore were paying more and more attention to youth work, which led to a stronger institutional structuring.

They also took the diversity of practices into better account. This was how the text of the law of 1971 relating to youth centres was modified in 1979. This modification made it possible to include two types of structures that were within the logic of participation by young people: accommodation centres for young people and information centres.

The law on youth organisations. This institutional structuring also affected the organised youth movements. In 1980, a text specifically organised their activities and subsidies. It defined an organisation as: "a voluntary association of natural persons or legal entities that … contribute to the development by young people of their responsibilities and personal abilities with a view to helping them become active, responsible and critical citizens within society." The themes of permanent education are found in the above quote: participation, citizenship and so forth.

The legislation also set up categories of youth organisations, for which membership, save exceptions, was limited to those under 30. There are four of them:

• movements, including the Scouts and Guides, the Red Falcons and the Patros, but also certain political organisations;
• specialised movements, in particular student associations;
• services, mainly those that provide information, but also covering lodging associations, training services, etc.
• co-ordinating organisations that group together other organisations. These umbrella organisations operated within the political pillars or, conversely, brought together diverse organisations on the basis of political neutrality. This need for neutrality was new and resulted from developments in youth work. New practices coming from the experiments of the 1960s and 1970s, and which were meant to be outside of the traditional and politicised circuits, acquired more visibility and legitimacy by grouping together.

Classifying organisations into categories was based on the number of members, geographic extent and the number of activities carried out. In fact, it corresponded to the situation of the associations in existence at the time. For the most part, this text acknowledged a pre-existing situation, and did no more than affirm major principles coming from permanent education. Moreover, it confirmed the major role that public authorities had assigned to the youth organisations, thus these remained the leaders in youth work. This is explained by the great autonomy and power that youth organisations had in the French-speaking community, in view of their connections with the political sphere.

Youth work and economic crisis: giving responsibility or social assistance to young people. In response to 1968, the principles of permanent education gave youth work a larger dimension of involvement, participation and creativity. However, the oil crisis of the early 1970s also led society to reconsider its perception of youth. The status of youth changed; it became a category to protect, but also to re-integrate.

This explains why youth assistance structures flourished, among them the *aides en milieu ouvert* or AMO (community-based assistance). Their role was to protect and they formed part of the social protection fabric between the family and the legal system. They aimed at preventing young people from failing to adapt and from falling into delinquency. The image of the young person was slowly changing, and it was the archetype of the young delinquent of immigrant origin that asserted itself in society. As a consequence, the legislative framework of social aid to youth reflected a slow slide towards a vision of society in which the young who commit criminal acts must be taken charge of by the legal system.

In response to the youth riots in the low-income districts of Brussels at the beginning of the 1990s, "security contracts" were established, where prevention among young people and coercive methods were mixed together.

Therefore, we have a complex institutional architecture as far as youth in the French-speaking community is concerned, with on the one hand an accent on permanent education with a goal of personal development, and on the other hand, a perspective of individual social remediation. This led to confusion among young people, all the more so since the methods used were often similar. The boundary was therefore blurred for the potential user, while the different professionals in youth work were keen to maintain their specific features in the cultural field while avoiding the security discourse.

The public authorities as youth work actors: *Été jeunes* and *Quartier libre*

In this context, starting in 1988, the French-speaking community decided to develop a programme for young people, in particular those from disadvantaged milieus. It was called *Été jeunes* (youth summer). The Youth Service, Youth Assistance and the Sport Service encouraged the setting up of partnerships to benefit young people from disadvantaged milieus. The idea was to provide activities for them during the summer holidays. This was also an attempt to open up transversally in order to get past the divisions between youth work and social assistance for young people. Even though only a very marginal part of its budget was dedicated to youth, the French-speaking community defined the type of activity that had to be carried out to benefit from subsidies. This was a *première*. Until then, the associations

themselves decided how to meet the objectives set by legislation, especially in the field of permanent education.

But now the public authorities financed them to carry out actions defined by the state. Numerous associations, feeling their autonomy threatened, criticised these measures. The same was true for the operation *Quartier Libre* (free neighbourhood) launched in 1996, and which aimed at promoting the cultural expression of young people, primarily the most disadvantaged. Young people could be supervised by diverse associations but, and this was even one of the objectives, they could also be involved directly at the base of these initiatives. Involving young people was therefore an essential objective, but social concern as well was very much present in this programme. So what is going on today?

➜ The current institutional framework of youth work

Youth work in the French-speaking community – A cultural approach

It is sometimes difficult to get one's bearings in all the different policies that are being carried out. I will linger here on what is grouped under the subject of youth work in the French-speaking community. In our community, youth work is clearly distinguished from social emergency work, at least from an institutional point of view. The Youth Aid Service oversees social measures and individual responses, while the Youth Service is responsible for policies connected to culture and permanent education. Therefore, it is within this field of non-formal education that what the legislature considers youth work is developing. Its objective is to develop responsible, active and critical citizenship. The institutional framework makes it possible to delimit the field of youth work and the major sectors that make it up. These are youth organisations and centres for young people:

Youth organisations

This sector is the most important historically. At the base of youth policies, its representatives are still currently considered privileged contacts by the public authorities. Since spring 2009, a completely new decree has framed their activities. It was negotiated directly with the representatives of the organisations in a youth organisation committee. The new decree subdivides youth organisations into five major categories:

- *youth movements*: they have the largest number of members, and include Scouts, Guides, Patros and Red Falcons, which professionals used to call *foulards* (for their neck scarves). Movements must be focused on community life and long-term action;
- *thematic movements*: these must relate to society through identifiable subjects. They include, among others, young people that belong to political parties, trade unions, student organisations, the young farmers;
- *youth services*: this category brings together organisations active in training young people, charitable activities, trips for young people, holiday activities, and activities to raise awareness of the challenges facing society, such as ecology or the Third World;
- *federations of youth organisations*;
- *federations of centres for young people*.

Youth organisations must be intended for a majority public between the ages of 3 and 30. In addition, the new text provides youth organisations with the means for establishing specific activities connected with: supporting local groups; combating

the extreme right; co-operation with schools; training of youth workers; the promotion of democracy, publics referred to as specific (handicapped people, disadvantaged youth, youth faced with discrimination, etc.), and partnerships across categories of youth organisations.

This text is an attempt to respond to all of the specific features of youth organisations. After consultation between the public authorities and the organisations, it was decided to stick to the reality in the field and go beyond purely quantitative criteria. There is also better financing, with a 30% increase in the amount of subsidies. More than ever, the 90 recognised youth organisations are one of the two principal bases of youth work in the French-speaking community.

Centres for young people

The other major aspect of youth work consists of centres for young people. Here as well there is a consultation committee and subcommittees formed of representatives of the associations in the field. They help and orient public authorities in the definition of policy. The latest modification of legislation dates from 2008. The objective of the 191 centres is to help young people develop a critical, active responsible citizenship and a sense of solidarity through participation in activities, often of a socio-cultural nature. The three types of centres are:

- *the* maisons de jeunes *or youth centres*. These are structures acting locally and whose premises must be accessible and open. There is no limit on the activities, as long as there is an overall participation of young people;
- *lodging centres*. These must be able to accommodate up to 50 young people and promote learning and encounters;
- *information centres*. The centres assist young people in an open, pluralist way and provide information free of charge.

The decree also recognises the federations of young people's centres. With regard to youth organisations, specific actions linked to certain themes, such as equal opportunities, decentralisation or developing creativity, benefit from specific financing. Here as well policies are defined in consultation with the sector through the intermediary of a consulting committee and sub-committees.

The two major focal points of the institutional framework of youth work in the French-speaking community are therefore youth organisations and centres for young people. But it also encompasses other initiatives and institutions.

Youth projects

Youth projects include the circular *Projets jeunes* (youth projects). Other operations include *Été jeunes* (youth summer) and *Quartier libre* (free neighbourhood). The decree allows for supporting projects that involve young people directly. These are organised around four principles or actions:

- communicate, become informed, live together;
- express oneself, develop one's creativity;
- carry out a collective work and disseminate the results;
- take action and commit oneself.

The Youth Service provides financing for national projects; international projects are financed by an autonomous body in turn co-financed by the French-speaking

community and the European authorities, the Bureau International de la Jeunesse (International youth office). The bureau was originally set up to manage European mobility programmes for young people.

Homework schools

Homework schools also fall under the supervision of the Youth Service and are therefore, from a legal standpoint, at least partially considered as youth work. This might seem strange because normally they should fall under the supervision of education, but the homework school founders, at the end of the1960s, did not want to be dependent upon the school authorities. And they believed that helping with homework had to be combined with socio-cultural activities to be fully effective. This sector is managed jointly with our National Birth and Child Office. The Youth Service deals with associations that organise the regional and community co-ordination of the homework schools. We therefore find ourselves somewhat in the confines of youth work, between education and aid to children.

Training courses

To complete the institutional panorama of youth work in the French-speaking community, I still have to mention the Youth Service supervision of training courses set up by youth organisations for their managers and youth leaders, and courses for youth managers working in holiday centres. This does indeed concern supervision and not organisation of these training courses, because the primary concern is to maintain the plurality of the associative life. Once again, we are operating within the principle of subsidiarity.

➜ Beyond the barriers: toward transversal youth policies

What conclusions can be drawn from this approach to the evolution of the institutional framework of youth work in the French-speaking community of Belgium?

Legislative measures have always tried to respond to the needs of the sector, at its base and from the network of associations. The primary principle that guides the public authorities is to give the associations as broad a freedom as possible. This is explained in particular by the strong connections that join these associations to the political class, all tendencies combined.

When the first youth legislation was voted in right after the war, it was to guarantee this freedom and to prevent totalitarian abuses. When legislators created a framework for youth centres or training initiatives, it was to officialise new practices that were already present in the fabric of associations. At the time of the Belgian division into communities, the idea of permanent education emerged out of the ideas of May 1968 on the transition from a uniform vision of culture to involving everyone in the production of cultural policies. With a few rare exceptions, public authorities adopted legislation that was more reactive than proactive. They adapted themselves to a kind of natural evolution of youth work in our community.

Connected with the sectors, the institutional framework has also been subject to its divisions. Youth work in our regions has always been associated with a non-formal education approach to the development of young people, and therefore fits completely into the cultural policy field.

Social assistance to young people has always experienced a separate destiny. The same is true for policies connected with education. But in numerous cases the objectives, or even the means used, are very similar. Going past these barriers to develop transversal policies that respect the specific features of each one, in order to encourage young people to develop and to assume responsibility in all the areas of their existence, will be the challenge of youth work in the French-speaking community for years to come.

The history of youth work and its influence on youth policy – The perspective of the German-speaking community of Belgium

Xavier Hurlet

→ Youth work before the First World War

Context

The more recent history of the German-speaking community of Belgium dates back to the Vienna Congress, which created a new political situation in 1815. The current East Cantons (the German-speaking community, together with the two Belgian municipalities of Malmedy and Weismes) became part of the Prussian Rhine Province, in which they formed the districts of Eupen-Malmedy within the administrative region of Aachen. This marked the beginning of over 100 years of allegiance to the Kingdom of Prussia (which became part of the German Empire in 1870) that would leave behind deep traces.

One factor that will stay with us on our journey through the history of east Belgium is the Catholicism that is deeply rooted in this rural region, and which has also played an important role in youth work.

Youth work

The history of the districts of Eupen-Malmedy is inseparable from the history

of Prussia. In its current form, youth work originated at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. It was at this time that the first youth movements emerged in the Prussian Rhine Province, which can be divided into two main categories: youth organisation work and youth social organisations. Many people saw the youth movement as a youth liberation movement, which had become as necessary as the liberation movement for women, children and citizens.

At the dawn of the 20th century, there was a series of youth organisations (youth hostels, the Zupfgeigenhansel[1] and, coming from England, the Scout movement, which fell on fertile ground in this region). However, the best-known organisation to emerge from the youth movement was the Wandervögel, which was created in 1901. The aim of this organisation was to give groups of schoolchildren opportunities to enjoy rambling. School pupils and students took advantage of this opportunity to achieve greater independence from their families, schools and the church. The creation of this organisation was not instigated by young people themselves but adults.

While the first youth movements were emerging in Germany, which had youth emancipation as their objective, this was not yet the case in Eupen-Malmedy. The first attempts at youth work in this region did not constitute youth work in the emancipatory sense. In Eupen-Malmedy, youth work was conducted by organisations, which steadily increased in number in the course of the 19th century and were also successful in rural areas such as our region. The first steps in terms of introducing youth work in east Belgium must actually be attributed to the gymnastics clubs. The creation of the St Vith gymnastics club in 1895 should therefore be seen within the context of a wide-scale movement. In Eupen, a gymnastics club had already been created back in 1848. The St Vith gymnastics club was established at the initiative of the National Association for the Improvement of Public Health (Nationalverein zur Hebung der Volksgesundheit) and not therefore at the instigation of the local residents. It was therefore supported and subsidised by the state authorities (in 1914, a gymnasium was built using 14 000 marks allocated by the government in Aachen). Towards the end of the 19th century, the gymnastics clubs founded a youth team and took an interest in youth affairs from this point onwards.

The youth work of the gymnastics club was not limited to gymnastics classes. Particular emphasis was placed on good manners, politeness and readiness to help. In a similar vein, the leaders also offered a medical course to young gymnasts, which would prove useful to many of them when they fought in the war a few years later.

The youth teams of the gymnastics clubs actually adopted the teaching methods of the German politician and educationalist Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, who attached great importance to gymnastics as a part of pre-military youth education. His educational goals targeted the gymnastics movement with an intensely nationalist philosophy, glorifying the German fatherland and Kaiser.

So, before the First World War, some form of youth work existed but this cannot be seen as emancipatory in any way. Youth work represented only one of the many activities of a national sports association and there was no organisation that took care of young people specifically. The youth work conducted by these organisations and initiated by the state was purely integrative.

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1. A young people's songbook widely adopted by the Wandervogel movement.

Xavier Hurlet

➔ **Between the two world wars: the pre-1933 period**

Context

The First World War was followed (after the Vienna Congress) by another change of nationality. The Treaty of Versailles and subsequent referendum, referred to as the *petite farce belge* (little Belgium farce) determined that the region should be merged with Belgium. The Belgian Parliament had planned for an interim regime, intended to facilitate integration of its "rediscovered brothers" into the Belgium state infrastructure. At the head of the *Gouvernement Eupen-Malmedy* stood General Hermann Baltia, who wielded the power of an absolute ruler. The districts of Eupen and Malmedy now became the three cantons of Eupen, Malmedy and St Vith.

This government continued until March 1925. An irredentist movement very rapidly gained momentum after the new cantons were finally integrated. The inter-war period was characterised by a conflict between advocates of revision of the Versailles Treaty and the reintegration of the "new cantons" into the German Reich and those wishing to remain part of the Kingdom of Belgium, which gradually became integrated into the new state.

The population of the East Cantons (particularly in the towns) became extremely polarised during this period. At organisation level, political conflicts arose solely due to the crucial decision as to whether the "organisation should join the German or Belgian umbrella organisation". Without doubt, Germany also played an important part in these conflicts. Following reintegration, a well-disguised network of contacts and links was very rapidly organised between Eupen-Malmedy and the former fatherland (Landwirtschaftlicher Verband, Heimatbund and Christliche Volkspartei).[2] Germany did not intervene directly but worked through organisations such as the National League for Germans Abroad (Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland or VDA), which supported the revisionist movement in Eupen-Malmedy.

Youth work

In the 1920s, youth work continued to develop in the East Cantons and the first youth movements rapidly emerged. Before 1925, that is before the integration of the three cantons into the Belgian state, no obvious politicisation of youth work could be observed. The two gymnastics clubs of Eupen and St Vith were able to continue their work very soon and remained until 1925 the only organised youth movements worth mentioning in east Belgium. In April 1925, one month after reintegration, the first elections took place, which clearly showed that the population had split into two camps made up of pro-Belgian and pro-German followers. Due to the intensive politicisation of society and organisations, it was already possible to divide youth work into two camps in the 1920s.

The above-mentioned gymnastics club in St Vith very rapidly revealed pro-German tendencies, although it still claimed during the "interim phase" (*Gouvernement Baltia*) to be working in consultation with the Belgian authorities, citing as an example its participation at a celebration held in honour of General Baltia in 1923. It can be observed, however, that it very quickly turned its back on the new fatherland in the years following reintegration and only took part in gymnastics

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2. Agricultural Union, Homeland League, Christian People's Party, respectively.

events in Germany. Nor is this in any way surprising, as during this period the gymnastics club was led by a pro-German activist, who would later also become a co-founder of the NSDAP-like Patriotic Front (Heimattreue Front) in the 1930s. Under his leadership, the St Vith gymnastics club joined the German Gymnastics Association (Deutsche Turnerschaft).

The club leaders worked especially hard to recruit young people during this period. The president at that time placed major emphasis on gymnastics for young people. "Competitions" were organised that were primarily aimed at the next generation of gymnasts and also intended to attract school pupils. One interesting detail is that, until the early 1930s, the leading gymnasts in the youth groups came from Germany. The St Vith gymnastics club will be discussed in greater detail below.

A different type of youth work emerged in the second half of the 1920s in the form of the first agricultural youth organisations. Two organisations were established for former agricultural school pupils in 1926. The objectives of these youth social organisations included bringing young people together for further education in all aspects of agriculture, to promote friendship and so forth. While the St Vith organisation cannot be considered a youth organisation, as the school had existed since 1879 and the organisation therefore counted many adults in its ranks, the Eupen organisation, founded only in 1923, can be seen as a youth group.

In this case, it is interesting to observe that the two agricultural schools and therefore both these agricultural youth organisations represented the two contemporary trends. The St Vith Winter School (Winterschule) was dependent on the Agricultural Union in Malmedy, which joined the Rhenish Farmers' Association (Rheinischer Bauernverband) in 1926, while the farmers of Eupen stayed faithful to the Belgian Farmers Federation (Boerenbond). Those responsible for the agricultural winter school in St Vith were predominantly pro-German and would later become leaders or members of the Patriotic Front. While the existing school in Eupen became the property of the Belgian state a few years later, the St Vith agricultural school had the clear objective of bringing pupils over to the German way of thinking.

During the same period (1925), a further youth social organisation was created in the East Cantons in the form of the CAJ or Young Christian Workers (Christliche Arbeiterjugend). At this time, in Kelmis, Chaplain Wenders was looking for a suitable youth organisation for his parish, which was 90% working class. During the early 1920s (1924-25), Belgium counted approximately 350 000 male and 250 000 female young workers, aged between 14 and 25. Most of them were forced to begin work without any preparation in factories, workshops and coal mines immediately after leaving school. Moreover, inhumane conditions predominated in the workplace, especially for young workers. In view of these facts, priests and responsibly-minded lay people appealed to all young people to join an organisation, in order to become strong, oppose these injustices and push for better working conditions. Following the 1924 Youth Congress in Charleroi, the JOC or Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne[3] was founded in Belgium, of which Joseph Cardijn from Brussels was appointed leader. Shortly after, Chaplain Wenders came into contact with Cardijn's ideas and formed the Kelmis JOC in 1925, which joined the Verviers district organisation.

Its main task was to give young workers opportunities to prepare for their subsequent working life before leaving school. Emphasis was also placed on the

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3. Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne (JOC) = Christliche Arbeiterjugend (CAJ).

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importance of Christian trade unions, while moral and material assistance was organised for unemployed young people. This assistance became particularly important during the economic crisis in Europe. In the 1930s and 1940s, many young workers were actually condemned to unemployment and received major support from the CAJ.

During this initial phase of the inter-war period (1925-33), another organisation in Eupen also gained followers: the JEC or Jeunesse Estudiantine Catholique (Young Catholic Students). This youth organisation (category: youth organisation work) originated in inner Belgium at the end of the 1920s. As a "student movement", it organised longer trips abroad for older pupils during the school holidays, as well as retreats, sporting activities and rambles.

The French-speaking youth movement did not last long in the East Cantons. In 1933, the Scout movement emerged in east Belgium at the initiative of JEC members from Eupen, which, of course, joined the Federation of Catholic Scouts of Belgium (Fédération des Scouts Catholiques de Belgique or the FSCB).

We would also like to mention the student movement at the University of Leuven as the last youth organisation of this period. The student movements had revolutionary origins, but the origin of this movement in the German-speaking part of east Belgium was more of a socio-political nature. On 11 December 1926, 10 students from the East Cantons, who were studying at the Catholic university of Leuven, founded the Eumavia Lovaniensis, which was intended as the cultural home of all German-speaking students studying in Leuven. Eumavia had given itself the duty and responsibility of familiarising its members with all cultural, political and social aspects of life, particularly problems in the Belgian East Cantons, and contributing to the self-awareness of this developing society. The German subversion networks very rapidly put out feelers and by 1933 Eumavia was financed from Germany.

➜ Between the two world wars: the 1933-40 period – Youth as an ideological instrument

Context

Political changes in Germany also led to the radicalisation of existing ideological conflicts in the new part of the Belgian state. When the revisionist Christian People's Party disbanded in 1936, to be replaced by the Patriotic Front, the polarisation of the different camps was complete and political dialogue was no longer possible. While the vast majority of this new party remained committed to Catholicism, it was not able to prevent the party leadership and leaders or "patriotic" (*heimattreu*) organisations becoming increasingly caught up in the whirlpool of national socialism, which also manifested itself in the financial support of these organisation by the German authorities. The convinced national socialists of the Patriotic Front formed undercover organisations, which had a structure similar to that of the Sturmabteilung (Nazi stormtroopers or SA). The church frequently intervened by banning people from voting for the regional Christian People's Party, condemning excessive nationalism, racist ideology and so forth. The Belgian state also attempted to intervene. After a few tentative initial measures against pro-German activists, in 1934 the denaturalisation law was passed (which was only applied once) and organisations based in the East Cantons were categorised as "anti-national". However, these and other measures only served to harden the political fronts.

After the invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939, a new phase of political conflict began in Eupen-Malmedy. While members of the Patriotic Front expected to be rapidly "returned" to the German Reich, pro-Belgian circles hoped that Germany would respect Belgium's neutrality. The political conflicts in the "new cantons" came to a sudden end when German troops violated Belgian neutrality on 10 May 1940. The East Cantons were then annexed by the German Reich.

Youth work

Youth work played a very important role in the 1930s. The two camps (pro-Belgian and pro-German), which had emerged before 1933, continued to radicalise during this period, due to social development and the intensification of political conflicts. Young people were certainly used as a tool by the two opposing ideologies.

The "patriotic" movement soon realised that, of all generations, young people could be the most easily fanaticised and therefore placed special emphasis on youth work.

Most schools, except for the above-mentioned winter school, were integrated into the Belgian state or church structures and were therefore difficult for the German authorities to reach. For these reasons, youth work became even more significant.

Until 1933 there was no German nationalist youth movement in Eupen-Malmedy. Actual Hitler youth groups (Hitlerjugend) were apparently frowned upon by German youth leaders. However, 21 national socialist youth groups emerged between 1934 and 1936. But the ring-leaders preferred to go undercover. In this way, the youth group of the St Vith gymnastics club (which was considered an anti-nationalist organisation by the Belgian authorities in 1934) quickly developed into an imitation of the Hitler youth groups. In the years 1934-36, the Patriotic Youth Movement (heimattreue Jugendbewegung) increased from 120 to 500 members. By 1938, there were 650 members, including 200 girls. During this period, work with the Young Girls Organisation (Jungmädel) was certainly of a political nature in the Eifel region. The falseness of this exercise was also apparent in this context – while the Nazis initiated new social experiments in the reactionary clerical province of Eupen-Malmedy, the concept of the "new" was firmly embedded in the Nazi context. The integration of youth movements into the Patriotic Front was completed during the years 1936-37.

Annual holidays in Germany provided free of charge since 1928 and which were allocated by the regional associations (Landsmannschaften), were the highlight of the year. Together with unforgettable camping trips to the Baltic or the Alps, games and songs, the children were taught national socialist "values". As a rule, 200 young people were invited on these trips.

Students were also provided with assistance. They and their families were considered to be German in character and in need. This involved selected young people, whose education was classified as extremely important and in Germany's interests. The German sponsors and leaders expected their charges not only to be grateful, but also to work for the German cause, which included working as an agent or informer.

Founded in 1933, the Catholic Scout organisation was intended to "correct" the influence of nationalist youth organisations on the young people of Eupen-Malmedy.

Moreover, the clergy and high-ranking Belgian officials attended its fifth anniversary celebrations in 1938. It was in the interests of the Belgian camp in Eupen-Malmedy to have a strong youth movement, which could oppose the German camp and its youth organisations in terms of youth work. For this reason the Verviers Scout pack was nominated to help the developing Scout movements in the new cantons to become more independent. This led to the creation of the Scout district of Eupen-Malmedy-St Vith (EMV) in 1937. The corrective role of the Scout movement against the national socialist influence on young people was reinforced by the Catholic youth groups (Jungscharen) set up in many parts of Eupen-Malmedy. These youth groups were intended, in particular, to introduce young students to Catholic philosophy and ethics.

The two camps (pro-Belgian and pro-German) conducted real trench warfare in terms of youth work (supported by state authorities) and used a range of effective methods of advertising or propaganda. As well as many events, the media were used with great consistency by the Scouts, including radio plays, films and, above all, the *Feuriger Adler* Scout magazine.

Scouts were recruited predominantly from grammar schools, while the Hitler youth groups targeted the lower social classes. Although the National League for Germans Abroad initially considered the Scouting community to be limited to the relatively small proportion of non-primary school pupils, it was later unsettled by the number of members under pro-Belgian, clerical leadership. Apparently, the same could not be said of the Patriotic Front, which struggled to cope with the fact that the spiritual and cultural work of the state/Catholic education was being completed politically and philosophically by the Belgian scout organisation.

With the invasion of German troops on 10 May 1940 and the subsequent annexation of Eupen-Malmedy, all the pro-German youth organisations joined the Hitler youth groups. The Scout movement and CAJ were forbidden.

But, despite the ban, the Scout movement never ceased to exist during Nazi Occupation. Illegal Scouting events even took place after autumn 1940. The CAJ also held secret meetings in cellars. However, there was no evidence of tangible or material resistance.

➜ The post-war period

Context

Eupen-Malmedy was liberated on 11 September 1944. However, it would be difficult for the east Belgians to return to normal everyday life. The euphoria of liberation had not made the "Old Belgians" forget that many inhabitants of Eupen-Malmedy had been "disloyal" to the Belgian state during the interwar period. This led to a relentless purge, many of the consequences of which remain tangible to this day. The major problem facing the population of the East Cantons during this cleansing was the failure to differentiate between occupied and annexed Belgium.

The number of people convicted in the East Cantons was far greater than the national average. Whole sections of the population were affected by the cleansing. The political activities of 25% of the total population during the war were investigated. While only 10% of those investigated were taken to court, with 1 503 people ultimately convicted, at 2.41% the percentage of people convicted was four times that for the rest of Belgium.

The government was convinced that a decisive policy was necessary during the interim and readjustment phase, in order to nip any anti-Belgian movements in the bud. The district commissioner responsible for the East Cantons called for assimilation measures. Together with education, out-of-school education was intended to represent the second pillar of cultural assimilation. The last remnants of German culture had to disappear. The specific promotion of the French language in the education system was seen as the cornerstone of this national policy.

Youth work

The Nazi period came to an end in Eupen on 11 September 1944 when American troops marched through the town. On the very next day a dozen Scouts offered their services to the town administration. After some initial hesitation on the part of the United States civil affairs officer, the boys ran errands, helped the Red Cross and made themselves useful wherever they could.

The CAJ, which was reformed in 1946, also rapidly became involved after the war. A new CAJ group was also formed in Eupen and St Vith.

These were the only two youth movements active in the East Cantons during the early post-war years. During this period of "normalisation" of conditions, many things had to be rebuilt, including youth work. The dualism (pro-Belgian/pro-German) of the inter-war period had disappeared and the two categories of youth organisation work and youth social organisations re-emerged in the form of the Scouts and the CAJ.

New youth movements, organisations and even new forms of youth work come into being during the 20 years that followed the war. This laid the foundation on which youth work still rests in the German-speaking community of Belgium.

In terms of youth work, the assimilation policy implemented by the Belgian state directly led to the two youth organisations (Scouts and the CAJ) being very closely monitored by the Belgian organisations. They received the guidelines, on which the CAJ was based, from Brussels and Verviers.

As far as the Scouts were concerned, the Eupen units were now amalgamated with the Verviers district at the decision of the Brussels office. The Scout district of Eupen-Malmedy-St Vith (EMV) created in 1937 no longer existed.

For over a decade, a policy of abstinence predominated in the East Cantons, due to the events of the inter-war period, which had left behind a very difficult legacy. People never wanted to belong to a partisan organisation again. The only initiatives to be successful in our region were those of the church and clergy, which also applied to youth work.

These were the origins of the youth organisations formed in the 1950s at the initiative of a number of priests. Their allegiance to a particular national organisation was also determined by the relationships or inclinations of the founder priest. By the start of 1954, young priests had worked out a plan, which aimed to recruit young people from the church districts of Eupen, Malmedy and St Vith to the Flemish rural youth movement (Flämische Landjugend), formerly known as the Boerenjeugdbond – BJB Leuven. The KLJ or Catholic rural youth organisation (Katholische Landjugend) was born in east Belgium. The Flemish rural youth movement, organised as part of the Belgian Farmers Federation (Boerenbond), had been

recognised for over 30 years by the bishops of Belgium as a youth organisation of Catholic Action.

The 1950s marked a period, during which many youth organisations were created, including the youth social organisation KLJ and Patrojugend. Chiro was also founded in the St Vith area. This youth movement appealed mainly to pupils and students.

These three youth groups were structured along very similar lines, governed by a president, whose role was to provide spiritual guidance, and based on a very hierarchical structure (leader, main leader, etc.).

With the creation in Eupen of the first youth club in 1959, a new type of youth work emerged in east Belgium in the form of "open" youth work. The youth clubs provided a meeting place for the many young people that did not belong to any organisation. The "open club" fulfilled the need for freedom, self-determination and experimentation. This created the extensive need to cope with everyday problems, identify/apply the necessary strategies and find oneself. The open youth club was for all young people, but its aim was to reach young people from the lower classes through new forms of youth work. Youth clubs were not subject to any national structure and had no pre-ordained activities. Self-administration represented the most radical departure from the old youth work structures. It aimed to develop a sense of responsibility, imagination and, above all, active social learning opportunities. With open youth work, and also in youth clubs, self-administration was a very important concept, as, in contrast to other youth organisations where adults in a distant office decided what should happen, visitors apparently did not wish to be told what to do in terms of activities and how the club was organised.

Once again, the creation of youth clubs in this region was closely linked to the church. Even if the church no longer intervened, in most cases it came forward as a sponsor when the youth clubs were created and open youth work was often the result of organisation work by the KLJ.

The 1960s were marked by a major breakthrough in various aspects of youth work. It became clear that the role of priests in the KLJ became less significant generally and in village groups, for example, when it came to stimuli. With the gradual withdrawal of presidents, the leaders assumed more responsibility, including, for example, for organising further training for leaders.

➜ From 1963: the German-speaking community of Belgium

Context

During this period, major state reforms will decisively change political factors and Belgium will complete its process of federalisation. As a result of the language legislation of 1963, Belgium was divided into three language communities. In terms of culture, however, the German language community was still dependent on the Belgium Ministry of Culture. Since 1961, this ministry had been divided into two wings for French and Dutch culture.[4] Each of the two wings had its own minister for culture, so that two ministers for culture were working for one ministry.

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4. In 1961 the Ministère de l'Éducation nationale et de la Culture was reorganised in Belgium, which included linguistically dividing the culture department up to ministerial level. From this point onwards, there were two ministers for culture.

The two wings of the ministry of culture both had a German-speaking department, which was responsible for cultural activities in the German-speaking region. From 1968 these two departments became a single administrative department shared by the two wings of the ministry, which were known as the Cultural Office for the German Language Area (Kulturamt für das Gebiet deutscher Sprache). The first state reform (1968-71) enabled the creation of the three language communities. The Ministry of Culture, in which French and Dutch culture had been separate since the beginning of the 1960s, now became two ministries of culture (Ministry for French Culture and the Ministry for Dutch Culture).

The state reform would also lead to major changes in the German-speaking region with the creation of the Cultural Office for the German Language Area (Rat der deutschen Kulturgemeinschaft). For the existing German cultural community, however, this only meant a "degree" of cultural autonomy as, in contrast to the two other councils (of the French and Dutch cultural communities), the cultural office only had limited non-legislative powers. Its primary function was consultative, together with the power to determine its budget and criteria for the subsidisation of cultural activities (including youth organisations).

It was only with the second major state reform (1980-83) that the community gained the power to issue decrees for cultural affairs (and person-related affairs). The German Cultural Community now became the German-speaking community of Belgium.

The third state reform (1988-90) transferred powers to the communities in terms of education. The recognition of the German-speaking community has been reinforced since the 1990s and its autonomy has been extended with the transfer of regional powers.

Youth work

In the 1960s, the KLJ was not only the largest youth organisation in terms of numbers, but it was also the only group to form a German-speaking regional organisation with a regional office in Eupen. Due to the financial support of the Belgian Farmers Federation, this organisation was able to work with three full-time employees, including a president, who was responsible for spiritual leadership and adult education, and managers of the girls' and boys' sections.

In terms of working class districts, there were CAJ groups in Kelmis, Eupen and St Vith. The restriction of the JOC-CAJ to the three above-mentioned larger municipalities was more or less based on a decision of the Bishop of Liège, which was intended to prevent any competition between the two youth organisations, KLJ and CAJ.

These two organisations also expressly targeted young adults. Other organisations worked more with children, who were once again divided according to gender: Scouts in Eupen and Raeren, Patro in Kelmis and Eupen, Chiro in St Vith.

These groups were affiliated to French-speaking (Patro) and Flemish (Chiro) organisations.

Until 1967, these youth organisations were fully dependent on funding from national movements or organisations. This changed in the course of year with the intervention of the Ministry of Culture. From 1967, it was possible for the German-speaking

department of the Ministry of Culture to fund youth leader training. These subsidies were initially aimed only at training for young adults. This intervention of the Ministry of Culture marked the origins of youth policy in German-speaking Belgium.

The end of the 1960s, however, witnessed a breakthrough for youth work in several respects. This period also saw the emergence of problems within the German-speaking youth organisations, all of which were language-related, including funding for the necessary translations, youth leader training in German and representation for German-speaking young people on the National Youth Council, on which only the major "national" Flemish and French-speaking organisations were represented.

The two responsible ministers of culture, who were aware of the issues, subsequently decided to expressly extend and significantly increase the national education subsidies budget to youth organisations. From 1969, all recognised youth organisations were therefore financially supported, without this being limited to training for young adults. Due to the subsidies from the ministries of culture, the youth organisations gradually distanced themselves from the national movements (Belgian Farmers Federation, etc.).

On the other hand, in 1970, the Cultural Office for the German Language Area (Kulturamt für das Gebiet deutscher Sprache) pushed for the creation of an autonomous German-speaking youth council and its representation on the national council alongside the two other language communities and not through the French-speaking council. The course was set for these changes, but it took until October 1976 for the first official youth council (presided over by the Minister-President of the German-speaking community of Belgium, K. H. Lambertz) to be formally inaugurated by the two responsible ministers of culture.

When the Council of the German Cultural Community (Rat der deutschen Kulturgemeinschaft) was created in 1973, it was intended that it would gradually assume both cultural and general responsibility for youth policy. These responsibilities were gradually transferred from the ministries of French and Dutch culture to the Council of the German Cultural Community. The Cultural Office for the German Language Area continued to exist during this period (1973-83) and was responsible for funding youth organisations. Youth organisations could only obtain the necessary subsidies following an assessment by this body, which monitored its annual reports and activities. When the community subsequently gained cultural autonomy in 1983, it was possible to build on the work of predecessors in the field of youth work. In the year 1983 the existing "official German-speaking Youth Council" became by Royal enactment of 30.12.1983 the "Rat der deutschsprachigen Jugend" (RdJ).

Since the first financial interventions of the Ministry of Culture (1967) the role of politics in youth work has become increasingly important. The creation of the German-speaking Youth Council must be seen in this context: The ministry's objective (even before 1973) was not only to subsidise young people, but also to actively involve them in youth policy.

Through the German-speaking Youth Council, on which representatives of all recognised youth organisations, centres and parties sit, young people can contribute to the decisions and measures that affect them. In order to sum up the responsibilities of this government advisory body, it is sufficient to focus on the following factors: giving a voice to German-speaking young people, co-ordinating youth

work and enabling our young people to communicate with other young people in this country and abroad. The German-speaking Youth Council was therefore an advisory body, which was appointed jointly in 1976 by the minister for Flemish culture and the minister for French culture. In order to extend its sphere of activity and improve its efficiency, it was soon realised that staff would have to be employed and that subsidies were required. For this purpose, a non-profit organisation was formed at the behest of the German-speaking Youth Council. This organisation was created in 1977 under the name Information and Advice Service for German-speaking Young People (Informations- und Beratungsdienst für die deutschsprachige Jugend) and exclusively followed instructions from the German-speaking Youth Council. Its responsibilities included the preparation and implementation of youth council decisions.

Over the years, this non-profit organisation, whose board was made up entirely of members of the German-speaking Youth Council governing board, was also entrusted with other tasks in the field of youth work (since the 1980s, for example, the Jugend für Europa was jointly administered by the non-profit organisation), so that the governing board had to deal increasingly with other issues, in addition to its role as a youth policy committee.

➜ The current situation

Since the 1980s, the German-speaking community of Belgium has therefore been legally and financially responsible for youth policy. It currently relies on three bodies: the ministry (Department of Cultural Affairs), the German-speaking Youth Council and the Youth Office in order to support three types of recognised organisations (8 youth organisations, a total of 19 open youth clubs and 3 youth services).

At the end of the 1990s, Georges Vallée (in Vroomen, 1999: 29) wrote:

> As a politician, you often ask yourself which youth policy you should implement in order to fulfil the expectations of both young people and society. The organisations are usually granted some or other subsidy in this field. In return, in order to cultivate good relationships with the authorities, they take part in various communication campaigns (road safety, racism, Aids prevention, building Europe, etc.), which characterise the current period. This commitment, however, bears witness more to budget priorities than true understanding of the needs of young people nowadays. The same also applies to the German-speaking community.

This quotation must be seen in the context of the developments of the last 10 years, for there have been many changes affecting youth policy and other circumstances. Youth policy is now more efficient and the influence of youth work is clearly more tangible.

This development of youth policy has undergone a decisive transformation. The Information and Advisory Service for German-speaking Young People (Informations- und Beratungsdienst der deutschsprachigen Jugend) whose original task was to administer the affairs of the German-speaking Youth Council, steadily broadened its scope of responsibility during the 1980s and 1990s. By the end of the 1990s, the situation had developed to the extent that the governing board of the German-speaking Youth Council was responsible for two tasks: its actual role as an advisory body and the affairs of the non-profit organisation (which was not essentially the responsibility of the youth council). The leaders of the youth council spent valuable time on administration so that its role as a youth policy committee was neglected.

In order to restore the balance and fulfil its proper role again, the decision was made to restructure the non-profit organisation and give the youth council greater scope in its actual role as an advisory body.

In 2000, the existing non-profit organisation was renamed the Youth Office of the German-speaking community (Jugendbüro der Deutschsprachigen Gemeinschaft) and basic restructuring was implemented. The administrative board of the non-profit organisation would henceforth be composed of representatives of the governing board of the German-speaking Youth Council, together with representatives from the government and ministry.

This integration of the government and ministry within the administrative board of the Youth Office clearly demonstrated the opening-up of youth policy managers. This enabled close co-operation between the German-speaking Youth Council, the Youth Office, government and the ministry. Youth policy managers in the German-speaking community thus gained an insight and direct link to youth work in the field. The various bodies complement each other in terms of youth work; due to their insight into the field, and the government and ministry are no longer like distant institutions.

Since 2000, this structural change and the resulting improved co-operation between bodies has led to more significant changes, while youth policy has prompted the implementation of a wide range of initiatives and is far more active in its support of youth work.

Open youth work has been strongly promoted. The Youth Office has set itself the objective of developing youth work in local communities and supporting community leaders with the planning of youth work. This led to the development of a new "performance mandate" concept in 2001. This enables the Youth Office, with the support of the German-speaking community and the relevant municipalities, to provide extensive open youth work in these districts and offer as many young people as possible a point of contact for a wide range of problems. The Youth Office has signed performance mandates with the government and four municipalities so far, which are valid for a period of two to three years, before being evaluated and developed by representatives of the government, the ministry, municipality, youth facilities and the Youth Office. These performance mandates have made it possible to create meeting places and opportunities for young people, as well providing a youth worker to act as a point of contact.

In the field of open youth work, the concept of street work was also introduced in the German-speaking community a few years ago. Young people talk to street workers on the streets or are contacted by them in order to discuss a wide range of issues, such as school problems, seeking employment, accommodation and so forth. The street worker's objective is to extend young people's decision-making skills, develop new life perspectives, promote tolerance and help develop self-confidence, self-esteem and personal skills.

Since 2008, youth counselling has been available in municipalities where street work was less successful. This youth counselling emphasises case work and prevention. In order to take advantage of it, young people themselves have to contact the youth counsellor.

The youth sector consultations conducted in 2005 and 2006, which gave rise to the Prima recommendations for youth policy in the German-speaking community,

provide further evidence that current youth policy seeks and has achieved very close links with youth work. The consultations, which involved both young people and youth workers, were initiated by the Ministry of the German-speaking community and the government. Their objective was to identify issues affecting young people in all fields. The current youth policy of the German-speaking community is based on these Prima recommendations.

This underlines the involvement of young people and particularly youth work in youth policy. Young people have the opportunity to influence their immediate environment and everyday life.

➜ Conclusions

The history of this small strip of land, now known as the German-speaking community of Belgium, has been very eventful and particularly so in the 20th century; not least because this region changed nationality three times within 25 years – due to the geopolitical conflicts of the early 20th century. In this context, youth work, which is of particular interest to us here, was also affected by rapid development and a wide range of influences.

After tentative initiatives at the turn of the 19th century, youth work became increasingly successful in the 1920s. The current conditions in east Belgium (the region was ceded by Germany to Belgium in 1920) explains the interest shown by both Germany and Belgium in the young people of Eupen-Malmedy. In the 1930s, youth work very rapidly became an instrument of German subversion or Belgian "corrective measures" and each "camp" attempted to interest and subsequently fanaticise young people.

After the Second World War, youth work in east Belgium continued to be an instrument, in this case for the assimilation policy. Belgium did not wish to repeat the mistakes made after the First World War and aimed to integrate the population – and therefore also the youth – as effectively as possible. The youth organisations and associations were subject to Belgian national movements, which also took care of their financial affairs.

The first intervention of the Belgian state affecting youth work in east Belgium dates back to 1967, when youth leader training was first granted financial support by the Ministry of Culture. These subsidies increased over the years, which enabled youth organisations to become increasingly autonomous and distance themselves from the national movements.

The year 1967 therefore marked the advent of youth policy in east Belgium. With the creation of the youth council in the mid-1970s, young people were involved in politics for the first time. As an advisory body, the youth council had a certain influence on the decisions of the Cultural Office for the German Language Area.

In the course of time and political changes (cultural independence in 1983 and subsequent developments), co-operation between youth work and youth policy increased steadily. The opinion of the German-speaking Youth Council became increasingly important (nowadays, it must produce a report in order for decrees to be passed). Due to this improved co-operation, the mutual involvement and influence of youth policy on youth work increased and vice versa.

Xavier Hurlet

The development of youth policy since 2000 clearly indicates that policy is made for young people and brought closer to them (close partnership between the government and ministry, the youth office and municipalities in the field of open youth work). It also shows clearly that the policy also originates from young people and youth work. Current youth policy is based on a programme, which is based on consultations with young people. In this way, a place and framework is defined with young people in the German-speaking community, in which youth can develop.

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➜ Interviews

› Irene Engel (Director of the Jugendbüro)
› Firmin Pauquet (Inspector, Ministry of the German-speaking community, retired)

Youth policy in the Dutch-speaking community of Belgium

Johan Van Gaens[1]

Since the constitutional changes of 1970, the Belgian Government is no longer responsible for youth policy. This competence was allocated to the newly created "cultural communities". This essay will, however, focus on continuity and change: from a Belgian youth policy, up to the end of the 1960s, to Flemish youth policy.

➜ The conception of a youth policy

People always worry about "today's youth". After the Second World War they had every reason to worry. In Belgium juvenile delinquency had risen just as it had in a number of other countries such as France (Vanlandschoot, 2008). War and the Occupation had left their mark on society. Pre-war values no longer applied. And then of course there was poverty, especially during that first winter after the liberation of Belgium.

Liberation was perceived by some as a return to former times, while others hoped for a complete change of society.

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1. The views that are expressed in this essay are not necessarily the views of the Flemish Ministry for Culture, Youth, Sports and Media.

But there was an (almost) shared feeling of disgust at what had happened. But one could not be naive. Four years of Nazi-Occupation meant that (young) people were – to a certain degree – infected by four years of Nazi socialisation. There was also disappointment over those who had collaborated with the enemy: a challenge to every concept of good citizenship. And of course there were the memories of how one of the most important leaders of the collaborating political parties, Leon Degrelle, had come to public attention by criticising the gerontocracy of the political leaders during the pre-war years.

In October 1944 the Ministry of Education organised a meeting to advise the minister on a new youth policy (Vos, 1991: 451), which would ultimately result in creation of the first National Youth Council (11 December 1945). The minister for education wanted to promote good citizenship. He wanted to bring young people into contact with the illustrious past of the country. This did not prove to be very successful.

"When Mr. De Lavaleye was Minister for Education, he wanted to create a Youth Parliament, aimed at getting youth organisations into contact with each other. This was undermined by the sectarianism of some." The author of these words was the then 23-year-old Herman Vanderpoorten (1946: 3-6), who would become a top liberal politician. He deplored the lack of co-operation amongst the youth organisations.

> Although all spokespersons of the youth organisations declare they only have the public interest and the future of the country at heart, we have been able to ascertain that young people are sent out into the streets for or against matters they do not understand. In this way the youth organisations are antagonised, hatred is being cultivated and those who are responsible proclaim charity and fraternity as the highest human virtues.

In this way the Catholic youth organisations got a lashing.

Party political differences would always have a major influence on youth policy and on the youth council up to the 1990s. Between October 1944 and December 1945 the Christian-Democratic Party had left the government of national unity, which was established just after the Occupation had ended. As the above-mentioned quotation indicates, the Catholic youth organisations were accused of putting the interests of their political alliances above the interests of youth.

But there was another reading of what had happened. On 6 April 1945 the National Youth Administration was founded. This created distrust among the representatives of Catholic youth organisations, because it coincided with declarations of intent about creating a government-led form of Scouting. The Catholic youth organisations wanted their freedom, but with financial support by the government (Vos, 1991: 459). For whatever reason, the newly created youth policy got off to a false start.

Belgian political conflicts traditionally have to do with three fault lines that cut through Belgian society: the social, linguistic and ideological divides. Initially the liberal Belgian Constitution of 1831 created opportunities that were seized by the Catholic Church to found and control a network of organisations that guided Catholic citizens from cradle to grave. Other ideological groups formed their own networks, but these were less successful in terms of membership or clients, and they were active in a smaller number of sectors of social life. Sociologists have

opted for the term "pillarisation" to describe this form of compartmentalisation along socio-political lines.

Pillars organise society along the chosen lines of isolation of those citizens that adhere to the same ideology. The government is expected to fund the pillarised institutions and organisations (schools, health insurance, hospitals, youth, sports and other organisations), but not play an active role itself. So even when funding them the government should restrain from interfering with the organisations. According to the Dutch sociologist Van Doorn, the pillarised organisations want to be "master of the house, but the house is at the expenses of the community" (cit. Huyse, 2003: 122).

This meant that there were Catholic Boy Scouts and Girl Guides organisations and neutral or pluralistic Scouts and Guides.

The social-economic and linguistic divisions were as important when it came to creating an identity for young people. Next to a Belgian youth hostel federation there would also be a Flemish and a Walloon organisation. And when you were a young Catholic boy or girl, you had a choice: Kristene Arbeidersjeugd (Young Christian Workers), Katholieke Burger en Middenstandsjeugd (Young Catholics of the Middle Classes) or Boerenjeugdbond (Young Farmers), or rather you where supposed to choose the organisation according to your social status or – more likely – that of your parents.

And of course in the centre of all this was the discussion on the role of government when it came to education. Here Catholics (or might one say: clericalists) on the one hand, and socialists (or social-democrats) and liberals on the other, fought a long and bitter battle. Both parties seemed to agree on the principle of separation of church and state, but not on where the frontier was to be drawn. For the church, a good Christian could only be raised in a Christian environment. The liberal Belgian Constitution was a chance to develop its own institutions whereas Catholics were guided by the clergy from cradle to grave.

Liberals and socialists were critical of the church-controlled schools. They wanted the government to play an active role in education. Catholics saw just one role for the government: funding the schools, without interfering in their pedagogical projects. Obviously the Christian-Democratic Party was reluctant to give the state a major role in youth policy, except as the financier of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

➜ A new start

On 12 June 1956 a new attempt was made to create a youth policy: a new start for the National Youth Service (government administration), for the Youth Council and a new but completely unsuccessful Interdepartmental Commission for Youth Affairs (Declerck, 1968: 285). The Youth Council could advise all cabinet ministers on youth affairs. It counted four experts on youth among its members. The other members were the leaders of the major youth organisations, representing all representative ideologies. The Youth Service had to:

• support the National Youth Council and the Interdepartmental Commission for Youth;
• function as a go-between youth organisations and the government, and between the various youth organisations;

- support voluntary youth organisations;
- help schools in organising extracurricular activities;
- focus on the training of youth leaders;
- support schools with extracurricular activities;
- found or support local communities or voluntary organisations in founding cultural houses, training centres and so forth;
- organise national and international conferences, educational exhibitions and so forth, and set up "youth libraries", information and documentation centres and publish magazines on youth.

But the National Youth Service was too understaffed to take up all of these assignments. The Van Acker government, in office between 1954 and 1958, was the last to rule without the Christian-Democratic Party (or parties), until 1999. Its ideas about the role of government in education were radically different from those of the Christian-Democratic Party. So after the Christian-Democratic Party gradually made its way back into government, "youth policy" was reduced to subsidising youth organisations.

In those early days, government focused in particular on training leaders of youth organisations. In the words of Leo Collard (1957: 357), Minister for Education: "The task of the youth organisations is to train the future leaders of the country in the spirit of civic duties".[2]

The pillarised youth organisations were there to create new generations of political leaders, and trade union officials, among others, and it worked. Of the Dutch-speaking members of the National Youth Council at the end of the 1960s, five became cabinet ministers of the Belgian or Flemish governments, and two of these, Wilfried Martens and Jean-Luc Dehaene, went on to become prime ministers.

Financial support was scarce in the early days of the National Youth Service. There was some financial support for non-local youth organisations, but means were scarce. One of the main reasons for this was that the youth organisations that were consulted could not reach a compromise on the rules that would apply (Totté, 1962: 133).

➜ New types of youth work

At the beginning of the 1960s the government provided the means to support local organisations. After the Second World War, the creativity movement had given rise to new ideas about artistry and pedagogy. The creative process itself came into prominence. This coincided with certain artistic developments (the Cobra movement, Abstract Expressionism and so forth) (Elias, 2001: 62-63). It encouraged the development of (creative) youth workshops (*jeugdateliers*). And while the official music education was provided by certain schools and funded by the education department, an alternative form of music education, routed in the music pedagogy of Carl Orff, was financed by the National Youth Service.

In the 1950s, concerns about new developments in youth culture gave rise to new methods of youth work. Compared to the youth movements, youth houses were less demanding of their target group. Their profile was closer to popular youth culture and to the new consumer culture that really took off during the 1950s.

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2. See also Marcel Haazen (1962: 95): "the youth movement, in the first place, meant something for its leaders".

Johan Van Gaens

Not long after the war the National Youth Council stated: "The youth movement is the most perfect form of youth organisation" (Nationale Raad voor de Jeugd, s.d.). But what about all those young people who did not feel attracted to a youth movement culture? The youth houses seemed to have some of the answers. They were of course seen by some to be second rate since they demanded less of their members. The whole thing was a kind of compromise: give in to certain aspects of modernism, or you are going to lose your audience.

After the Second World War and until the end of the 1950s birth rates were high. They dropped in the 1960s and 1970s. At the same time migrant workers of mainly Turkish or Moroccan descent came to Belgium and raised families. In certain areas demography changed rapidly. Socially mobile workers left their neighbourhoods for a house in the suburbs. Migrant workers moved into their former houses.

As neighbourhoods changed so did neighbourhood-related youth work. At the end of the 1970s a new category of youth work was funded by the government: youth work for deprived youngsters, which aimed more at the problems the target group had to cope with. Professionalism was on the rise. The youth movement had rapidly lost its monopoly. Officially however, support to many of the new organisations was given only because they were supposed to be a kind of stepping stone to the (traditional) youth movement.

➜ 1968

The historian Louis Vos (1991: 159-160) summed up the effects of what has come to be known as "1968":

> In Belgian society, 1968 came to signify a shift in mentality that included four aspects. The most crucial consequence was the waning of the unquestioning acceptance of authority. Second, a mental depilarisation delegitimised the ideology of the pilarised social organisations. Third, there was an increase in grassroots action groups and new social movements dealing with various social issues. Finally, and perhaps most lasting, the "spirit of 1968" was the generation of those who participated in the movement, and it deeply affected their later role in society.

The problems that were voiced by young people did not lead to any direct changes in youth policy. Youth policy was not proactive; young people's needs were never at the heart of it unless they were voiced by the organisations, and the sole instrument youth policy officers had was subsidising youth organisations. New social challenges were not to be recognised unless an NGO put forward a claim on government benefits to support its work.

The increase of grass-roots action groups, founded mainly by young people, gave rise to a number of new forms of youth work, such as youth information centres, youth advisory centres and experimental youth work.

The Flemish Government also took up supporting "youth centres for social change". They were supposed to "have a critical view on the contemporary neo-capitalist system, which they question radically". This comes from an official government text that was approved by a Flemish Christian-democratic minister in the 1970s. How times change.

The "mental depillarisation" not only gave rise to new organisations outside the pillars, but also had an effect on various pillarised organisations. They loosened their ties, although most of them stayed within the boundaries of the pillar.[3]

Being outside the pillar had its consequences. Youth organisations emancipated themselves from their parental institutions (church, trade union, political party and so forth) and by doing so became less attractive as a recruitment pool for the future leaders of the country. Only one member of the Dutch-speaking Youth Council at the end of the 1970s would become a cabinet minister.

The creation of a Catholic, socialist, liberal, elite was no longer the domain of youth organisations. And of course the anti-elitist ideas of that time enforced this. And then there was the professionalisation of the pillarised institutions, made possible by increased welfare, increased schooling, and the employment creation programmes of the 1970s and 1980s. Whereas quite an important number of the political and trade union leaders from the past had acquired their competencies outside the formal school system, the democratisation of the educational system had made this kind of implicit recognition of non-formal education obsolete.

➜ Youth policy as cultural policy

The student uprising of the 1960s was instrumental in the creation of new governmental structures: the "cultural communities". The Dutch-speaking community (aka the Flemish Community) could form its own cultural policy. And cultural policy according to the changed constitution did include youth policy, but not formal education or social affairs.

Once, the term *cultuur* (culture) used to be synonymous with the term *beschaving* (civilisation), and thus stood for the best a nation could produce. Therefore by definition it was elitist. Under the influence of American social scientists the word took on a more neutral meaning. This was enforced by the younger generation that had grown up after the war and which was less inclined to criticise the consumer culture of the post-war era. The welfare state as well made a broader definition of "culture" possible and even encouraged it. Internationally this development was stimulated by the United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) (Aerts, 2002).

"Youth policy" was defined as policy towards all forms of education outside the formal school system and constitutional changes had severed it from educational or social policy, which were at that time still within the framework of the national Belgian Government.

The division between Catholics and non-Catholics was to a certain extent also a geographical division. In the north (Dutch-speaking community) Catholics formed the majority, and in the south (French-speaking community) non-Catholics formed the majority. In this divided society the minorities feared majority rule within the newly created "cultural communities". Therefore a political agreement among the major political parties aimed at the protection of "cultural minorities". In practice this agreement institutionalised the role of the pillars, while at the same time their fundamentals were eroding because of growing individualism and globalisation.

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3. An interesting example is presented by Karlien Brysbaert (1989). She shows how the youth organisation Jong Davidsfonds was eliminated by the organisation Davidsfonds in an attempt to protect the pillar.

➜ Some characteristics of youth policy

Attempts to create a youth policy that went beyond the subsidisation of youth organisations were numerous but not fruitful. The role of government was more and more restricted to subsidising youth organisations, but without interfering in content or methods. It is interesting to compare this with the change in policy in other "cultural" matters, such as sports. In the 1970s cultural policies were mainly aimed at the participation of the whole of the population: encouraging people to take up sports, read, visit museums and so forth. The idea was taking hold that while NGOs could play an important role in a participation policy, there would always be a large number of people that could not be reached through the NGOs. And this led the government to use other instruments for implementing its policy to complement its support of the NGOs. But in Flemish youth policy this was not an issue. Participation policies went only as far as "participation in the activities of youth organisations". Not young people but the organisations were at the heart of Flemish youth policy. And therefore youth problems or changes in youth culture were not really an issue. They only became an issue when taken up by NGOs.

The criteria used to recognise and subsidise youth organisations were strictly quantitative. The quality of youth work was an issue that the government should not interfere with. The decree of 1975 on the recognition and subsidisation of Flemish youth work stipulated that the amount of subsidies would be based on certain expenses the organisations made: 90% of the cost of one professional, 75% of a second professional and 50% of all others; 75% of certain exploitation costs (telephone, rent, and others). This meant that more financial support was given to those organisations that were able to raise income in other ways.[4]

The decree on the recognition and subsidisation of Flemish youth work did not contain a definition of youth work. "Youth work" was a collective name for various types of youth work. Most of these were member organisations, such as:

• youth movements (Scouting and so forth);
• young adult movements (youth organisations of political parties, trade unions, farmers, etc.);
• student movements;
• specialised youth movements (for example Youth and Music).

And then there were "youth services", which delivered "services" to young people and/or youth organisations, and umbrella organisations: Catholic Youth Council, Union of Socialist Youth and so forth.

"Youth work" was a term that was used for organisations for the young (6 to 35 years), led by young people: at least two thirds of the board members had to be under the age of 35. There were no common goals, no common pedagogy, no shared content or common values. What these organisations shared was "youth", but that was defined in such a broad way that they did not even share a target group.

➜ The 1980s: crisis and political impasse

During the 1980s youth work did not flourish. Membership in youth movements declined. These organisations found reaching teenagers and young adults increasingly more difficult. Various other kinds of youth work went into an identity crisis

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4. Matthew 13:12. "To those who have shall be given".

(youth houses, creative youth workshops, youth music workshops). The number of youth houses diminished.

Society was still pillarised, but society was changing. Growing individualism and globalisation were eroding its structures. The most successful pillarised organisations loosened their ties with their partner-organisations, some even left the pillar.

And there was a political problem. The partners of the coalition government of Christian-democrats and liberals (influenced by economists of the Chicago School) did not see eye to eye on matters such as the funding of youth organisations. The minister for culture, and in this capacity also competent for youth policy, was a liberal: Patrick Dewael, a nephew of the aforementioned Herman Vanderpoorten. He was the last Flemish Youth Council member to become a cabinet minister. At the end of his term in government Patrick Dewael (1991: 141) wrote a book about what he had achieved. But in the field of youth politics he had to admit to his failure: "It's not the task of government to subsidise ideologically or philosophically inspired institutions or organisations" [I want] "a Flanders that needs no political holdings or "netwerken" (systems),[5] but a Flanders where emancipated citizens can make a choice out of a number of pluralistic offers."

He made it perfectly clear that his (Christian-democratic) coalition partner had not allowed him to change legislation according to his views.

➜ The 1990s

The cabinet ministers responsible for cultural affairs in the 1990s were Christian-democrats. Their views were firmly rooted in Christian-democratic traditions, defending the Catholic-pillarised organisations, even despite sociological changes. Luc Martens (1995: 9), who was cabinet minister from 1995 to 1999, wrote a policy plan "Werken aan netwerken"[6] (Working at systems): "The increased individualisation results in a situation where those who participate in cultural and social life are often not emancipated enough to do this in an autonomous and responsible way: he or she selects the most accessible and consumes this unquestioning."

In the early 1990s new legislation was drafted. The Flemish Community would no longer subsidise local youth organisations. Instead local government was subsidised by the Flemish Community for implementing its own local youth work policy plan. The focus of this legislation was the process that local government would use to come to its local youth work policy plan. A lot of attention was paid to the participation of local youth work, young people and experts on the problems of youth.

For the first time a definition of youth work was included in Flemish legislation:

> Youth work: group-oriented socio-cultural initiatives based on non-commercial objectives for or by young people, who participate voluntarily in this initiative, in

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5. He alluded to the pillarised organisations.

6. It is interesting to see how the same word *netwerk* (network, system) was used by Dewael and Martens. Dewael used it to refer to the pillars, and thus gave it a negative connotation. Martens used the word in a more positive way, but it was clear that his plea for enforcing *netwerken* was also a way of supporting and re-legitimising the pillarised organisations.

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their leisure time and under educational supervision; this work is being set up by private youth associations or by municipal public authorities.

This definition limits youth work to group-oriented work. Organisations working for individuals (such as youth information services) were excluded. In times of crisis one tends to return to that which is supposed to be the fundamentals of youth work. The group-orientation is primarily a youth movement issue. It echoes the idea of the youth-movement as "the most perfect form of youth organisation". And it was not without any party and political interest: youth movements belonged mainly to the Catholic pillar. The organisations that were to be excluded were mainly situated outside the pillars. The definition does something else: "youth work" is no longer a collective noun for a number of organisations. It refers to a number of activities that were not easy to define.

The idea of local policy plans and participation of youth organisations, young people and local experts on youth matters changed local youth policy in a fundamental way. Local government was expected to make an inventory of the expectations and demands of local youth. The challenges they faced were not always to be met by the NGOs. This gave way to a more active role for local authorities (such as setting up playground activities or youth centres).

The legislation on the subsidisation of Flemish (non-local) youth work changed in 1998. This legislation again favoured the larger organisations. It therefore was no surprise that one of its outcomes was a significant decrease in the number of subsidised organisations: the smaller organisations had to go.[7] And "youth organisations" were to be "youth work organisations". Activities in the field of welfare, such as public health, education and so forth were discouraged.

➜ Youth policy since 1999

In 1999 a coalition of liberals, social-democrats, democratic Flemish nationalists and ecologists was to form the Flemish Government: the first without the Christian-democrats. Depillarisation was seen as a sociological fact. It no longer needed to be a political objective:

> The Flemish government recognises the importance of NGOs and the growing depillarisation in society, and it wants to support this evolution.[8]

> Flemish society depillarises. This is clearly noticeable at the grass roots level. It does not mean that people no longer have their own opinions, convictions or philosophy of life, but that they want to share these with others and that they increasingly value the opinions of the others. This evolution needs to be translated on the policy level. Our policy will open the way to depillarisation … We will therefore offer support to pluralistic initiatives where everyone is welcome, and to individuals. Co-operation between existing organisations will be encouraged.[9]

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7. "To those who have shall be given in abundance, but those who do have shall be taken away even that which they do have" (Matthew, 13:12)

8. Regeringsverklaring van de Vlaamse Regering (Flemish Government policy statement), Flemish Parliament, Document 31, No. 1, (1999), p. 4

9. Regeringsverklaring van de Vlaamse Regering (Flemish Government policy statement) 1999: 40.

The 1998 legislation wreaked havoc among the subsidised organisations. All the smaller ones would have to go. And youth work organisations were to limit their non-youth work activities (education, welfare etc.). This was all fiercely contested by the youth organisations. The dissatisfaction with the 1998 legislation was a great starting point for a radical change in policy. Objective criteria, formulated by parliament, to determine the amount of subsidies, were to a large extent replaced by a more subjective appreciation by the cabinet minister of the achievements and policy plans of the organisations. We lack the distance history gives us for commenting on the changes during the first years of this century. We will restrict ourselves to enlisting some changes in youth policy during this first decade of the 21st century:

- the proliferation of policy plans, including a youth policy plan;
- the integration of children's rights policy within the youth policy framework;
- the focus on ethnic minorities and the poor; an approach which differs fundamentally from an approach vis-à-vis persons facing various social problems;
- a shift from social inequality to inequality in social participation (Coussée, 2006: 262).

Since the summer of 2009 the minister responsible for youth policy was no longer the minister for culture, but the minister for education. It will be interesting to see where this will lead us in terms of the relationship between formal and non-formal education.

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Hans van Ewijk

Youth work in the Netherlands – History and future direction

➔ Introduction

Youth work in the Netherlands goes back a long way and since the 1970s has taken on a rather strong professional image. During the last decades, it went through some hard times, but recently it has undergone a revival and revaluation. (Griensven & Smeets, 2003). The first section of this paper is about how the characteristics of the Dutch affect social work and youth work concepts. The second part discusses the Dutch framework for youth work: definition, fields of activities, core tasks and the ambiguous relationship between youth work and social work. The third section deals with the history of youth work. The paper concludes with a reflection on the future directions that youth work could take. The article is based on Dutch historical research, some by the author, and the author's involvement in youth work, both as a youth worker and editor-in-chief of the semi-scientific journal *Jeugd en samenleving*.

➔ Typical Dutch

In Simon Schama's study of the Netherlands in its Golden Age (17th century), he refers to the amazement expressed by foreign visitors over the tenderness

with which children were treated. The Dutch were highly focused on their children, apparently much more so than in the United Kingdom (Schama, 1997). Schama also reports that humanist educators discussed how children could be educated without losing their innocence. Apparently thinking of children as different beings with their own special development was an early practice in the Netherlands. Recently, international comparative research has revealed that Dutch youth is among the happiest on our globe (Unicef, 2007; Adamson, 2008) but the research is too hypothetical to see a causal relationship between Schama's observations and their own results.

Pillars and pacification

Since the 19th century, Dutch social policy history has been characterised by its different "pillars": Catholic, all kinds of Protestants denominations, socialist, humanist and the "generics" or "publics", highly comparable with Belgium and the German-speaking countries. Most of the pillars had their own associations, foundations, schools – even universities, housing corporations, care institutions, broadcasting companies and political parties. Having so many religions and ideologies on one cushion called for pacifying strategies (Liphart, 1968). All the pillars had an interest in having their own institutions and sovereignty in a non-intervening state. This created a very strong civil society that provided social services for its people. It also implied a slow start in building up the welfare state, because the big five – education, health, housing, personal services and social security (Beveridge, 1942) – were left predominantly up to civil society with its well-organised pillars.

Professionalisation in youth work

The Netherlands was the first country to open a school for social work (1899) (Linde, 2007) and in the 1970s youth work became more or less a professionalised sector (Ewijk, 1985). Nowadays youth work in the Netherlands is mainly associated with professional youth work. Since the 1970s youth workers have been trained professionals, thus volunteer youth organisations are no longer at the forefront. They are in the same corner as sport clubs and art activities for youth.

Instrumental thinking

The Dutch are often seen as merchants and pragmatists. A small country with big neighbours – leaving out Belgium – should be opportunistic and liberal. Since the 1970s the youth work debate has been mainly in the hands of policy makers and not scientist or researchers because they are not the ones who will pay for it. Legitimating youth work should to be done in the political arena, more so than in the scientific or pedagogical one. This political instrumental approach became even stronger after the universities closed their institutes of social pedagogy, agogy and andragogy, all newly constructed disciplines aiming at social processes of change. Over the last decades, the traditional universities showed a clear lack of interest in the work of social professionals.

The innovation velocity and fragmentation

The Dutch love to change structures and concepts. They have built the largest number in the world of different churches and they have effected what might be the highest number of changes in structures and organisations in the societal arena. It is popular among politicians and social managers to change infrastructures and their own departments every few years. Apart from this high speed structure and

steering principle change, we find an impressive number of programmes, projects and innovations that have been implemented – or at least are trying to be – in schools, communities and the social services.

Localisation and market

Dutch social work and youth work has been mainly left to civil society, but since the 1980s the localisation of social services – including youth work – has become popular, and since the 1970s, privatisation of the market a new trend. The nation state is decentralising its social responsibilities to civil society, the market and the local communities (Ewijk, 2009). Youth work is an interplay between municipalities (financiers), NGOs (provision) and a market that is growing through tendering procedures and an increase in profit providers, in particular in childcare.

→ The Dutch framework

Definition

Youth work is more or less an undefined field of activities. There is no legal basis for social work – let alone the youth worker as a professional. Neither is there a legal basis for youth work as such, or its definition and description. Localisation, privatisation and civil society approaches are hindering the development of a national, recognised framework even more. I once defined – and it is still a quite popular definition – youth work as "the non-profit oriented effort by adults to offer recreation, informal education and support to age-defined organisations of leisure time" (Ewijk, 1985; Coussée, 2006). I emphasise "adults" because in this definition, youth organisations that are fully run by young people themselves – youth cultures, youth groups, gangs, youth actions – do not belong to the realm of youth work. The three core tasks of youth work are recreation, informal education and support, such as counselling, providing information, referring the young to agencies (Fabri, 2009). The estimated number of youth workers is 1 700 (Noorda & Veenbaas, 2001).

Fields of activities

One of the problems with youth work is that there are endless ways of categorising it, all based on different criteria. A dominant one is by age group, thus 0-4 is pre-school, 4-12 children in primary school, 12-15 teenagers and from 16 on, young people with flexible maximum ages (18, 21, 23, 27 even sometimes up to 30). A certain shift to earlier transitions in age groups is going on, thus being a teenager starts at 10, and a young person at 15 on. A second system is target-group oriented, based on gender, ethnicity, social-economic standards or specific problems. A third categorisation system is based on field of activity, such as youth organisations, open youth work, outreach youth work, sports and so forth. Yet a fourth mechanism is to distinguish between core tasks, such as counselling, recreation, community building, participation, protection, correction. One can find all those categorisations and different combinations of them in the youth work literature.

The last one, field of activity, is the main divide between professional youth work and youth organisations. Youth organisations are volunteer organisations, supervised and counselled by adults with professional staff at national or regional level. Scouting, most religious youth work, political youth work (trade unions, political parties, national and local youth parliaments or platforms) and special interest groups belong to this category. Professional youth work is youth work carried

out by professionals together with volunteers, and includes open youth work and street-corner work.

Ambiguous relationships

Youth work and in particular youth workers are often perceived as being very singular and different from other services and professionals. A tense relationship exists between social work and youth work. In the Netherlands most youth work has been integrated into generic local social services (welfare organisations), combining youth work, community building, care for the vulnerable, multicultural and integration projects, child care and social case work. On the inside of these organisations, youth workers like to see themselves as different from social workers, and as expressing their own social pedagogical approach and having fully different target groups and specific methods. A second ambiguous relationship exists between youth work and youth care. There are more or less open borders between the two but most youth workers prefer not to be in the therapeutic or youth care corner, let alone in the disciplining corner from the justice point of view. A third problematic relationship exists between the youth worker on one hand and local social policy and its policy makers on the other. Youth workers often see themselves as exploited by politicians eager for short-term successes, and as being used to respond more to incidents than participating in long-term strategies. Perhaps this tension has eased up a bit over the last years, as we will discuss later.

➜ A short history of youth work

Prehistory

We have already learned that the Dutch were quite gentle with their children and that they recognised children's need for a protected education. Orphanages and houses of correction existed from the Middle Ages on (Linde, 2007) and the painter Jan Steen depicts a rich world of children playing all kind of games. In the 19th century youth work materialised. In 1853 the predecessor of the Young Men's Christian Association (Nederlands Jongelingen Verbond) came onto the scene and in 1897 the first fenced playground appeared (Boon, 1947; Brentjens, 1978; Ewijk, 1992; Linde, 2007). Clubs started by students or *fröbelschools* popped up everywhere and in 1919 a national committee was appointed to research the development of young people between ages 13 and 18 (Hazekamp & Zande, 1987). Stuart Hall (United States) in *Adolescence* (1904), presented the first theoretical reflection on youth as a separate category, characterised by common features. Spranger published *Psychologie des Jugendalters* in 1924, however, most youth work in those days was more ideological than socio-psychological (Welten et. al., 1973). Civilising the working classes, keeping youth inside their own pillar and in complacency with the very poor and excluded seemed to be its driving motives (Bank, 1979; Selten, 1979; Linde, 2007). Industrial society's interest in having a better equipped work force, socially minded and liberal citizens' commitment to the poor and the pillars' interest in strengthening their constituency all went hand in hand.

Within the own vestment:
youth organisations and club work – 1920-50

Youth work took its first steps inside the different pillars. Socialists, Catholics and Protestants organised their own youth groups behind banners, in pre-organised activities, non-formal learning and recreation. However, this was all

relative. Even during its best periods, youth organisations, led by "strong" men and women, never reached more than 25% of young people (Brentjens, 1978; Weterman, 1957). Besides well-organised youth organisations, churches had their recreational activities and a number of clubhouses (De Arend in 1922 and De Zeemeeuw some years later) were established in poor, urban neighbourhoods, starting with Rotterdam (Nijenhuis, 1987). The first Scouting group dates from 1910, the AJC (workers' youth movement) from 1921, youth hostel organisations from 1927 and the so-called "open door work" started by the Dutch Reformed Church as early as 1920 (Brentjens, 1978; Selten, 1979; Linde, 2007). Three main roots of youth work had their foundations laid in the first two decades of the 20th century: youth organisations mainly for middle class and emancipated working-class youth, club houses for the poor and deprived, and open door work for the in-betweens. Youth movements – fully driven by youth – hardly existed (Brentjens, 1978).

Non-organised youth, being young together: 1950-65

The Second World War was a shock for Western society. Also many youth organisations were traumatised. The rather disciplinary way of organising youth, its walking behind banners and uncritical acceptance of ideology were seen as a hotbed for recruitment by totalitarian organisations. Similarly, the great numbers of young people, in particular the less educated, that had not been reached were also at risk of totalitarian tendencies. A third consideration was the socio-psychological effect of the world war on the post-war youth, such as traumas, cynical attitudes, the loss of families and friends and the loss of trust (Selten, 1979; Ewijk, 1979). From this point on, more socio-psychological approaches became popular and the idea that youth work had to gear to the context of young people rather than bring young people into youth organisation became more dominant. In the Netherlands open youth centres opened their doors (Rex Mundi and Lex Mundi in Rotterdam in 1945) and a range of youth centres were set up in the county, as in the poor, south-east part of Drenthe in the early 1950s (Brentjens, 1978; Nijenhuis, 1987). On the other hand, the socialist AJC (young labourers) decided to disband their organisation in 1959 and most religion-based youth organisations were experiencing a sharp decrease in membership (Brentjens, 1978). Youth work became supportive, creating room for young people and "their growth into adulthood". Creating a stimulating atmosphere and recognition of the Third Milieu ("not family, not school") were the basic issues of those years (Hazekamp & Zande, 1987). A new and special branch of youth work was institutional non-formal training for working boys and girls. Young people between 14 and 21 who had already worked in industry or agriculture at low-skilled jobs were trained in social and educational skills. In this same period new schools for youth workers were started, or the so-called social pedagogical schools – Brieneroord, Middeloo, Jelburg and Kopse Hof, one Catholic, one Protestant, two generic (Ewijk, 1979). In those years the tension between youth organisations and professional youth work was felt, though it had smoothed out a bit. However, most experts gradually switched to a more professional youth work perspective. By far the most recognised youth journal then, *DUX,* fully endorsed open youth work and non-formal-education. The well-known editor-in-chief Han Fortmann wrote an editorial about "a fair full of quite idiosyncratic hobby horses", with reference to youth organisation leaders (Fortmann 1958). In 1969 Protestant youth worker Jacq Roos compared youth organisations and youth work.

Open youth work	Youth organisations
Activity centred	Ideal centred
Participants	Members
No traditional youth	Traditional youth
Over age 15	Mainly under 15
Modern lifestyle	Traditional life style
Context centred	Method centred
Professionals	Volunteers
No national umbrellas	National umbrella

(Roos, 1969)

From then on youth organisations kept up operations, but they were no longer part of mainstream youth work and youth policy. The government decided that those youth organisations reaching out to decent middle-class boys and girls could perfectly organise themselves. Governmental support should be aimed at those organisations reaching out to marginal, low educated boys and girls. In the 1980s they did lose their structural financial support from the state. Opinion was that they could and should live from their membership and local social policy support if needed. The national ministry could finance projects, for example to recruit more members from immigrant groups.

1965-80: professionalisation and emancipation

The 1960s and 1970s greatly affected youth work in the Netherlands. Some of the open youth centres were fully geared to the protest generation and the "revolution" going on in the universities, and strongly supported the growing squatter groups. My own youth centre became a meeting point for alternative and protesting young people, from squatters to gays, from the Dolle Mina's (women's liberation) to the (soft) drug adepts (Ewijk, 1974). Many youth centres and youth workers felt they were part of a new youth movement together with alternative youth care (JAC, Social Units) and the critical non-formal education centres (Vormingswerk Jonge Volwassenen) (Ewijk, 1975).

This radical turn in youth work connected to new insights in psychology about the youth moratorium as an expanded stage in human development. A stage where one could explore freedom and experience limits and limitations, and find and construct a full identity (Erikson, 1968). The programme planning document (1974) of my own youth centre called for the centre to be a breeding ground for new ways of living, a shelter from a cold, one-dimensional world, and a place to relax, meet and take action.

In the more mainstream youth policy and youth work development, there was a gradual shift from pedagogy and creating a stimulating atmosphere to eman-cipation. Emancipation did not imply full integration into adulthood but on the contrary, a recognition that being young was equal to other life stages (Welten et al.,1973). However, at the same time, emancipation called for fighting against age discrimination and exercising full socio-economic rights in society, in the field of employment, benefits, social assistance, legal rights and responsibilities (Welten et al., 1973). Socio-cultural recognition of being different, and a socio-economic recognition of being equal – that was the key message. Youth work should support

young people to create and construct their own youth phase and help them gain access to all aspects of society. Youth work was the enabler and the mediator in this emancipation process. A prominent scholar in those days, Wil van Stegeren, defined social pedagogy as "contributing to a pedagogical emancipation process of young people in society, aiming at acquiring freedom and self destination for themselves and others, by promoting support to a generation growing up and concretised in systems regarding youth [meaning schools, labour, social services, housing]" (Stegeren and Hazekamp, 1974).

In 1969, the first minister of social work, Marga Klompé, produced the first youth policy document. It called for the young to participate in policy making. It also called for the provison of meeting places for young people. Protest and left wing radicalisation, and emancipation were the dominant perspectives. The third was a gradual shift in youth work towards helping the youth that was the most marginalised. My own centre, as many open youth centres, was forced by local authorities to reach out more to underclass youth than to alternative youth. Youth from Suriname and Moluccan backgrounds needed attention because of their increasing criminality. My youth centre closed because we were not able to manage those groups in an open youth centre setting.

➜ Commoditisation and work, work, work: 1980-2000

In the early 1980s, a serious economic recession set in and unemployment became the big issue. In the meanwhile, the protest generation had dispersed into hippies, radical socialistic splinter parties, radicalising squatters, feminists, radical therapists, back-to-normals and so on. Ideas about full personal development and full emancipation became interchangeable with getting young people to work, improving education and connecting social rights to social duties. Activating young people moved to the forefront, mainly activating for the labour market (Ewijk, 1994). Youth work was swimming in trouble waters. It was being asked to integrate unemployed youth, discipline youth, carry out more targeted work, be effective, and focus on realistic, quantifiable actions instead of processes, ideals and intentions. In the youth policy document of 1995-96, the ministry asked for effective solutions to social problems, early alerts in risk cases, an integrated approach, better and stronger directed youth care and for promoting the self-organisation of young people (VWS, 1995). Cees Schuyt's study "Kwetsbare jongeren en hun toekomst" (vulnerable youth and their future) was a major influence, calling for the productive contribution of young people to society and space for developing a strong identity (Schuyt, 1995). He suggested focusing youth policy and youth work on the links in the chains of the social systems, such as transition from school to the labour market, primary school to secondary school, living at home to independent living. The task of youth work was to help young people make these transitions smoothly and integrate into new systems such as the labour market. In 1983 a workgroup of youth workers and youth experts published the pamphlet *Bundeling van krachten* (pooling of powers), in which they called for an overall youth welfare strategy and moving from: a free activity approach to a focused activity approach, a breeding place to a working place, isolated youth work to partnerships. They also called for better knowledge and analysis, stronger youth work organisations, and professionalisation and innovation. Youth work as a skilled profession with clear targets, forming partnerships, focusing on helping young people to access social services and express social competences (Werkgroep Bundeling van krachten, 1986). Overall, this period is often seen as one which attacked youth work, continually cut budgets and transformed youth work into an extended arm of the school, labour market policies and the police.

➜ Youth work back on the agenda: 2000

During the "work, work, work" period a lot was said about the youth work crisis: burnt out youth workers, further fragmentation and short-term projects (Werkgroep Bundeling van krachten, 1986). Youth, youth policy, youth care and youth work found their way back onto the agenda thanks to a series of incidents in youth care, a growing fear of radicalism and criminality with regard to Muslim Moroccan migrant youth, ever longer waiting lists for youth care and political debates about the fragmentation and alignment problems in the whole chain of youth provisions. Operatie Jong, chaired by van Eyk, a former secretary of state, was set up to be a national breakthrough project in the youth field. Its reports focused on sorting out the hindrances facing young people and youth care systems. Enlarging opportunities for young people, fighting against exclusion and derailment were the leading objectives (Operatie Jong, 2003). The public sector, families and civil society (schools, youth work, sport, etc.) should work together to enable consistency in growing up. Youth policy was divided into the preventive, the curative and the restorative, and the focus was on the links in the chain of services and interventions.

The report from Operatie Jong (2003) concluded: not enough consistency, inadequate information and knowledge sharing, a lack of conceptualisation and support, vaguely defined responsibilities, an inadequate alignment of regulations and actions, and a lack of cultural specific approaches. The report ended with a plea for local centres for youth and families, a minister for youth and a re-evaluation of preventive youth policies, including youth work.

At about the same moment a large survey among municipalities concluded with a growing positive evaluation of youth work, the need for more youth workers, a focus on professionalisation and more continuity (Griensven & Smeets, 2003).

A review report of youth work in the city of Utrecht discussed youth work with youth workers, users, politicians, youth work partners and managers, and concluded with an unexpected, positive image of youth work in Utrecht. Young people were very positive about youth work, and indicated that they wanted to learn to organise and find solutions to their own problems. Girls and children definitely were asking for more youth work responding to their needs and wishes. In the same Utrecht report youth workers were deliberately legitimating their work with the concept of prevention. That was exactly what politicians expected them to do. Youth work was assumed to become an integral part of the intervention chain: connecting and bridging, looking for solutions for problems, promoting social development, facilitating access to youth provisions. Youth workers had to deliver a mix of activitities on demand. Quite often it was stressed that youth work should be more on the side of developing talent and social dispositions, creating opportunities and eliminating blocking mechanisms and hindering structures, rather than focusing on the restorative and discipline corner. The Utrecht report stated that "society expects youth workers to contribute to finding answers to complex societal problems" (Visitatiecommissie, 2009).

In Amsterdam, youth work has turned to talent development, implicating that youth work should be a challenging, positive power in the communities and young people should be approached from a positive and empowering perspective. Rotterdam stated "Young people need the chances to do it. If they are willing, they get full opportunity. If they cannot manage, we support them. If they are really unwilling, then we will be strict and take actions" (Bestuursakkoord 2005).

Another positive action is the strategy to set up professorships (lectoren) and research centres in the Hogescholen (polytechnics) and then to turn them into universities of applied sciences (Fabri, 2009). Equally positive is the national infrastructure's (National Youth Institute) renewed interest in preventive youth work, including setting up a database for evidence based work and the creating a national profile for the youth worker profession (Dam and Zwikken, 2008). The profile introduces youth work as an easy accessible service for all young people from 12 to 23 years old. Changing behaviour, preventing youth from sliding down-wards, neighbourhood learning centres, self organisation and promoting social resilience are summed up as important objectives. Youth participation, informal learning and social education, information, meeting and recreation are also on the list. The profile document also summarises core tasks, competencies and trends, and sets up a workable framework for improving and strengthening youth work.

Conclusion: at a time when youth work is being reinvented by local authorities, there is a move from loosely defined projects and innovations to a more consistent, sustainable approach. There is a shift from a problem-oriented approach to posi-tive prevention and support of development of young people's talents, but in the mean time the promise to be tough on those young people who are unwilling to integrate. Although it still has not proved its effectiveness, the prevention approach has gained more recognition. Youth work has become an integral part of the social intervention chain, together with the family, school, leisure time provisions, youth care, mental health institutions, police and justice, labour market agencies and local social policy (Ginkel, Noorda & Veenbaas, 2007). As such, youth work and youth policy are more individualised. The focus is on young people in their context and on the planning of pathways for young people's development and offering challenging talent developing events and activities.

➜ Reflection and future direction

A separate youth phase?

A well-known Dutch author, Guus Kuijer, said cynically "The true appearance of human kind is adulthood", referring to approaching children as non-adults (Kuijer 1980). Childhood and being young are seen as preparation for becoming a true adult, apparently the highest phase of life. From Kuijer's point of view, the process of becoming an adult destroys the child in ourselve. Diderot (1751) emphasised, in his *Encyclopedia,* the greatness of the (late) adolescence period: "malgré les écarts de la jeunesse ... c'est toujours l'âge le plus aimable et le plus brilliant de la vie; ... car les imperfections de la vieilesse sont assurément en plus grand nom-bre et plus incurables que celles de la jeunesse"[1] (Kreutz and Heyt, 1974). And Musgrove has observed that young people are much more positive about adults than the other way round (Musgrove, 1964). The question to consider is to what extent young people are different, need different services and different teaching methods and to what extent youth work is a categorising and labelling provision. Was Locke correct in stating: "The sooner you treat him as a man, the sooner he will be one" or not, forgiving him for only referring to the male elements in society (Musgrove, 1964). What is the difference between adults and young people and do we want to enlarge the difference or bridge it? It is said that adolescence is a transition phase, which is true but our whole lifespan is full of rather individualised

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1. "Despite the imperfections of youth … it remains the fondest and most outstanding part of life … because the imperfections of old age are most certainly greater in number and more incurable than those of youth."

transitions. We are not moving from instability to stability or from "not integrated" to integrated; we live in a society, in contexts and age phases that are in permanent states of transition. Age is one of the multifaceted characteristics of life, next to gender, class, ethnicity, (dis)ability, cultural background and so on. It is important to be careful when extending the definition of youth to ages as old as 23 or even 30. It seems better to focus on early adolescence as a phase of protection (10-15 years) and late adolescence (15-19 years) as early adulthood, combining education with the first work experience, combining family life with building up intimate relationships outside the family, and taking part in all the joys life has to offer. As many vulnerable adults, some young people need support in late adolescence, sometimes protection and sometimes correction.

Secondly, in my opinion, youth work is and should be a fully recognised and integrated field of social work. It belongs to the family, not as an outsider but as a real insider. Where possible, generic social work should be open to youth and where needed, specific youth interventions, youth accommodations, and youth workers, should be available. Thirdly, youth work cannot be separated from the youth chain: family, school, leisure time, labour market, youth care, justice, mental health and so on. It is even one of the connecting and bridging powers in this chain, in particular in the links between systems and the link of young people to the systems.

The youth social model

We all recognise the medical model, the education model, the justice model and even an economic model. The social model seems less explicit and less recognised because of its fragmentation and underdeveloped social perspective (Smith, 2008; Ewijk, 2009). I would like to bring in some elements for the social (youth) model.

1. Social work aims at supporting, promoting, improving social competences, social behaviour, social relationships and social contexts. It is not part of the cure department, nor of the therapeutic corner nor of the free market system. Social work is an effort to include people in social life, in communities and society, in labour, education, housing, health and social security. This is the case for youth as well.

2. The core concept could be found in active citizenship, bringing together personal responsibility, social responsibility and the implementation of social rights. This is the European Union's overall conceptualisation of social citizenship. People should be responsible for their own living and working conditions and their social behaviour. People should be socially responsible in their families, social networks and communities. The state guarantees access to social systems (education, health and so forth). The concept of citizenship should be adjusted to relative or contextual citizenship – each citizen to his or her capacities and capabilities – and to relational citizenship as a common "project" for society and communities. It is not a pure, personal thing but an inter-personal concept as well. In youth work, the threefold approach of self reliance, social responsibilities and social rights can be a strong perspective, calling for people to be treated as equally as possible in society, but with room for relative and relational citizenship (specific situation of young people, personal competences and the common participative project in strengthening social citizenship in society and the role of young people in it). It transforms young people into producers instead of consumers or objects of intervention.

3. An interesting development in social work is the re-invention of the basic front-line worker or lead professional. In restorative social work, youth care and social care, a new professional is emerging, for example in the method of "wrapping around". This is a one-to-one relationship between users and professionals who as partners try to change context more than the assumed personal deficit. The lead professional assists the user or citizen to access his or her social rights and the social support and interventions he or she needs and wants. Together, they work to modify all the links in the chain, the back offices and institutions to the personal context; they try to pull down the barriers and to create opportunities. According to the United Kingdom youth policy:

> The lead professional, who would act as the coordinator, negotiator and advocate of young people with multiple support needs could come from different backgrounds and
>
> • act as a single point of contact, to trust by young people and families, able to support them in making choices and in navigating through the system;
> • ensure that children and families will get appropriate interventions when needed;
> • reduce overlap and inconsistency among other practitioners;
> • ensure that where the young person requires more specialist services … the young person is involved in an effective hand-over. (DfES 2005: 59)

The question arises, however, if such a lead professional should be or could be part of youth work. Youth workers, more than anyone else, are possibly closer to the contexts that young people live in and are therefore in a position of professional leadership, even in more individualised trajectories. Social work basically could be divided into:

• this leadership or front line work;
• a range of activities and specific interventions in the field of recreation, non-formal education and support;
• specialised services, back offices and institutions in youth care, mental health, disabilities, homes for the elderly and so on.

4. Participation is perhaps most thought of as participation in democratic political processes, in the labour market and civil society. A specific area is participation in social work (services) itself. Quite interesting is the conceptualisation and implementation used in the United Kingdom to combine the user-service approach and basic children's rights: "The primary determinant of their interest should be children and young people themselves and intervention should be based on this principle ... To promote the active participation of young people across differing aspects of their lives" (Smith 2008). The basic principle behind the UK approach is that social work has more impact if the user is part of the assessment, planning (pathways), implementation (realising the plans) and evaluation. There is a lot of evidence to support the observation that social workers – and perhaps youth workers – do not try hard enough to involve their users in the heart of the process of problem definition and in finding and realising solutions. There is also evidence that a motivated user and a committed competent professional together determine 80% of the success of intervention or support process (Hermans and Menger, 2008).

Concluding remarks

The report of the first Blankenberge workshop (Verschelden et al., 2009) discusses a youth work paradox: "Youth work that works is not accessible, accessible youth work does not work." This may be true for youth organisations but from the standpoint of the current situation of Dutch professional youth work, it is highly debatable. A number of investigations and policy documents on youth work consider that youth work is capable of connecting to unorganised youth and preventing it from "slipping down", and improving youth contexts. At least, it seems to be valued as an essential link in the youth social work chain.

The same report also presented the dilemma of whether youth work answers to the social question or to the youth question. Is its primary focus on strengthening "being young" or on solving social problems and improving the social economic status of the excluded and/or undervalued groups? Partly, the answer lies in recognising that "being young" is one of the highly valued transition phases in life (Diderot) and cannot be made separate by a one-faceted categorisation process. Nor can we deny that social positions, social problems and social potentials are amongst the main things to focus on in youth work.

In this last section of this article I sketched a framework for developing consistent and recognised youth work as part of and partner to social work and local social policies. In my opinion, the framework connects to the re-evaluation of youth work in my country, not denying other dominant and contradictory trends in Dutch social work and youth work, such as bringing social work onto the consumer market (privatisation), formalising and prescribing what social workers should do, and focusing on discipline and correction. My optimism is based on a number of current policy documents and new research findings, the creation of the "BV Jong" (an association of professional youth workers), the national youth work profile document and the future research centres in the Hogescholen (universities of applied sciences). However, it has recently become clear that due to the recession and budget problems affecting local authorities, there will be some serious cutbacks in social work. As it did in the early 1980s, economic recession affects ideas on youth and social work, and may once again caused it to be used as an instrument in labour market policies and to keep control over the communities and their residents, in particular the younger ones.

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For God's sake, tie your ropes together: the (recent) history of youth work in Wales – Political betrayal, professional infighting and practice inertia

Howard Williamson

→ Preface

The title of this paper derives from Tony Jeffs' final remarks in his scene-setting address to the second Blankenberge workshop. He told the story of a child who fell down a well. The child cried for help. Adults rapidly arrived and one threw a rope down the well. It was not long enough, the child shouted. Another rope was thrown down, but the child still could not reach it, and a third was lowered. It was still not long enough. With three ropes dangling above the child's head, the call came from below: "For God's sake, tie your ropes together". It is an apt metaphor for youth policy in many countries where there is a lack of inter-sectorial cohesion and too many independent initiatives that fail to join together. The recent history of youth work in Wales, despite a promising start following "devolution" in 1999, and after significant confusion about its direction during the 1990s (see Williamson, 1995) provides some strands of one such rope; a more overarching analysis of the various "ropes" of youth policy in Wales can be found in Williamson (2007).

➔ Introduction

This is a partial and rather personal account of the evolution of youth work in Wales over the past 20 years for, in policy terms, I have been integrally linked to the developments I describe. Appointed as the chair of the Wales Youth Work Partnership in 1989, I was, until 2006 and perhaps beyond, a significant "actor" in the changes that took place. The true historian of youth work in Wales is John Rose, whose Ph.D thesis addressed the topic (Rose, 2006) and whose writing with Bert Jones was a key feature of the publications that emerged from the biennial Durham history conferences (Jones and Rose, 2003; Rose and Jones, 2006). That writing identifies many distinctive threads in Welsh youth work history, despite it being theoretically umbilically attached to England until as recently as 1999, when policy responsibility for youth work was devolved to the newly-established National Assembly for Wales and its Welsh Assembly Government.

At the second Blankenberge workshop, I stood in as a replacement for a contributor from another country who was unable to attend. Thus my preparation was spontaneous and I had not expected to have to prepare it for publication. That I decided to do so was not just because I believe the story from Wales is both important and instructive, but also because I had detected an absence of the "personal" in the preceding accounts presented at both the first and second Blankenberge workshops. Yet I knew that, certainly in some cases, those reporting on their country's histories had also played a key part in shaping their more recent histories as well as constructing the historical record altogether. The following account of Wales unashamedly injects the personal into both the professional and the political. Youth work histories are not just about structures and strategy. The twists and turns of youth work (and wider youth policy) development and implementation are often influenced, sometimes very significantly, by individuals within that so-called "magic triangle" of youth research, policy and practice. And it is not always virtuous circles of development that they produce. Indeed, some might say that there were moments when unfortunate personality clashes (maybe sometimes involving me) arguably obstructed and stalled positive development and delayed the progress that otherwise might have materialised.

This is an account of recent youth (support)[1] work in a small country – Wales. Despite my close involvement in that history, which some might allege is bound to produce bias and weight in particular directions, I hope my academic principles and personal integrity vitiate the worst excesses of any grievances I may hold, and there are, without doubt, some – where there is little doubt, I believe, amongst both my allies and opponents, is that I have always had the life-chances, opportunities and positive experiences of young people in Wales closest to my heart. And effective youth work, however that may be defined, is a key element of that aspiration.

➔ Prehistory

For many years, youth work in "England and Wales" was largely synonymous. Though there may have been "small departures" in terms of detail and in terms of some distinctively Welsh youth organisations (notably the Urdd Gobaith Cymru,

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1. The mutation of the Youth Service (encapsulating municipal and voluntary youth work organisations) into "youth support services" (covering a much broader range of interventions based on different principles, philosophies, methodologies and practice) has been very controversial in the United Kingdom, and especially in Wales.

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or the Welsh League of Youth, whose work was constructed to promote and extend the use of the Welsh language but was much more besides – see Davies, 1973), early "national" reports tended to treat Wales as a region of England, much to the chagrin of those who detected important differences not just in language, but also in culture and rurality. Indeed, the famous Albemarle report (Ministry of Education, 1960) addressed the Youth Service in England and Wales.

Such reports on the Youth Service were published roughly every 10 years. The one that appeared in the 1980s, the Thompson report (Department of Education and Science, 1982) was notable because it concerned itself only with England. It was left to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, through its inspector in Wales with a dedicated responsibility for the Youth Service, to produce a separate report for Wales (HMI, 1983). That was, arguably, a precipitating moment that led to a growing divergence in youth work policy and practice between Wales and England.

➜ Points of departure

The year 1985 was International Youth Year with its three themes of participation, peace and development. It heralded a number of "separatist" initiatives in Wales. A Wales Youth Forum (WYF) was established. A distinctly Welsh youth information booklet, *Canllaw online* (a name resurrected later, with ultimately rather destructive consequences), was produced. Perhaps most significantly, given disquiet in some parts of youth work in Wales that the Leicester (England) based National Youth Bureau (NYB) was not according enough attention to the specificities of Wales, an outpost or offshoot of NYB was established in Wales: the Wales Youth Work Partnership (WYWP). This brought together the different contributors to the "Youth Service" in Wales, the local authorities (municipalities), the voluntary sector, the professional association for youth workers in Wales, and the Wales Youth Forum. Initially, this concerned itself with largely professional matters of delivery and quality but, by the end of the 1980s, it had to turn its attention to more "political" questions.

Instead of yet another ten-yearly report on the Youth Service, the UK government in London decided to hold a series of ministerial conferences on the Youth Service, designed to focus its practice on current political priorities relating to young people (training, crime, health) and to strengthen its relationships with other youth policy structures (schooling, the careers service, policing). The political demand was to establish a "curriculum" for youth work that would reflect a "concentrated fusillade" of distinctive practice rather than a "scatter gun approach". The National Youth Bureau was charged with taking this imposed agenda forward (see NYB, 1990).

By the time of the second ministerial conference (Birmingham, December 1990), those attending from Wales struggled to see the relevance of much of the debate. The challenges facing young people and youth work in urban, multicultural England were rather different from those in rural, still relatively homogenous Wales. On their return to Wales, those delegates pressed the WYWP to strengthen its "independence" through the production of a different youth work "curriculum statement" and the establishment of a separate "youth agency" for Wales. The battle lines were drawn symbolically by repeated references at WYWP meetings to the English Youth Bureau (and later the "English" Youth Agency) to the chagrin of observers from NYB/NYA. I told them that we could also correct the "error" but they would have to be ready to catch a later train home because every time "national" was mentioned, someone would inevitably raise the question as to which "nation" was being referred to.

The rather radical, perhaps stupid (in the sense of being impossible to achieve), English youth work curriculum statement that spoke to redressing all forms of inequality was not mirrored in Wales. Instead, the youth work curriculum statement for Wales retained three broad principles – that youth work was participative, empowering and educative – and added a fourth: that it was also expressive. This statement remains the philosophical framework for youth work in Wales to this day, though some details have been amended from the original (and some might question how true some youth work practice remains to these foundations). At a structural level, the mutation of the National Youth Bureau to the National Youth Agency in England (in 1991) provided the opportunity for Wales to create its own youth agency. The Wales Youth Agency was established a year later, in 1992, following considerable inertia and in-fighting between what came to be its constituent parts, which, though keen to separate from England, were anxious about their individual loss of autonomy and independence. The umbrella body for the voluntary sector in Wales, the Council for Wales Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS), was particularly concerned on this front.

→ The Wales Youth (Work) Agency

The Wales Youth Agency (WYA) was the successor to the Wales Youth Work Partnership, but it had more formal managerial authority over the former "partnership". Though welcomed from the start for its symbolic status (a separate youth agency for Wales) it was also criticised from the start for apparently seeking to "take over" youth work in Wales through absorbing the functions of formerly independent CWVYS and the WYF.

Initially, the WYA was funded to fulfil five distinct functions: youth participation and empowerment (the WYF role), information for youth workers, youth information, training and staff development (significantly through an education and training standards role), and support for the voluntary youth work sector and its voluntary youth work organisations (the CWVYS role). The WYF folded at this point, but CWVYS continued as an entity, though with no public financial support.

The WYA added a further function through dialogue with the British Council and its Youth Exchange Centre: international work. Sometime later, it had another function imposed on it: the management of grants to voluntary youth organisations. All this created tensions at many levels. There were endless debates about whether or not the agency was essentially concerned with "youth work" or with "work with young people". There were articulated concerns about it both supporting the voluntary sector and overseeing the grants to its organisations. There was criticism of the fact that "youth voice" was now harnessed to a (Welsh) government-funded agency. In short, most disputes hinged on the extent to which the agency was perceived to have the capacity to operate autonomously rather than having to respond to the whims and demands of what was then the Welsh Office. Nevertheless, after what seemed to be interminable attention to the responsibilities of its formal status (a non-departmental public body or NDPB), the agency started to interface with the field and, throughout the 1990s, commanded considerable credibility through its defence and advocacy for youth work.

→ Some key moments in the 1990s

Perhaps one of the very first independent actions by Wales at an international level (on any front, not just in the youth field) was the signing of the Lisbon Protocol in 1992. This was concerned with the under-26 youth card and, along with Young

Scot, Wales led the way in the United Kingdom in progressive thinking and practice on youth information. A year later, Wales hosted a European conference of the Council of Europe's Congress for Local and Regional Authorities in Europe that produced the Llangollen Declaration on youth participation. The agency hosted another European conference concerned with the social exclusion/inclusion of young people in Cardiff in 1994. Prior to that, it established the Youth Work Excellence Awards, with some modest private funding from a national bank. These were highly contentious at the start; there was a reluctance to "judge" youth work for good or for bad. However, over time and through its annual application, judging and presentation process, the excellence awards helped to showcase diversity and innovation in youth work and thereby strengthen political support. The awards provided a record of strong club-based youth work, the range of issues tackled, residential experiences, international exchanges, young people's engagement with their local communities and more besides.

Youth work, nevertheless, remained a vulnerable dimension of youth policy during the mid-1990s. At one point, the political decision was made to withdraw the government funding of voluntary youth organisations in Wales (the NVYO grant scheme). The Wales Youth Agency fought a rearguard action, making representations to the minister and hosting a national conference called "Building the future", with an accompanying document of the same name (WAY, 1995). According to later remarks made by ministers, this helped to save some central planks of youth work in Wales. Moreover, the agency co-ordinated Welsh representation for the United Kingdom Youth Work Alliance that battled, through its publication of *Agenda for a generation* (United Kingdom Youth Work Alliance, 1996), to preserve a threatened service across the four nations of the United Kingdom. Subsequently the alliance also produced *Learning, citizenship and competence* (United Kingdom Youth Work Alliance, 1999), a pamphlet to persuade Blair's new Labour Government of the benefits of youth work, but this did not cut much ice with the Westminster government.

In Wales, however, the new Labour administration displayed considerably more faith in the value of youth work, even prior to formal devolution. It charged the Wales Youth Agency with exploring ways in which youth work practice might support the retention of young people in learning (and reduce school exclusions). It responded positively to the agency's work in aligning youth work with youth crime prevention initiatives. And the agency even employed a development officer dedicated to supporting youth work's contribution to health promotion. All this was, of course, "tightrope" stuff, in which the Agency sought to reconcile wider political agendas and priorities with the principles and practice of youth work. Some viewed this as progressive, others as capitulation and the compromising of cherished youth work values. The irony was that those from within the youth work field who alleged that the Agency was "selling out" were matched by those beyond the field who saw the Agency engaging in the stubborn defence of what they viewed as old-fashioned and out-of-date youth work practice. The internal frictions did not bode well for any future when the Agency might be under threat.

Not that this was the case at the turn of the millennium. The agency's budget had grown six-fold. More grounded youth work practice had benefited from additional funding both from the state and from the National Lottery. The Secretary of State for Wales had a youth work background. The agency was positively sandwiched between a re-energised field and a supportive political infrastructure. It was trusted with strategy, professional development and practice innovation. With the inauguration of the new Welsh Assembly Government, the agency's (and thus youth

work's) position was strengthened yet further. Three individuals with youth work backgrounds contributed to the expert group that shaped the "flagship" youth policy document in Wales, "Extending Entitlement" (National Assembly for Wales, 2000). Youth workers in England, who were having to contend with their minister's remark that the Youth Service was the "can't do, won't do" service, looked enviously across the border, especially when Extending Entitlement received unanimous political support (59-0) when it was presented to the assembly.

Whereas the Youth Service in England was being threatened by the development of a new "youth support" service called Connexions with its own new profession of "personal advisers", the new Welsh document, subtitled "supporting young people in Wales", explicitly acknowledged the importance (indeed centrality) of youth work and proclaimed that there was no need for either new structures or a new profession. The policy commitment was also to a broader age range, 13-25, rather than the 13-19 age group to be served in England by both youth work and Connexions. In the debate within the Welsh Assembly, the minister announced an extra 3 million pounds (over three years) to support youth work in Wales: to strengthen partnerships between the maintained and the voluntary sector, to improve youth information provision, and to extend the range and quality of training for youth workers. This work was to be undertaken by the Wales Youth Agency, and it would be resourced accordingly. Even the heightened commitment to youth participation would be led by the Agency, on the grounds of its experience of engaging with young people, and its policy officer convened Llais Ifanc (Young Voice) which eventually became Funky Dragon, the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales. A strongly funded agency would be leading a diversity of established and innovative youth work development, designed to improve opportunities and experiences for young people in line with the vision of Extending Entitlement, and contribute especially to particular strands of that vision, notably around youth information, away from home and international experiences, and youth participation.

➔ Fragmentation and division

Or so the Wales Youth Agency thought. At the very point when youth work in Wales was convinced that it was more celebrated, coherent and connected than it had ever been, its position began to unravel. New faces and new structures began to appear – in government, in the civil service, across the wider sector of children and youth organisations, and in the youth work field itself. At governmental level, though the minister for education (and thus youth work) remained the same, a new first minister took over, whose loyalties to youth work and the Youth Service were less apparent and who was clearly more focused on an agenda for children. Within the Welsh Assembly Government (the national administration) a new youth policy unit was established, thereby stripping the Wales Youth Agency of its implicit and previously assumed strategic role in the development of youth work. There were clearly different views about what constituted "youth work" held by officials within the Government of Wales. Indeed, through some unclear messages from professionals in the field and through misinterpretation by officials, the idea of a new profession of personal learning and development coaches (later shortened to "learning coaches") materialised and fitted well with new conceptions of youth support services and not a distinctive Youth Service. But a new profession? The thought had been firmly rebutted and rejected only a couple of years before, when the mantra was concerned with strengthening and joining up existing professions, especially youth work, the careers service and schools.

Both within the Youth Service itself and across the wider sector of children's and young people's services, new bodies, structures, organisations and partnerships sprang up – presenting veritable Trojan horses to the lead role and solidity of the Wales Youth Agency. A standing conference for youth work in Wales was formed, initially and ostensibly to "defend" youth work against the paths being taken by the Welsh Assembly Government, but soon stepping clearly into the terrain hitherto occupied by the Welsh Youth Agency. Some of its membership proclaimed mutuality, as they were bound to do, given that they were part of both systems. Further away, a body describing itself as representing All Wales Young People's Organisations sprang up, as did a Participation Consortium led by Save the Children in Wales. Most significantly, the Welsh Assembly Government announced the formation, at municipal level, of Children and Young People's Partnerships, within which there would be Young People's Partnerships as a voluntary addition. This development derived from a new Welsh children's strategy (Welsh Assembly Government 2004), to which Extending Entitlement was increasingly playing second fiddle. The bodies referred to above were closely involved in the process, the Wales Youth Agency less so.[2] But no new structures? Once more, there had been a striking *volte face*.

These developments may have appeared to be, at least at first, relatively innocuous external threats to the Wales Youth Agency and its place at the heart of youth work policy and practice in Wales. Of more concern, almost from the very start of it apparently reaching its zenith of professional and political support, were twin initiatives that prefaced its fragmentation and demise. The first was a resurrected "Canllaw online", very different from its 1985 manifestation, but formed to endeavour to secure National Lottery funding for the establishment of a pioneering and comprehensive youth information system. It had been formed as a charity in order to be eligible for lottery money and had sometimes presented and described itself as an "offshoot" of the Wales Youth Agency, even asking WYA's director to join the board of the charity. Though it was never its offshoot, the agency had certainly been supportive of the new "Canllaw online"; as a company, the agency had always also intended to seek charitable status in order to access charitable monies, but it had never got round to doing so. It was supportive of Canllaw's mission, until it became aware that by the back door Canllaw was trying to get its hands on the agency's youth information budget. As a result of personal frictions, personal representations and organisational manoeuvring, it eventually succeeded in doing so. That led to the second haemorrhaging of the agency, when the CWVYS, with a work programme but not a staff employee since 1992, spotted the opportunity to seek, once again, its dedicated director. It was also successful in achieving this. As a result, the Welsh Youth Agency lost two thirds of its "new" money, two of its senior staff, as well as some proportion of its older budget. Youth work in Wales was now dispersed, strategically and operationally, across a number of organisations and contexts.

The agency's work diminished yet further when its work with municipal youth forums was criticised by the Welsh Assembly Government and transferred completely to the Participation Unit convened by Save the Children. The Welsh Assembly grant for youth information services, which, though now within "Canllaw

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2. There are mixed views about why this was the case. The prevailing official view was that the agency was not willing to "play ball" and was too fixated on the defence of "traditional" youth work; a counter view from the youth work field was that the agency was being deliberately marginalised in order to diminish its role and purpose and ultimate produce its demise: which is eventually what took place.

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online", was at least being managed by the specialist who had previously worked for the agency, and was re-allocated to the Careers Service – thus losing the youth work philosophy that had previously underpinned it. (It was later transferred again to a newly-formed third sector media organisation specialising in work with young people.) The Welsh Assembly Government pressed on with its commitment to youth support services and more targeted programmes concerned with youth crime prevention and healthy lifestyles. The residual allocation from the launch of Extending Entitlement to improve youth worker training was given little encouragement by officials, and staff of the Agency pursued this mission (which in the 1990s had been lauded for its coherence and development) in something of a vacuum. There may have been training for youth work at the local level, in four higher education institutions and through a virtual Staff College co-located with the Agency, but it was increasingly unclear what its graduates were emerging into the field to practice.

➜ 2005-09: a rudderless four years

At the end of November 2004 the education minister announced her intention to withdraw public funds from the Wales Youth Agency and to take its remaining functions (training, and education and training standards, youth worker information, international work, and the voluntary youth organisation grant scheme) inside the Welsh Assembly Government. She would have a three month consultation on the proposal and make a formal decision at the end of February 2005. Despite almost unanimous opposition to the idea from the youth work field (which may not always have been comfortable with the agency but were deeply concerned about the implications of its functions being managed within the Welsh Assembly Government), the minister confirmed her intention. Attention was drawn to her officials that both the education and training standards function and the international youth work undertaken through the Agency were not within the minister's power to control, but words of warning were largely ignored. At the end of December 2005, some 14 dedicated youth work staff of the Agency were transferred into the Welsh Assembly Government into a new "youth work strategy" unit, which steadily reduced to fewer than five people. [By 2010, not one of those transferred will still be working within this unit.] The youth work Education and Training Standards Committee functioned illegally for some months and its precise legal status was still to be clarified even towards the end of 2009. The Agency officer responsible for international work transferred to the British Council in Wales, for she could not carry out this work, for both legal and political reasons, within the Welsh Assembly Government. Some of the "top-up" monies that had been freed for this purpose within the overall budget of the Agency was lost. There was a general climate of inertia. Amongst senior and experienced youth work managers and practitioners in Wales, there was deep disquiet and concern at the strategy and tactics employed by officials within the Welsh Assembly Government to sideline and undermine established youth work practice.

After a long hiatus, despite real efforts on many sides to make the transition of functions from the Agency to the Welsh Assembly Government as short and shallow as possible, a new Youth Service Strategy was launched in the spring of 2007. It was strong on the rhetoric that youth work remained an important contribution to the overall visions for youth policy in Wales. The Wales Youth Agency received one cursory mention, as if it had been written out of history. By 2009, Extending Entitlement was also being airbrushed into history through the production of a new framework for children and young people called Cymry Ifanc (Young Wales), though the new director-general – a man who commands considerable respect and

has a reputation for integrity – remains adamant that its philosophy will still exert a significant influence on the direction of youth policy in Wales.

➜ Where now for youth work in Wales?

The 2007 Youth Service Strategy was provided with relatively little resource base for review, development and implementation. However, a budget almost a quarter of the policy allocation has been made available for a robust evaluation, just two and a half years on. There is a strong likelihood that it will conclude that youth work has made only a modest contribution to the big visions that were mapped within the strategy. That may sound a further death knell for a distinctive youth work practice. There was a national conference in February 2009 called "Thinking seriously about youth work" which attracted practitioners and managers from across Wales as well as some distinguished national and international speakers, yet the event was largely preaching to the unconverted who displayed a gritty determination to defend the cherished values of voluntary engagement and dialogical space that has historically guided youth work across its many contexts. The idea of "youth support services" was cursorily dismissed.

But those at that conference sit unequivocally on one side of the fence. On the other side is a new generation of "youth workers", compelled or persuaded to pick up resources from different funding pots to engage in a diversity of projects with young people that may or may not readily attract the label of "youth work" (see Williamson, 2008). They are pragmatists, largely locally trained or not trained at all, and very different from those who have agonised for lifetimes over philosophical and conceptual debates about the legitimate territory of youth work.

It is, according to some, such agonising that has done so much to undermine the credibility and reputation of youth work. Surely, they say, it is a simple question of getting on with the job of supporting young people. Perhaps. But if the challenge is a different one, of defining the boundaries of youth work practice and the principles that should govern it, then public professional infighting has allowed hostile political and administrative arrangements, that have very little grasp of the complexity of these issues, to divide and rule. The outcome has been a weakened field and enormous uncertainty about the focus and direction of youth work practice.

John Rose, who himself moved into the Welsh Assembly Government as the head of Youth Work Strategy, from his role as assistant chief executive of the Wales Youth Agency, has now retired as a civil servant, though he continues to teach on initial training courses for youth and community workers and, in Wales, has pioneered postgraduate study in this field. At a recent conference, freed from the constraints of his civil service role, he noted – and the audience found this to be arguably the most memorable statement of the day – that "we have to put the lights on all over the house, not just in the front room". In the first Bert Jones memorial lecture, Rose was reasserting the case and need for a distinctive Youth Service, across both state and voluntary structures, responsible for the delivery of a "youth work" practice grounded in some shared and mutually understood principles and methodologies. Some all-singing, all-dancing repertoire of youth support services, heavily leaning towards servicing wider political agenda and trapped within a range of imposed bureaucratic expectations, was unlikely to serve the personal developmental and non-formal learning needs of young people. Rose observed that even those in Wales who had "joined the real world" of targets, indicators and outcomes, "have still found themselves in the wilderness", outflanked by other so-called youth services even more eager to embrace and comply with these frameworks. But he then

asserted, with some optimism and not a little irony, that this "real world" will not last forever and that a new "real world" will emerge once more, one that places greater acceptance on the relative independence of the Youth Service, that respects the need for an associative life for young people that is constructed on supporting youth autonomy and self-direction, that can engage flexibly in the provision of a range of activities and experiences, but one that is consistently and consensually anchored in some core values. This was, indeed, the findings of a piece of research conducted by the Wales Youth Agency in the middle of the 1990s (Williamson et al., 1997), and few in direct contact with the heterogeneity of young people in Wales today would dispute the need for this to be one component of a comprehensive approach to youth policy – in Wales and beyond.

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Youth work in Ireland – Some historical reflections

Maurice Devlin

➜ Introduction

A pervasive theme of the first Blank-enberge history workshop and the ensuing publication was the seemingly "perpetual identity crisis" of youth work in many or most parts of Europe (Verschelden et al., 2009). While youth work in Ireland has by no means been free of, or has fully resolved, such a crisis, it is perhaps not surprising given the historical context that Bernard Davies's comments on the relative clarity of the identity (or at least the identifying features) of British youth work also apply to Ireland:

> … over the past century and a half in England – and indeed, it could be argued, over the UK generally [all of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom until 1921 and the six north-eastern counties still are] – the core features of a way of working with young people have been formu-lated and refined so that, overall, they provide a well-delineated if unfinished definition of a distinctive practice that we now call "youth work". (Davies, 2009: 63)

The definition of youth work in the Republic of Ireland is also perhaps

"unfinished"[1] but unlike the situation regarding youth work in the United Kingdom and most of Europe – and indeed unlike the situation that pertains in most of the social professions everywhere – there is in Ireland a law that says explicitly what youth work is: the Youth Work Act 2001. This should certainly not be taken to be a "finished" definition since it is itself an amendment of an earlier piece of legislation (the Youth Work Act 1997) and it could be amended again: Helena Helve informs us that in Finland "legislation governing youth work has been enacted regularly since 1972, being reformed every ten years or so (1986, 1995 and 2006)" (Helve, 2009: 120). However, the two definitions of youth work in Irish law have both been broadly in keeping with the "core features" of youth work as it has evolved historically; the main difference between them being that the key role of the non-governmental or non-statutory sector is made explicit in the second and current version, largely due to successful lobbying by that sector itself (for further detail on the reasons for the introduction of amending legislation and the relationship between the two definitions see Devlin, 2008). The definition in the Youth Work Act 2001 (s.3) is as follows.

> [Youth work is a] planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through their voluntary involvement…which is –
> (a) complementary to their formal, academic and vocational education and training; and
> (b) provided primarily by voluntary organisations.

This definition has been criticised for being "determinedly structured" and for relying on concepts which are themselves "all contestable" (Spence, 2007: 6-7), but for the current author the formulation in the Youth Work Act neither prescribes nor proscribes too much and in fact it might be argued that the contestability of certain concepts allows some useful "room for manoeuvre" in practice. Most importantly, while the definition may have the rather technical or instrumental character that legal language typically does, it explicitly and unmistakably enshrines a few key points – or principles – that would command widespread agreement among people involved in youth work in Ireland today, as they have throughout its history. The first is that youth work is above all else an educational endeavour and it should therefore complement other types of educational provision. In fact it is sometimes called "out-of-school education", but that designation is misleading because youth work can in some cases take place in school buildings. It is now more common therefore to refer to it as "non-formal" and/or "informal" education (for comments on the relationship between these terms see Devlin and Gunning, 2009: 10; Youth Service Liaison Forum, 2005: 13). The emphasis on the twin dimensions of the "personal and social development" of young people is in keeping with definitions of and approaches to youth work throughout most of Europe (Devlin and Gunning, 2009; ECKYP, 2009; Lauritzen, 2006).

The second key point is that young people participate in youth work voluntarily: they can "take it or leave it", a situation which is markedly different from their relationship with the formal education system. The third is that youth work is for the most part carried out by organisations which are non-statutory or non-governmental (although as we will see the state has on occasion been proactive in relation to direct youth work interventions and a key provision of the Youth Work Act is the

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1. As Davies says, youth work is a social construct and one of his key concerns is to show how contemporary policy makers, at least in England, are determined to "reconstruct" its historical character.

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imposition of a statutory responsibility to ensure that the provision of youth work programmes and services by voluntary organisations actually takes place). Furthermore, it is in the nature of these "voluntary organisations" that many – perhaps most – of the adults who work with them do so on an unpaid basis. Throughout its history Irish youth work has relied enormously on "voluntary effort", both individual and institutional. This is partly an expression of the principle of subsidiarity which has underpinned social policy and social services in Ireland since their inception; and it is also (and relatedly) a result of the links from the outset between youth work on the one hand and religious and political movements on the other. These points will be explained further in the following two sections. The purpose is to highlight some selected aspects of the history of youth work in Ireland, illustrating elements both of continuity and discontinuity with the present. There is not time here (and it is not in any case the main purpose in the present context) to go into the many significant administrative and policy developments in youth work in Ireland in the last few years, but if the reader is interested these can be explored elsewhere (Devlin, 2008; 2009; Forde et al. (eds.), 2009; Lalor et al., 2007).

➜ Subsidiarity, religion and politics

As was the case in other countries, the major social professions in Ireland – including youth work, social work and social care – were part of the broad philanthropic movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries concerned with "rescuing" (or controlling) needy, destitute and troublesome children and young people, whose numbers and visibility had increased substantially as society industrialised and urbanised. Social work developed a significant statutory dimension relatively early although it has retained strong links with the voluntary and charitable sectors (Kearney and Skehill eds., 2005). The particular direction that social care took was shaped by its links with the industrial and reformatory school system and with provision for young offenders (Lalor et al., 2007: 290). The path taken by youth work (and its emergence as a separate area of practice) was due to the fact that the early combination of philanthropic concern and "moral panic" (Cohen, 2002) gradually merged with other impulses that associated youth not just with the problems of the present but with the promise of the future and with the potential to defend and promote certain political, cultural or religious values and beliefs.

Most of those engaged in such defensive or promotional work were doing so on a voluntary basis, as individual volunteers or activists within voluntary organisations. This was certainly not the only country where youth work (and other work with young people) had its origins in voluntary activity, but in Ireland the emphasis on voluntarism took on a particular character because of the fraught nature of the historical relationship with Britain and the fact that the great majority of the country's population, particularly south of the border after independence, was Roman Catholic. In this context voluntarism was among other things an expression of the principle of subsidiarity which was emphasised by Catholic social teaching. According to this principle – most explicitly and systematically developed by Catholic intellectuals in Germany (Kennedy, 2001: 188; see also Geoghegan and Powell, 2006: 33-34) – the state should only have a secondary ("subsidiary") role in providing for people's care, welfare and education.

> The State exists for the common good, and that common good is best achieved when families and individuals are enabled to fulfil their proper destinies … The State does not exist to do for individuals and families and other associations what they can do reasonably well themselves. (Kavanagh, 1964: 57)

Of course these "other associations" included the churches and all of the organisations and services they established and ran, and the institutionalisation of the principle of subsidiarity in Ireland after independence meant that the churches had formal ownership and control of vital areas of social services (for example most primary and second-level schools; most hospitals) and the state's main role was to offer funding and support. This is a situation that is only now, and only slowly, changing (although a series of scandals in recent years involving members of the Roman Catholic Church in particular have given added impetus to calls for reform).

In youth work too the application of the principle of subsidiarity meant that the main early providers (who in some cases continue to be among the main providers today) had links with one or other of the churches. But as already stated the association of youth with the nation's future also meant that some early youth movements had a significant political dimension; and indeed sometimes the religious and political dimensions overlapped (as they have continued to do on the island of Ireland up until today, and up until recently with tragic and violent consequences). The effect was that there were often different groups or organisations providing substantially similar services for young people with different religious and/or political affiliations (the main ones being "Catholic/nationalist" and "Protestant/unionist"). Just a few examples will be given here of a pattern whereby groups established as part of a UK-wide organisation and associated either in fact or in the minds of the majority Catholic population with Protestantism, came to be mirrored by "national" or even explicitly "nationalist" alternatives, most commonly set up, like the original organisation, along gendered lines and often leading to tension – implicit or explicit – between the parallel providers.

The pattern started early. The Young Men's Christian Organisation or YMCA, "widely regarded as the UK's first national voluntary youth organisation" (Davies, 2009: 65) was established in 1844 with the aim of "uniting and directing the efforts of Christian young men for the spiritual welfare of their fellows in the various departments of commercial life". It operated throughout the United Kingdom which of course then included all of Ireland. Within just five years the Catholic Young Men's Society (CYMS) was established in Ireland (1849). An address to the YMCA group in Bray, County Wicklow in 1860 made it clear that the organisations were perceived as having not only different religious catchment groups but incompatible political outlooks. They may have had in common a concern with the spiritual well-being and development of young men but the speaker suggested that the YMCA was encouraging "the right kind of volunteering", whereas:

> The so-called Catholic Young Men's Associations … [aim] to make the members of them disloyal to the Government, and to send them out as volunteers to Italy; to support the temporal authority of the Pope. (*Irish Times* and *Daily Advertiser*, 28 September 1860)

The establishment of the Boy Scouts by Robert Baden Powell in 1908 was a further important milestone in the history of youth work in Britain and Ireland and one that (like the YMCA) went on to have an international impact. Less well known outside of Ireland is the fact that there was another organisation called Na Fianna Éireann ("soldiers of Ireland", also known as the National Boy Scouts). Although the idea pre-dated Baden Powell's organisation, having been established by John Bulmer Hobson in 1903, it was only in 1909 that the "Fianna" was successfully re-launched (by Bulmer Hobson and Countess Markievicz). It played a significant role in the nationalist movement and two of its early recruits, Con Colbert and Seán Heuston, were among those executed during the 1916 rebellion (the "Easter

Rising"). A key aim of the Fianna was to stop young Irish men from joining the British army, as a recruitment leaflet made clear:

> National Recruiting Campaign, 1913. – Boys, will you enlist? Not in the English Army, but in the Irish one. Join Na Fianna Éireann (*Irish National Boy Scouts*).
> The course of instruction includes: – Squad and company drill, Morse and semaphore signaling, first aid and ambulance work, pioneering and camp life, Irish language and Irish history, physical culture etc. etc. (*Weekly Irish Times*, 14 March 1914)

It was not until several years after Irish independence that the Catholic Scouts of Ireland were established in 1927 as a Scouting organisation for Catholic boys but without any militaristic trappings (and it took almost 80 more years for the two Scouting bodies to merge, as Scouting Ireland, in 2004).

This situation was roughly paralleled in youth work services for young women. The Girl Guides were established in Ireland in 1911 as part of the UK entity and as a "sister" organisation to the Boy Scouts. Baden Powell in fact remarked (without apparent intended irony) that "the girls' branch is more important [than the boys'] since it affects those who will be the mothers of the future generation of boys" (quoted in Davies and Gibson, 1967: 38). The Guides, in Ireland as elsewhere in the United Kingdom, played their part in the "war effort" during the First World War. In 1919 Chief Commissioner, Colonel W. Edgeworth-Johnstone commended them after an inspection. The newspaper reported him as saying that "all loyalists had appreciated the patriotic and useful work which had been carried out by the Girl Guides during the war. They were living in times when all loyal citizens ought to devote a certain amount of time and energies to the good of their country" (the *Irish Times*, 23 June 1919).

Some years after independence, in 1928, the Catholic Guides of Ireland were set up as an alternative to the Girl Guides and as well as having a different religious ethos the organisation set out to play its part in the process of building the new "nation" and state. They were also engaged in a "war effort" of a different kind: according to Diocesan Commissioner Mrs B. Ward in 1933, they were attempting to counter the "war on religion". Moreover, she said:

> The Catholic Girl Guides [are] a National organisation, and every guide worthy of the name [should] work for her country and help towards the revival of its Gaelic culture. One of the biggest things the Guides have to do in that respect is to study the language of their country, to play their native games, and learn the native dances and songs. (*Irish Independent*, 28 February 1933)

In addition to being stratified along religious, political and gender lines, early uniformed youth work organisations in Ireland were also frequently characterised by class differences between the adult volunteers (or "leaders" or "helpers") and the young people they were working with. This also applied in the youth club movement. One of the earliest youth clubs was established in Dublin in 1911 by a probation officer called Bridie Gargan. In 1918 it became the Belvedere News-boys' Club, and in a booklet published in 1948 to mark its 30th anniversary the following account is provided on the nature of a "club":

> A club is what happens when a group of young men actuated by Christian charity, and more or less of middle class, and a group of boys of the slums form individual and collective friendships. A club is not a building or anything else on the material

plane. It is like a bridge across the great gulf of class, environment, age, that exists between the two groups. (*Belvedere Newsboys' Club*, 1948)

While parts of the sentiment expressed here – and the particular wording used – may seem dated or even objectionable to many contemporary readers, the passage also contains an acknowledgement of a vitally important aspect of youth work practice that nowadays we would describe using words such as "process" and "relationship". Both facts – that some of the content jars and that some has a positive resonance for the modern youth work reader – are illustrations of Bernard Davies's point about the core features of youth work having been "formulated and refined" during the course of its history. The historical examples highlighted above are from the voluntary sector. The next section will show that the same is true when we look at the first, and to date most significant, direct intervention by the state into the provision of youth work in Ireland.

➜ A role for the state

The major exception to the historical pattern of voluntary (that is, non-statutory) predominance in the delivery of youth work in Ireland has been in the capital, Dublin, where since the early 1940s there has been a statutory youth service. It is significant that this initiative took place at precisely the same time that there was a breakthrough in the role of the state in British youth work. Bernard Davies notes that despite the historical primacy of the voluntary youth work sector in Britain, by the 1940s "the popular mindset on state intervention had changed significantly", not least because "whole populations and their economic and social institutions had to be mobilised to fight two total wars" in the space of a few decades (Davies, 2009: 73). Ireland had been part of the United Kingdom during the First World War and while formally neutral during the second it was still badly affected (the period was referred to nationally as "the Emergency") and it is therefore perhaps not surprising that significant state intervention in youth work began at the same time. In 1942 – the very year that all 16- and 17-year-olds in England, Scotland and Wales were required to register with their local office of the Ministry of Labour, in part to "secure contact between them and the Youth Service" (Board of Education/ Scottish Education Department, 1943: para 1; quoted in Davies, 2009: 73) – the Minister for Education in Ireland instructed the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (CDVEC) to take appropriate steps to deal with the problem of youth unemployment in the city. The result was the establishment of a sub-committee of the CDVEC called Comhairle le Leas Óige (Council for the Welfare of Youth), since re-named the City of Dublin Youth Service Board (CDYSB).

The setting up of CDYSB (as it now is) might appear to run counter to the principle of subsidiarity discussed above, but in fact the minister was acting at least partly in response to pressure from the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Dr John Charles McQuaid. That the Catholic Church's most powerful figure in Ireland at the time was prepared to see the state take an active role in relation to "youth welfare" can be attributed to two main factors. Firstly, the initiative was taking place within the vocational education sector rather than the "mainstream" secondary sector which remained firmly in the control of the churches and which (from the perspective of church figures) would be seen as much more important in shaping the values of young people. The emphasis of CDYSB in its early years was to be on the establishment of youth training centres (which were to become known as *brughanna*, roughly the Irish for "clubs" or "centres") to provide both "formal education in suitable i.e. very practical] subjects" and "physical culture, sport, hiking and camping, the cultivation of allotments, illustrated lectures and talks,

craft work of various kinds, songs and plays"; in other words, broadly speaking the kind of "social and physical training" envisaged by the Board of Education in Britain at the time (Board of Education, 1940: i).

Secondly, and much more importantly perhaps, there was by this time in Ireland an overwhelming consensus between the Roman Catholic Church and the state since the latter was no longer regarded as alien, secular and inimical to the church's interests but on the contrary was to a large degree at the church's disposal. The constitution which came into effect in 1937 had enshrined a "special position" for the Roman Catholic Church, and even if that had not been the case the church could rest assured that most of the political figures who took the key decisions and most of the senior civil servants who implemented them had studied in Catholic schools and colleges and were in possession of "safe pairs of hands". The consensus was made quite explicit on the opening night of the first *brugh na nóg* in Dublin on 8 September 1942. The event was attended by the Taoiseach [Prime Minister] of the day, the Minister for Education, the Lord Mayor of Dublin and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Dr McQuaid. The first chairperson of the new youth service, Fr D. Vaughan, remarked on this:

> Functions such as this are accustomed to be favoured with the attendance of distinguished guests; but I, at least, feel that Comhairle le Leas Óige is singularly privileged to have on its opening night this concord of Church, State and Municipality – co-operating to do honour to our purpose and to do justice to the cause for which we stand. We are conscious of this great honour, for we fully realise that, however tentative and experimental our efforts on behalf of youth may be, tonight we are sent on our mission of youth welfare with the Blessings of the Church, with the sanction of the State, and with the assurance of Municipal co-operation. (Comhairle le Leas Óige, 1942: 1)

Again paralleling the British experience, attempts were made to allay fears that statutory involvement was intended to impose uniformity or regimentation on voluntary youth work or have it swallowed up by an anti-democratic national youth movement as was happening elsewhere in Europe. The British Government circular requiring registration of 16- and 17-year-olds with the labour office stressed that it was not intended "to apply compulsion to the recruitment of youth organisations" (Board of Education/Scottish Education Department, 1943: para 1; quoted in Davies, 2009: 73). The new youth welfare service in Dublin reassured the public that it was not a youth movement in the sense in which that term was used elsewhere.

> An Chomhairle [the Council] does not … presume to take the place of good home life, or to waive the authority and influence of good parents in giving leisure facilities and instructions to the young, but it is honoured in being permitted to defend all youths from influences detrimental to their characters as citizens of Dublin and of Eire. Its influence, therefore, extends more over those whose home life is weakened either by internal disruption or external forces, and it does not claim to be a Youth Movement except in the sense that it urges its youths to "move on" from the street corner and the toss school into the better atmosphere of educational centres and the more natural influences of the home. (Comhairle le Leas Óige, 1944: 5)

Apart from the question of a "movement" and the relationship between youth work and the family, the above remarks raise another issue that has been central to debates about youth work policy and practice in Ireland ever since; namely the question of whether youth work should be "targeted" at specific groups (the

"needy", the "disadvantaged", and more recently the "socially excluded") or pro-
vided on a universal basis. This is not just an Irish issue of course. It arose in several
contributions to the first Blankenberge history workshop and publication, as the
editors note (Verschelden et al., 2009: 157; and for comments on the Flemish case
see Coussée, 2009: 48-49).

In fact, in one of the earliest sustained Irish contributions to what we now call
youth studies, the Jesuit priest Fr Richard S. Devane discussed both the merits and
demerits of youth movements and the related issue of (what we now call!) target-
ing, as well as questioning the motivations of the state relating to youth and youth
work. While rejecting the totalitarian ideologies associated with certain European
youth movements, he suggested that their concern with embracing "youth as a
whole" was something from which democratic societies could and should learn.
Writing around the time of the first significant statutory intervention in youth work
in Ireland he wrote:

> The difference of approach to Youth between the democratic and anti-democratic
> states may be said to lie in this: the former have not envisaged Youth as a whole,
> not even the whole of working Youth. They have been concerned only with the
> unemployed element of young workers. Moreover, they have been moved to action
> as regards this helpless section, not so much in the interest of unemployed youth
> itself as by the fact that danger was to be feared to the State from the demoralisation
> arising from unemployment of youth; the State acted in self-interest rather than in
> the interest of youth. (Devane, 1942: 52)

Like the ongoing debate about the relationship between youth movements and
youth work (Coussée, 2009) and the question of whether youth work should be
universal or targeted (Devlin and Gunning, 2009), the issue of whose interests are
being served or promoted by statutory involvement in youth work is a recurring
one. It was explicitly referred to in the title of Davies's publication (1979) chal-
lenging the policy move in the United Kingdom "from social education to social
and life skills training". In the Irish context it is one of the key issues addressed in
a recent collection giving a critical assessment of contemporary youth and com-
munity work theory, policy and practice (Forde, Kiely and Meade, 2009; Treacy,
2009). It is important to remember, of course, that the same question can and
should be asked about any institutionalised adult provision for young people,
whether "statutory" or "voluntary".

➜ Youth work's "core features" – a case of continuity?

So far in this article we have come across a number of significant historical dimen-
sions of youth work in Ireland, some of which have lost or are losing their rel-
evance or potency (the role of the churches and most strikingly the Roman Catholic
church; the significance of the "national question" in the formation and develop-
ment of youth organisations) and others that remain central, some of which were
summarised in the last paragraph above. To these we might add certain "core
features" such as those mentioned earlier, at least some of which have now been
officially enshrined in the legislative definition of youth work (and others of which
are, I would argue, entirely compatible with it). These include the educational pur-
pose of youth work, particularly its focus on non-formal and informal learning, the
voluntary participation of young people and the centrality of positive relationships,
the importance of starting with the needs, interests and aspirations of the young
people themselves ("where they are at"), but also of striving to go beyond these.
To make it clear that matters such as these have been conscious concerns of youth

workers in Ireland for many years, we need only consider some incisive remarks from a magazine published by Comhairle le Leas Óige (now the City of Dublin Youth Service) in 1944 to mark the first Dublin "Youth Week". In one contribution a "club chaplain" comments as follows:

> It is in many respects more difficult to be a youth leader than a schoolmaster. Both are educationalists. To the one the pupils come compulsorily, to the other voluntarily. This is a vital difference. In the one education is direct, in the other indirect. For the one there is a definite programme fixed by outside authority, for the other the programme confirms to the needs and the desires of the members, who have to be inspired by the leaders themselves… (Comhairle le Leas Óige, 1944: 21)

Elsewhere in the magazine a "youth leader" writes about "my club experience":

> The leader has much to give, but what he gives must be the spontaneous offering of a heart fired with a great love of youth, and a will to understand and sympathise with its problems. He must strive ceaselessly to awaken in those young hearts committed to his care a love and trust from which will arise naturally a confidence in his guidance and leadership culminating in the establishment of a bond of friendship which will endure beyond the years of youth. (Comhairle le Leas Óige, 1944: 28)

Of course for the youth worker to adopt such an approach and maintain it consistently it is necessary that he or she possesses a requisite body of knowledge and skill but also the necessary personal qualities, and it cannot simply be assumed just because someone is keen or willing to work with young people that that he or she has these, or has had the chance to develop them. This raises issues of training which have come to be regarded as crucial today but which were also beginning to be recognised in Irish youth work even in the 1940s.

> In the main, the leadership of Youth is now carried out by people who have performed a full day's work. The whole responsibility cannot be theirs. In many cases the leaders are completely unsuited for the work … The establishment of a Training Centre for Youth Leaders should provide the opportunity for [leaders] to come under the influence of corrective training. (Comhairle le Leas Óige, 1943)

The author of these words, in acknowledging that the "whole responsibility" for youth work practice cannot be left with people who have other full-time occupations, was implicitly raising the issue of professionalisation and the associated question of the relationship between the paid worker and the volunteer. This too remains a key issue for contemporary policy and practice. Most commonly the term "professional" is used to mean not only effective, efficient and ethical but also employed (or, specifically, paid). This can create tensions for volunteers who feel that their contribution is demeaned by being regarded as less than or other than "professional". The National Youth Work Development Plan in Ireland attempted to address some of these concerns. It acknowledged that youth work is a profession – an important statement in itself – but its approach to professionalism is one that need not exclude volunteers.

> The doing of youth work, in the sense understood in this Development Plan, requires a particular combination of knowledge, skills and personal qualities. This is the case whether the person in question is a volunteer or a paid worker, and is more important than ever in the light of the current concern with child protection and related matters.

> Youth work is not just a vocation, although almost inevitably the people who do it have a particularly strong sense of personal commitment to the work and to the wellbeing of young people. It is a profession, in the sense that all those who do it, both volunteer and paid, are required and obliged, in the interests of young people and of society as a whole, to carry out their work to the highest possible standards and to be accountable for their actions. (Department of Education and Science, 2003: 13)

The working out of such an approach to professionalism and professionalisation in practice is just one of the significant challenges confronting the youth work sector in Ireland at present. In this as in so many other ways it has much in common with its European neighbours.

➜ Conclusion

This paper began with the definition of youth work in Ireland's Youth Work Act 2001. It suggested that this definition provides the youth work sector in Ireland with a certain degree of clarity regarding its nature and purpose (although there are of course tensions and challenges when it comes to implementing it and in practice the relationship between youth work and other forms of provision for young people is still sometimes unclear). It also suggested that the definition reflects the historical origins and development of Irish youth work, and the remainder of the article gave selected examples of important elements and events in that history, focusing (of necessity, for reasons of space) on the early years and attempting to identify points of continuity and discontinuity with the present context. The educational focus of youth work, the emphasis on the voluntary participation of young people and the primacy of voluntary organisations in the direct delivery of youth work are aspects of its history that have not only continued into the present but have been enshrined in the legislative framework enacted in 2001.

The author knows from conversations with youth work colleagues in other European countries that this is a situation many would like to be in. The legislative definition is certainly a most important affirmation of significant aspects of the "core features" of youth work as they have been "formulated and refined" over the years (Davies, 2009: 63). Moreover, the publication two years after the Youth Work Act of the *National Youth Work Development Plan* (Department of Education and Science, 2003) and, flowing from that, other recent developments such as the establishment of an all-Ireland professional endorsement framework for youth work education and training (the North South Education and Training Standards Committee, NSETS) and a Quality Standards Framework (QSF) for the youth work sector (currently being finalised for implementation after the evaluation of a pilot phase) have helped to put in place an infrastructure that has the potential both to serve and sustain youth work's distinctive contribution, through non-formal and informal education, to young people's individual and collective needs.

However, a further very important development must be noted at the conclusion of this paper. In mid-2008 the recently appointed Taoiseach, Brian Cowen (who succeeded to the office after the resignation of Bertie Ahern), announced that the Youth Affairs Section located within the Department of Education and Science (as it had been for most of the previous 40 years, in keeping with the view that youth work is primarily an educational process) was to be integrated within the Office of the Minister for Children (OMC), to be re-named the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA). The OMC was established in 2005 and is attached to the Department of Health and Children, but it also serves as a "strategic

environment" within which that Department's responsibilities relating to children can be better co-ordinated with early years' education (the responsibility of the Department of Education and Science) and the Youth Justice Service of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (Lalor et al., 2007: 288). The integration of the Youth Affairs Section within the OMCYA (as it is now called) is likely to prove as significant in the long term as any other initiative in the history of Irish youth work, but it is too early to anticipate the full implications. One immediate result was that responsibility for youth work, assigned under the Youth Work Act 2001 to the Minister for Education, was reassigned by statutory instrument to the Minister for Health and Children, despite the fact that youth work is defined in the legislation as a programme of education and the related fact that the statutory bodies given responsibility under the act for ensuring its provision (primarily by voluntary organisations) are the vocational education committees.

These apparent incongruities may turn out to be relatively minor administrative matters, and may be far outweighed in the long term by the benefits of integrating policy and services for young people with those for children (and there are many obvious potential benefits). However, the experience elsewhere of such "integration" would suggest the need for caution, particularly the experience in England and Wales where the distinctive educational role of youth work has been severely undermined by developments in policy and services for "children and young people" in recent years. Bernard Davies quotes the words of Beverly Smith, the British Government's "youth minister", in 2005: "Primarily [youth work is] about activities rather than informal education. Constructive activities, things that are going to enhance young people's enjoyment and leisure … I want activities to be the main focus" (Davies, 2009: 64).

Nothing that has happened since then suggests that the alarm felt by most youth workers who heard (or heard of) those words was misplaced. Hopefully everyone involved in youth work in Ireland – policy makers themselves, practitioners and the young people they work with – can learn from the experience of our near neighbours and ensure that the advances made in recent years through the youth work legislation, the national development plan and related initiatives, can be consolidated and built upon further in a manner that acknowledges and responds appropriately to the challenges of the contemporary context but also recognises and retains the valuable dimensions of youth work that have evolved over the last (first?) 150 years of its history.

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Péter Wootsch

Zigzagging in a labyrinth – Towards "good" Hungarian youth work

Understanding the history of youth work is an important aspect of understanding its social and political function. Yet to approach youth work from a historical perspective is not an easy enterprise. Which historical methods do we use to gain a better understanding? Do we use a timeline approach, thus putting events into chronological order? Or do we try to understand the psychological effect of past events on people's attitudes? In other words: do we talk about the changing methodology in youth work or do we examine changes in youth policy on which youth work is built? It is like a labyrinth. I would like to illustrate this dilemma using the example of the history of youth work in Hungary.

If we want to examine people's attitudes in the past, we can use "tags", which will identify the most important events, and political and ideological influences on Hungarians. Perhaps these tags could be widely applied to other countries in central and eastern Europe as well. They symbolise the wide range of influences that shaped people's political minds in the region. Consequently, they also influenced youth issues.

Our tags

Soviets	**Berlin Mauer**	Cold War	Communism
Poznan	**1956**	Pluralism	Uprising	'Sovietization'
		Oppression		
	Stalinism	1981	**Fascism**	
	Socialism with a human face or reform-communism		
Gdansk	1968	Solidarnosc	Revolution
1953	Prague	**Tanks**	Molotov cocktail
	Communists	*Iron curtain*	
	Communist youth organisation		

(KISZ, FDJ, Комсомол)

What does history mean in this context? I would like to share three quotations with you to illustrate different perspectives:

- Aristotle said: "Poetry is finer and more philosophical than history, for poetry expresses the universal and history only the particular."
- George Santayana said: "Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it."
- And thirdly, Friedrich von Schiller said: "The history of the world is the world's court of justice."

So do we use history to understand the path which has led us to the position in which we find ourselves presently? Or do we use history as a base for judging how relevant the contents and messages of the previous generations were?

We know that *Romeo and Juliet* is a history of love. Every love has its own history and this is how young people deal with the past in their present.

The last decades of Hungary could be called a "history of interruption". At the beginning of the 20th century Hungary's youth organisations and those of most countries in Europe had very similar landscapes: Scouts and Girl Guides, Catholic or Protestant young people's movements, workers, rural youth or those against the consumption of alcohol. Yet this relatively linear development was interrupted by the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles, when Hungary lost two thirds of its territory, 65% of its population and approximately 70% of its natural resources. This strongly affected the youth movements, because the nationalists and revisionists defined the political and social role of youth work. For example, after Trianon (the Hungarian reference to the Treaty of Versailles), it became compulsory to start the day in elementary schools with a prayer: *Hiszek egy istenben, hiszek egy hazàban, hiszek Nagy-Magyarorszàg feltàmadàsàban*, which means "I believe in one God, I believe in one country, I believe in the resurrection of Great Hungary."

The Second World War and the Hungarian way of participating in the war, on the side of the German Army, was a logical continuation of the post-Trianon period. The consequences of the Second World War for Hungary were tragic: 1 million lives lost, approximately half of which were Hungarian Jews. After the war, optimistic attempts were made to join the western European community of democratic states. However, this ambition could not be fulfilled, as the process was interrupted

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by the communists, supported by a Stalinist Soviet Union: the comrades arrived in 1948 and stayed until 1989.

The youth-led 1956 uprising and revolution were only a short "intermezzo", yet its consequences were tough: some 280 people were executed, more than 30 thousand were arrested and imprisoned for many years, and around 300 thousand Hungarians emigrated. The influence of 1956 on young people and youth movements was enormous: the political establishment was afraid of the potential of young rebels, and set up an airtight control system to direct all aspects of young people's lives, from leisure time to education. The Hungarian communist youth organisation (KISZ) was created in March 1957 by the Communist Party, and it remained the only youth movement permitted until 1989. It was the state's most effective tool for exercising control over young people and it co-operated closely with the secret police. Hungary's single political party followed the philosophy: "Who controls the youth, controls the system." And so it did.

The year 1968 stood for different things in divided Europe: in central and eastern Europe it meant "Prague Spring", another failed attempt to achieve democracy. In western Europe youth and student revolts challenged and changed existing democratic systems. They affected Hungarian youth policy in a contradictory manner: in 1971 Hungary passed one of the first youth laws in Europe, but it still remained a tool for controlling young people, and yet certain freedoms were accorded in small niches of leisure time. "Let's give them a bit of Jimi Hendrix, but no Cohn-Bendit!" Big Brother kept an eye on young people and made it impossible for them to become active citizens. New institutions were established during that period, for example, youth research became legal again, the KISZ established a new youth leaders training scheme and the term "youth policy" found its way into political speeches.

If we imagine history as a curriculum vitae, we can illustrate how succeeding generations of young people were exposed to the influence of the respective older generations.

History is a CV? Do we need another hero?

Yes, we can… in…	1956	1968	1989	2004
Born in:				
1940/45 war generation	11/16	23/28	44/49	59/64
1950/55 baby boom generation	1/5	13/18	34/39	49/54
1960/65 generation of consolidation	0	3/8	24/29	39/44
1970/75 accessed generation	0	0	14/19	29/34
1980/85 crisis generation	0	0	5/9 our kids	19/24 in Europe
1990/95 generation of democracy	0	0	0	9/14

The economic depression of the 1980s created new tensions against the political regime and became the starting point of the erosion of the establishment. This time, intellectuals led the protest, not youth. Young people took to the streets only in 1988, when the first public mass demonstrations took place.

The biggest change in youth policy during that period was the establishment of the State Office of Youth and Sport, symbolising the party's intention to share power with the government, that is an attempt at (re-)establishing a somewhat neutral state. The "Party-State" had started to dissolve. New legislation was passed in 1989 to allow the setting up of non-governmental organisations; new youth organisations were created that were independent of the KISZ. The Miszot, a kind of national youth council, was the very first pluralistic, representative body of civil society in Hungary.

The year of all years was 1989. More and more laws were passed to guarantee the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. This legislation helped society determine its role in the new democracy and participate in negotiations between the Communist Party and the democratic opposition.

The public funeral of Imre Nagy in June 1989, the Prime Minister during the 1956 uprising, who was executed in 1958 and declared *persona non grata* for decades, marked the definite end of the socialist regime.

Only a few weeks later, the first pluralist Hungarian youth delegation participated in the last (communist) World Youth Festival in Pyongyang, North Korea and shocked the other Socialist bloc delegations by joining a Scandinavian organised demonstration against the killing of student protestors in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. In the meantime, Hungary opened the Iron Curtain to allow thousands of East German refugees to leave for Austria and West Germany.

On 23 October 1989, the Republic of Hungary was declared and the newly established democratic constitution entered in force. It reestablished the role of the state as based on rule of law and could have opened the way for the creation of a new youth policy, reflecting the real needs of young people.

The first free elections in 1990 resulted in a Conservative/Christian-Democrat coalition government. The first years of the new democracy and the transition period were dominated by economic reform and setting up a free market economy. Between 1989 and 1995, approximately 80% of the previously state-owned industries, services and properties were privatised; around 1.6 million people had to change their work place; and some 1.2 million people lost employment. The National Youth Council was occupied with their claims to receive their share of the so-called "youth property", that is the estate of youth camps, training centres and office buildings previously owned by KISZ. This situation was not favorable to the development of a new youth policy as youth issues were low priority on the political agenda.

A new government was elected in 1994 and the coalition of socialists and liberals was in office until 1998. The political philosophy changed again, and with it the understanding of the importance of youth policy. Mobilitàs, the Hungarian National Youth Service was established in 1995; later on Mobilitàs took on the function of the National Agency for the European Commission's Youth for Action programme. The National Youth Council was transformed into the Children and Youth Council of Interests, a corporative body working with the government. One

youth department was established within the Ministry of Education under a liberal minister, but another youth department was created within the socialist-led Prime Minister's Office. Party politics had a strong effect on planning and implementing measures in favour of youth. The Council of Europe's European Youth Centre Budapest was inaugurated in December 1995, but it had little effect on national youth policy development.

Between 1998 and 2002, the former opposition took on government, a coalition of liberal conservatives, Christian-Democrats and the Smallholders Party. Again, the political philosophy changed and families were given priority. At the same time, far reaching structural reforms were implemented in favour of the youth field: a Ministry of Youth and Sports was founded and a decentralised infrastructure was set up, based on youth offices in the seven regions of Hungary. The Mobilitàs National Youth Service enlarged its scope of action and took on youth research and a drug prevention centre. In 2002, a national youth workers training scheme was created.

After the following national elections in 2002, once again the government changed and a Socialist-Liberal coalition returned to power. It changed youth policy and its underlying philosophy; some elements of the previous structures were kept, others discontinued. A Ministry of Children, Youth and Sports operated until 2004; youth affairs moved to the Ministry of Youth, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, which was in operation until 2006. Joining the European Union in 2004 had a strong positive impact on the dynamic of youth work, mainly through the European Commission's Youth for Action programme. During this period, party politics divided civil society into "winners", or those loyal to the government, and "losers", or those who were not part of the ruling political circles. This situation opened the way to corruption involving support budgets for youth NGOs, which generated a lot of attention in the media.

For the first time since 1990, a government was confirmed in office, as a result of the general elections held in 2006. Youth issues disappeared from the list of political priorities; a small youth department operated within the huge Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. The state budget for youth issues was dramatically reduced; the Mobilitàs National Youth Service lost its independent status and more than half of its staff. The initiative to create a national youth action plan started in 2007. A national youth policy report was drawn up with the Council of Europe youth sector, based on the work of an international review team. Two years later, in October 2009, the national youth action plan was adopted by the Hungarian Parliament, however the plan does not take into account the Council of Europe's recommendations to the desired extent and many of the support structures needed for its implementation have disappeared in the meantime.

The media called this government the "KISZ government", meaning that the prime minister and several of his cabinet ministers were previously leaders of the communist youth organisation during its last years of existence. This historical fact gives us insight into the reasons for the incoherent development of youth policy in Hungary. National and international experience, evaluations and examples of good practice do not necessarily lead to a youth policy based on commonly agreed democratic values.

In 2009, the Hungarian youth sector reflected the confusion and lack of orientation characterised by its long zigzagging route: it is scattered, vulnerable, and incoherent and its protagonists are insecure about its future. There are as many good to

excellent examples as there are bad ones in Hungarian youth policy, youth work and research practice.

A question that clearly needs to be asked to the present and future actors in the Hungarian youth field: "Can we learn together from our common history?"

The history of youth work – The South African perspective

Lwazi Mboyi

➜ Demographics

South Africa is situated on the southern tip of the African continent and is widely regarded as one of its most critical economic players. The population is spread over nine provinces. The country has a predominantly young population, with youth (ages 14-35) comprising 40% of a total population of approximately 50 million people. Unfortunately, the highest unemployment levels are found amongst youth, with current statistics indicating that there is a 70% unemployment rate in this category. A more detailed breakdown reflects that 0-13 years constitute 29.3%; 14-24 years constitute 22.1%; 25-35 years constitute 18% and 36 and over constitute the remaining 30.5%. As evidenced by these statistics, the South African population is predominantly young.

➜ Historical perspective

South Africa emerged out of a history of deep divisions in economic, social, political, cultural and other spheres. Naturally, this produced a deeply divided society which left the predominantly black majority of the population poor, underprivileged, lacking skills, and with no access to appropriate

resources. The African National Congress (ANC) had been at the forefront of the struggle to liberate the disenfranchised masses since 1912.

Under the banner of the ANC, youth movements like the African National Congress Youth League were established in the 1940s, led by such leaders as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and many others. Other youth movements were established in the 1930s, such as the South African Association of Youth Clubs. These youth movements played a pivotal role in mobilising young people into activism, whilst leading the struggles of youth for a better life. The 1960s ushered in an era of escalating state brutality and the banning of most political, youth and student movements.

Throughout this period, there was limited or no focus on youth development by government, in particular when it came to the majority of oppressed youth. Additionally, this period was devoid of any government framework to guide interventions in the youth sector. In a nutshell, there was no state supported policy, programme or initiative aimed at enhancing the development of young people.

Over the years, there were pockets of resistance, made up of young people, to the racially-charged, oppressive systems of government. In June 1976, there were unprecedented student uprisings throughout South Africa, primarily against the introduction of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in schools. These uprisings were a testimony to the highly effective organisational capability of youth and student movements, under very repressive conditions, imposed by the government of the day. These laid a foundation for a solid revival of youth movements in South Africa.

More importantly, this marked a significant turning point in the history of youth movements in the country. These regained significant ground in the space of mass mobilisation and re-engaged young people in structured campaigns, in spite of the repressive government.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), both faith- and community-based organisations played a significant role in supporting youth movements. In their own right, they also played a major role in developing and executing youth development programmes and ensuring that young people were equipped with necessary skills.

International youth movements emerged through various avenues out of anti-apartheid movements worldwide, and also played a major role in supporting local youth movements. Relations established during this period would extend into post-apartheid South Africa in the form of support for youth development in the country. In 1983, through the influence of the political movements in exile, the United Democratic Front was established to lead the efforts of the masses of South Africans in the struggle for freedom. The establishment of the South African Youth Congress (Sayco), as an umbrella body of youth formations in the country, complemented the United Democratic Front in the youth space. To a large extent, Sayco provided leadership and guidance to most youth formations in the country.

The majority of young people were active in the political arena as part of ongoing struggles to usher in democratic dispensation. The unfortunate consequence was that this period denied a significant number of young people access to proper schooling and education. These circumstances also meant a lack of access to acquiring critical skills. The saddest reality is that a significant number of young

people who emerged out of that era are without secondary and tertiary education and lack the skills needed to guarantee their survival in a country that is developing into a significant player in the current world order. Further, this would also inhibit their contribution to South Africa's development once freedom had been attained.

Political movements and youth movements were no longer banned in 1990 and South Africa became a democracy in 1994 when democratic elections were held. The first youth conference hosted by the democratic government was held in 1995, and was indicative of a paradigm shift in the government's approach and attitude to the plight of young people in the country.

➜ Democratic dispensation

Key to the reconstruction and development efforts of South African society was the need to institutionalise mechanisms to redress the past imbalances through appropriate policy instruments, the provision of services and mobilising resources and other mechanisms. The same would apply to young people, taking into account that they had been largely affected by the impact of apartheid and had been at the forefront of the liberation struggle. The government set out to address the National Youth Commission to outline a process that would deal with the challenges facing young people through:

• developing appropriate policy instruments;
• setting up institutional mechanisms;
• promoting better co-ordination and synergy amongst organs of government on youth matters;
• consolidating relations with civil society;
• promoting ongoing research to support decision making at the highest level.

In the context of the above, in 1996 the government established the National Youth Commission responsible for matters of young people's development within the President's Office. The commission was led by a full-time board and a CEO. Provincial youth commissions were also established with the offices of the premiers of provinces (regional heads of government). State departments appointed youth focal point officers responsible for youth matters within their departments. Youth officers were also appointed at a local government level within mayors' offices.

The commissions were established with a fairly complex mandate to, *inter alia*:

• draw up national youth policy;
• develop a framework and make recommendations for its implementation;
• ensure implementation of policy provisions by government at all levels;
• co-ordinate with state departments and agencies that are monitoring progress;
• provide ongoing advice to government;
• develop research development.

In 2001, the Umsobomvu Youth Fund was established, and was responsible for, *inter alia*:

• providing entrepreneurial support and guidance;
• skills development on entrepreneurship;
• financial support to young entrepreneurs;
• career counselling.

These agencies were established to make meaningful contributions to the development of young people under the democratic dispensation.

In civil society, young people were organised under the banner of the South African Youth Council, the umbrella body of all youth organisations in civil society. The council became a critical partner in government initiatives directed at young people. As a civil society body, it made sure that these initiatives were grounded in the reality of young people's needs and aspirations. To this day the South African Youth Council remains an indispensable government partner in the course of developing young people.

➜ Policy provisions and programmatic interventions

As part of the government's response to the challenges facing young people, informed by the need for a comprehensive policy framework, the first national youth policy for the country was completed in 1997, following extensive consultations with all relevant stakeholders, particularly young people. This critical policy instrument identified some of the key challenges faced by South African society and outlined possible intervention mechanisms to address them. The National Youth Policy was revised into a National Youth Development Policy Framework (2002-07). The revised framework placed greater emphasis on young people as important citizens whose needs and aspirations need to be prioritised, particularly through government intervention.

All these policy instruments were responding to the following identified challenges:

- poverty – bearing in mind the fact that the majority of young people came from poor families and lived in poverty. This would be one of the major challenges facing government;
- unemployment – unemployment in South Africa was estimated at about 40%, with youth unemployment estimated at a staggering 70%. This still remains a major challenge for South Africa;
- health problems – young people remain faced with varied health challenges, including HIV and Aids, opportunistic infections and diseases, among many others;
- lack of skills, experience and opportunities – as eluded to earlier, the impact of apartheid was devastating to young people as far as skills acquisition was concerned. Most of them have none of the skills and requisites needed to survive as part of an economically active population;
- crime and violence – young people had been affected by crime and violence as both victims and perpetrators, meaning that interventions aimed at addressing this challenge had to be cognisant of this important dynamic;
- information – young people had limited access to all forms of information that would help them live meaningful lives;
- education – the commitment to the struggle for freedom had denied young people access to proper education and led to some of them dropping out of school early and without appropriate qualifications. Very few attained tertiary qualifications.

All developed policy instruments identified common areas of strategic intervention, inclusive of, *inter alia*, the following:

- social well being;
- education and training;
- economic participation and empowerment;

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- justice and safety;
- social mobilisation, capacity building and advocacy.

The conceptualised programmes of various government agencies meant to address some of these challenges, informed by the frameworks mentioned above. Suffice to add that the current Youth Policy Framework (2009-14), as revised, also reflects the same areas of strategic intervention as previous policies, with one additional focus area, youth work.

➜ Youth work

South Africa views youth work as focusing on the holistic development of a young person (spiritual, emotional, social, political), taking effect at community and grass-roots level. Youth work identifies desired developmental outcomes of young people and determines practices that need to be in place to achieve them. Youth work could be considered more as a profession that requires a certain level of experience and qualification. It can be formal or informal. More importantly, it is perceived as giving primacy to young people as opposed to other professions such as social work, which deals with all sectors of the population.

In the South African context and given the complexities of our past, youth work was predominantly practised through faith-based organisations, such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), the Salvation Army, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), community-based organisations, student organisations and youth movements. There was no state involvement before democracy was attained in 1994.

The launch of the South African Youth Workers Association in 1998 was a significant milestone in advancing the course of youth work in the country. The association started out as an advocacy project of the South African Association of Youth Clubs in1992, to focus on the following:

- promoting the recognition and professionalisation of youth work;
- being the professional association of youth workers;
- supporting youth work activities to strengthen civil society;
- promoting education, training and skills development in youth work;
- facilitating national and international networks of youth work;
- appraising the quality and standards of youth work involvement;
- promoting and supporting research in youth work;
- supporting policy formulation processes.

It is important to note that after 1994, youth activism declined, along with a decline in both the power and organisational capabilities of organised formations in youth work. There was a systematic collapse of the major youth formations that were powerful and extremely influential, such as the Joint Enrichment Project. Currently, organisations such as the South African Youth Council, the South African Youth Workers Association and the South African Association of Youth Clubs are still in existence, but they are much weaker. Political youth formations are still active and strong in some cases. The state entered the youth work space through its own youth agencies such as the National Youth Commission and the Umsobomvu Youth Fund. Many NGOs, community- and faith-based organisations still play a major role in youth work, particularly Junior Achievement, the South African Student Voluntary Organisation, Slot, the ECYD, and Rag.

Challenges

Youth work is still highly fragmented and inherently lacking co-ordination. It is still largely informal, with no formal recognition and status. The lack of recognition limits capacity for proper monitoring and accountability. It further limits the ability to determine whether organisations are meeting developmental targets, nationally and internationally, such as the United Nations millennium development goals.

Donor contributions are in decline and government funding is limited. Youth work also continues to suffer from an unfortunate perception that it is meant only for volunteers. Coupled with that is the realistic challenge of limited career options and continually bringing the younger generation on board.

The case for professionalisation

In the South African context, a case has been consistently made for the professionalisation of youth work. The first youth policy in 1997, subsequent policy instruments, various civil society organisations have all recommended professionalisation. They argue that, among other things, professionalisation will:

- set minimum standards for the profession and provide practitioners with an operational framework. This will further help regulate the practice, as well as promote registration with professional councils;
- provide systems to govern youth work and ensure its professionalisation;
- provide minimum qualification standards for youth workers, thus minimising abuse of the practice and provide protection to legitimate practitioners;
- provide career paths and job opportunities for youth workers; and
- raise the profile of the practice.

Any case being made for professionalisation should take into account that there have been youth work practitioners exercising for a long time without the provisions suggested above. Recognition of this experience is important in all efforts aimed at professionalisation so that it remains an inclusive process.

The state also has a significant role to play, in particular facilitating the recognition of youth work as a profession and developing a regulatory framework. The state must also ensure that youth focal point officers in state departments are appointed who will ensure dedicated focus on youth work by their respective departments. Research must be an essential element of the state's work to ensure that its decision making is based on sound evidence. More importantly, the state must develop a training and development framework, in accordance with the South African Qualifications Authority. Linked to that is the responsibility of monitoring and evaluation.

Through ongoing consultations with the youth sector, the state must ensure that all youth policy provisions are implemented. Finally, the state has a fundamental role to play in the funding of youth work activities.

The fourth democratic government, elected in April 2009, has announced the dissolution of the National Youth Commission and the Umsobomvu Youth Fund. These institutions will be replaced by the National Youth Development Agency, which will lead all government youth development and youth work activities in the country. This will, hopefully, further advance the course of young people in South African society.

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➔ Conclusion

Youth work remains an essential component in the development of young people. All historical evidence points to the significant role played by youth work in moulding the young, which necessitates clear and dedicated youth work programmes in our current environments. Fortunately, there seems to be a growing acceptance of youth work throughout the world, indicating the need to intensify our efforts. Sharing of experiences in this journey is critical for the benefit of all the young people we seek to serve.

The history of European youth policy

Bjørn Jaaberg Hansen

➜ Introduction

I am not a researcher, but "practising history" is a hobby of mine. I have been involved in European youth policy for some years. When we discussed "the history of youth work" in the first Blankenberge seminar I found there was a lack of attention on the history of European youth policy. I made some informal comments on that and now I have to pay for it and do some work.

I have been actively involved in youth policy at national and European level since I entered university in the early 1960s, starting in the Norwegian Labour Party student organisation, the student parliament at the University of Oslo, the Norwegian National Union of Students, the Norwegian Youth Council, the Council of European National Youth Committees (CENYC) and I have now worked for 25 years in the ministry responsible for youth policy in Norway. I will make some reflections on youth policy developments in Europe, mainly from the last part of the 1960s to the last part of the 1980s. This will be a presentation based on my own experiences.

➜ After the Second World War

To understand the youth policies in the 1960s and the 1970s, we have to start with the period after the Second World War. In the spirit of co-operation between the allied countries during the war, the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) was founded in London in November 1945. Membership was open to national youth organisations. In 1946 the International Union of Students (IUS) was founded with national unions of students as members. But Europe was soon split along the Iron Curtain, and WFDY was more and more dominated by communist youth organisations and by the Soviet Union. As a consequence the World Assembly of Youth (WAY) was established by Western European youth leaders with its headquarters in Brussels. WAY was based on national WAY-committees. CENYC was established as a European regional committee of WAY in 1963. In many countries they were identical to national youth councils. The student movement also split, and for Western Europe the International Conference was established in Stockholm in1950 (Oluf Palme was one of the founders).

➜ 1968

This year has become an icon in European youth and student policies, mainly due to the "student revolution" in Paris. I draw your attention to two other incidents that year that were perhaps even more influential in European youth policies than the student uprisings:

• In 1968 the Soviet Union and some of the allies in the Warsaw Pact, invaded Czechoslovakia and stopped the Prague Spring. This event had a serious affect on youth and student leaders in Western Europe, especially in the student movement. It took a number of years to re-establish the contacts with the International Union of Students.

• During the 1960s Western European youth and student organisations had received financial support from the Foundation of Youth and Student Affairs. In 1968 it was discovered that the CIA was behind this foundation. This resulted in serious difficulties for a number of international non-governmental youth and student organisations. The International Conference was dissolved (some work continued in the International University Exchange Fund) and the World Assembly of Youth ended its work at European level. Several individual organisations had grave deep problems.

In the beginning of the 1970s governmental funding of international youth activities was introduced. In Norway the Ministry of Foreign Affairs established a system of grants to international youth activities, the Nordic Council of Ministers established a Nordic Youth Foundation and the European Youth Foundation of the Council of Europe was established from 1973. Also the EU – at that time the European Economic Communities (EEC) – included in its report at the summit in The Hague in 1969 a paragraph on youth work and youth policy, which later resulted in financial support to the European work of the International Non-Governmental Organisations. This is not a coincidence. Western governments had an interest in giving "their" organisations the best possible conditions for having a constructive dialogue with "the other side".

➜ The Council of Europe[1]

The European Youth Centres

Already in 1960, the idea of establishing a European Youth Centre was launched in a resolution by the Parliamentary Assembly (Consultative Assembly). The youth policy field had just then become a part of the responsibility of the Council of Europe as a part of the mandate of the Council for Cultural Co-operation.

The idea of a youth centre was developed during the coming years and a scheme for a residential youth centre (board and lodging for 60 participants) was ready in 1962. The project collapsed however because the governments could not agree on the purpose and tasks of such a centre. Instead the Council for Cultural Co-operation and the out-of-school education committee decided to establish the experimental European Youth Centre in October 1963. During the years of the experimental youth centre, the idea of making a permanent, residential youth centre in Strasbourg matured. The various European youth organisations, which had in the beginning been a bit reluctant to the idea, started constructive lobbying work to promote a permanent youth centre, and more and more governments were convinced to support the proposal.

A detailed plan for the establishment of a European Youth Centre (EYC) was submitted to the Committee of Ministers. They decided in April 1967 to agree in principle to the realisation of a permanent European Youth Centre in Strasbourg. Supported by the offer of a building site by the city of Strasbourg and a Norwegian offer to finance the architects' preliminary plan, the construction of the centre could start. Formally the European Youth Centre was in existence from 1 January 1971 when the Committee of Ministers adopted the statutes. The building was completed and operational from 1 June 1972. Its capacity was doubled in 1978 and the centre was renovated in 2008.

The European Youth Foundation

During the discussion on the establishment of the European youth centre, the idea was launched to create a European Youth Foundation (EYF). The French-German youth office, established in 1963, functioned as a model. The idea of establishing a Youth Foundation (Jugendwerk) was also supported by Willy Brandt in his inauguration speech as Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1969. The above-mentioned events in 1968 also played a part in gaining support for the project. The "scandals" related to the Foundation of Youth and Students Affairs convinced many youth organisations that there was a need for an open and democratically controlled source of financing for international youth and student co-operation.

The decision to establish the European Youth Foundation was taken by the Committee of Ministers in May 1972 and it was in function from March 1973. The foundation was however not formally a Council of Europe institution. It had an independent structure with the three organs: the Intergovernmental Committee, the Governing Board and the Advisory Committee. The Council of Europe provided the secretariat of the foundation. The idea behind the decision to make an independent institution was to make it possible for non-members of the Council of Europe to

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1. The period until 1978 is based on a pamphlet written by Ragnar Sem, the first director of the youth centre, published by the Council of Europe in 1979.

take part in the EYF. At this time the Council of Europe was a rather small organisation. It was a western European organisation that had fewer than 20 member countries. The early 1970s was a period in which pan-European co-operation, beyond the old Iron Curtain was starting up. Some people believed that eastern European non-member countries would join the European Youth Foundation as it was an institution independent from the Council of Europe. This never happened.

"Co-management"

Already at the time of the establishment of the experimental youth centre a co-management principle was introduced. An administrative board with six governmental and five representatives from voluntary youth movements was set up. In addition a consultative group of voluntary youth organisations was established. The co-management principle was introduced also in the EYC and EYF, be it in a slightly different form.

The development of the Council of Europe institutions

The youth policy of the Council of Europe was not static, but in more or less constant development, especially after the establishment of the EYC and EYF. The national ministries responsible for youth policy were only involved when they had a seat in one of the governing boards of the EYC or EYF. This changed when the ad hoc committee on youth policy was established in 1982 and the first Conference of European Ministers responsible for Youth was organised in 1985. Since then Conferences of Ministers have been organised on a regular basis and the relevant national ministries have been in a position to draw up strategies for the Council of Europe youth policy. The ad hoc committee was transformed to a steering committee and it became a part of the official Council of Europe structures in 1988. The Directorate of Youth and Sports was established in 1992 and the link to the Council of Cultural Co-operation was weakened.

The opening of the borders, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 created a completely new situation for the Council of Europe. A number of new independent states were established in Europe and several post-communist countries became members of the Council of Europe. This was a major challenge to the Council of Europe. The youth sector started the discussion on how to adapt youth policy to the new situation. The EYF was integrated into the Council of Europe and the financial contribution to the foundation became a compulsory part of a country's membership of the Council of Europe. To meet the new challenges, a second European youth centre was established in Budapest.

The first youth campaign "All Different – All Equal", based on the conclusions of the 1st Council of Europe Summit in Vienna, was another important element.

→ The European Union

For many years the Council of Europe has been the most important actor with regards to youth policy development and co-operation. But we cannot neglect the growing importance of the European Union.

Already at the meeting of the heads of states of the European Economic Communities (EEC) in The Hague in 1969 the need for youth policy activities and co-operation was mentioned in the conclusions. The European Commission financially supported youth activities from the early 1970s. The Council of European

National Youth Committees (CENYC) and the European Co-ordination Bureau (ECB), as well as individual international youth organisations benefited from this. With the establishment of the Youth Forum of the European Communities (1978) youth organisations at national and European levels had their own participatory body. But the Youth Forum did not have a privileged position with the European Commission. There was no such thing as the Council of Europe's co-management principle. The Youth Forum concentrated on its work as a lobbying organisation. The merging of CENYC and ECB into the Youth Forum in 1996 has obviously contributed to their success.

The development of the youth programmes, starting in 1988, has also been an important part of the youth policy development of the European Union. In recent years the White Paper and the introduction of the Open Method of Co-ordination have laid a constructive foundation for co-operation between the member states in the field of youth policy. The communication on a new strategy for youth policy presented in April 2009 has added new important elements to this development.

➜ East-West co-operation

In some western countries there had been contacts across the Iron Curtain from the early 1950s. In Norway, the State Youth Council opened bilateral contacts with the Soviet Union during the first half of the 1950s. Both the Soviet invasion in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968, resulted in serious regression in this co-operation. In the early 1970s the "pan-European co-operation" in the youth field started up again. Finland, a country with a long-standing relation with Russia and the Soviet Union, both in a positive but also negative way, was one of the leading countries. The Finnish took the initiative and organised the conference on security and co-operation in Europe, with the participation of all European countries. The Finish youth organisations were invited to this European youth security conference, which took place in Helsinki in August 1972. There are two elements which make this an important breakthrough in European youth co-operation. The conference had a very broad political and organisational field of participants, including several international organisations and national delegations of most countries. The European youth security conference was, at the initiative of the World Federation of Democratic Youth and their Hungarian member organisation, followed by a series of conferences at Lake Balaton. These so-called "Balaton meetings", improved the dialogue between "East and West" in Europe and resulted in the idea of establishing a more structured working relationship in the form of a "framework for pan-European co-operation".

Another important event is the European youth and students meeting in Warsaw in June 1976. Around 1 000 participants met in the palace of culture in Warsaw and discussed various themes in 10 to 15 different working groups. This conference had also a very broad political and organisational field of participants. It was, like the Helsinki Conference, jointly prepared by all the different stakeholders. The involvement of many youth leaders from all European countries made this event an important arena for multiplying a positive dialogue with youth representatives in all European countries.

The work for the establishment of a framework for pan-European youth co-operation continued into the first half of the 1980s. But in reality the political differences were too big and there was quite a different understanding of democracy and human rights. At the end of the 1980s the political situation was suddenly totally different with the opening of the border, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of

the Soviet Union, the democratisation process in the eastern European countries and the reunification of Germany.

➜ Conclusions and discussion

Did the youth and student co-operation during the Cold War play a substantial role or was it only an innocent exercise for some youth leaders? This dialogue had a very positive effect on youth leaders both in the East and in the West, and I believe it made the transition period easier in many countries. Another question is if the youth movements were ahead of the governments in this process or if they were rather following developments on the governmental side. The dialogue and co-operation among the youth leaders and youth movements could not have taken place without the change in government policy. The role of Willy Brandt as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany was of the utmost importance. He was awarded the Nobel peace price for this policy.

I am convinced that other people who took part in European youth co-operation during these years will be able to make supplementary analyses. I invite others to come with their viewpoints and their understanding of this period of the history of European youth policy.

The history of European youth work and its relevance for youth policy today – Conclusions

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The second workshop on the history of European youth work and its relevance for youth policy today took place in Blankenberge, Belgium, from 25 to 28 May 2009. The workshop was jointly organised by the Belgian Flemish Community's Agency for Socio-Cultural Work for Youth and Adults and the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the youth field. Researchers, policy makers and youth work practitioners attended the workshop. The contributions gathered at this second workshop were embedded in eight different regional contexts. After a more general introduction on youth (social) work in the United Kingdom (Tony Jeffs), we had perspectives from the French-speaking community of Belgium (Gauthier Simon), the German-speaking community of Belgium (Xavier Hurlet) and the Dutch-speaking community of Belgium (Johan Van Gaens) and perspectives from the Netherlands (Hans Van Ewijk), Wales (Howard Williamson), Ireland (Maurice Devlin), Hungary (Péter Wootsch) and South Africa (Lwazi Mboyi).

➜ Introduction: youth work as social and pedagogical work

The second "history of youth work" seminar built further on the conclusions of the first one (see Verschelden et al., 2009). On that occasion we situated youth work as a "social work practice", meaning that it is a practice mediating between individual aspirations and societal expectations. We felt that this social pedagogical perspective would help us to go beyond one-sided interpretations of youth work as promoting individual development on the one hand, or as an instrument for social cohesion on the other hand. The reading of youth work as "a social animal" (Williamson, 2008) enabled us to situate youth work in specific historical, political, economical and cultural contexts and at the same time it helped us to construct a more general picture of the inherent paradoxical nature of youth work.

In this second workshop this social pedagogical view was adopted as a starting point. In their introduction, the rapporteurs (Griet Verschelden and Filip Coussée) summarised some of the discussions from last year focusing on the question of how the rise and growth of youth work was and is inextricably bound with "the invention and the management of the social". The creation of "a social pedagogical buffer zone" between the individual and society dates back to the Industrial Revolution and the so-called social question. The industrialisation and the growth of economic capitalism released society from its agricultural, in some aspects almost feudal, organisation. But it also caused the pauperisation and imminent exclusion of an emerging working class, with an impeding disintegration of society as a result. Charity and repression were no longer sufficient to avert these threats to social cohesion. Therefore in all emerging western democracies a social sphere was created. This is a buffer zone between the private and public sphere (Donzelot, 1984). Pedagogical interventions – such as youth work – are at the heart of this social sphere (Mollenhauer, 1983).

In the previous report we argued that the social question gradually transformed into a youth question, meaning that pedagogical interventions were increasingly disconnected from social context. As a consequence youth work evolved from, in a broad sense, "social work practice" to educational methods, guiding young people into an external, prescribed, harmonious development (Verschelden et al., 2009). From then on most youth work theories and practices focused on the question of how participation in youth work could contribute to harmonious individual development and as a powerful instrument for social cohesion. All participants in the first seminar pointed at the fact that there were different moments in their particular histories where a firmly established youth work identy was being questioned. As an example, the Fairbairn-Milson report in the United Kingdom (1969) commented:

> It is no part of our aim to achieve a comfortable integration of the youth and adult populations, nor to attempt to socialise the young so that they are reconciled with the status-quo, and capitulate to its values. The aim should be to establish a dialogue between the young and the rest of society; a dialectical and not necessarily amicable process … There can no longer be an underlying consensus about all the issues which face our society (Davies 1999: 126).

For this reason the authors concluded: "We found ourselves unable to answer the question 'what kind of youth service do we want? until we have answered a previous question 'what kind of society do we want?'" (Young, 1999: 80).

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There were several other examples given from all countries present in the first workshop. The discussion between Cardijn and Baden-Powell – both initiated a youth organisation that spread all over the world – is exemplary too (Coussée, 2009a). One of the important tasks of historical research is exactly to show this contingency. The present is not a self-evident, inescapable, progressive product of past evolutions (Depaepe, 2002). So we wanted to have a closer look at the concrete evolutions in youth work practice, policy and research, but we wanted to be sure to have a look also at the road not taken (Reisch & Andrews, 2001). Ulrich Bunjes pointed out that the dialogue with history helps us in our reflections on youth work to go beyond the needs of the day to take into account different traditions in youth work and to gain new insights. This is also extremely important for the European level, with its rapidly developing youth policy that often does not appear to be based on any historical consciousness. This was confirmed by organisers Jan Vanhee (Flemish Community of Belgium) and Hanjo Schild (the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth). Right away they started "practising history" on a European youth policy level by programming a presentation from Bjorn Jaaberg Hansen (Norway) on this topic. In their own introduction, Jan Vanhee and Hanjo Schild pointed at the importance of increased (historical) knowledge and understanding of youth (work) in various regions in constructing European youth policy.

The first introductory speaker in this second workshop, Tony Jeffs, made this dialogue with history concrete by illuminating some unknown or underexposed youth work pioneers and their theories.

➜ Revolutionary pedagogy

Inspired by youth work pioneers such as Hannah Moore, John Pounds, Robert Owen, Nikolai Frederik Grundtvig, George Williams and Robert Baden-Powell, Tony Jeffs put the finger on some key youth work concepts (association, education and the pedagogical relationship). He showed the development of the concept of non-formal education by elaborating on Owen's distinction between "the arts of humanity" and "the arts of industry". Or put in another way: pedagogues should not only teach how to earn a living, but also how to live a life (see also Jeffs, 2001: 43).

Interestingly, Jeffs took up the analysis of "the social" by starting his presentation with three revolutions which transformed dramatically a society in which existing inequalities in power and wealth were seen as natural and god-given, in any case unquestionable. In doing this he connected the social question (coming to the fore with the Industrial Revolution) to the democratic question as highlighted in the French and the American revolutions: how to cherish individual freedom and at the same time create stability, pursue social justice and guarantee equal chances? He situated youth work in the middle of this tension between individual freedom and social equity or in other words: in the social sphere between the private and the public sphere. Jeffs highlighted the inbuilt dilemmas deriving from this position and pointed at the thin line between liberatory practice and practice of domestication. In his conclusion he emphasised that this tension cannot be solved, but it has to be managed. This happens in the social sphere and this makes youth work explicitly a social profession.

➜ Youth work, an autonomous social profession?

In the new European Union youth strategy "Investing and empowering" professionalisation is a key theme. This is not an undisputed theme because professionalisation seems to carry the risk of a further methodisation of youth work. The international discussion on professionalisation revolves around two issues: *(1)* Is youth work a professional practice or is it rather the domain of volunteers? and *(2)* Do we need more focus on the technical aspects of youth work or do we have to cherish the ethical aspects? These issues also structured the workshop discussions on professionalisation. Although the situation is not entirely the same in all of the three communities (Flemish, French and German speaking), we definitely could argue that Belgium is a country where youth work is predominantly associated with voluntary work. The same goes for Ireland, as clearly illustrated by Maurice Devlin. In other countries, like the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (specifically in England), youth work originated as voluntary work, but is now foremost the work of paid professionals.

It was argued in this second workshop – in line with the introduction of Walter Lorenz in the previous one – that professionalisation in youth work history often went together with the elimination of political and even pedagogical aspects of youth work (see Lorenz, 2009). Debates about professionalisation have tended to centre on the achievement of an autonomous professional status. The pursuit of this status has led to the underlining of a specialised body of knowledge and expertise. As a consequence technical competences can easily get the upper hand in youth work practice and training, although youth work has always been defined as an ethical practice (Bradford, 2007). As conveyed overwhelmingly in all presentations, there is a strong temptation to emphasise youth work expertise in a rather technical, methodical way. Such an identity may give clearness and something to hold on to, but it also makes youth work vulnerable to instrumentalisation, either from the public sphere, or from the private sphere. In both cases the pursuit of professional autonomy does not in fact lead to professional autonomy, quite the reverse. In the first case youth work becomes an instrument of social policy, oppressing individuality and diversity and losing the necessary discretionary space to work with young people. In the latter youth work is an instrument for "identity politics", becoming the vehicle for young people or youth groups claiming individual rights, without any linking to the social and to the question of how to relate to each other and to wider society. In both cases youth work loses its social mandate: facing up to discrepancies, conflict and doubt in the context of modern societies (Lorenz, 2007: 600).

The risk of methodisation and further depoliticisation when professionalising youth work practice was especially brought to the fore after the South African presentation. Lwazi Mboyi spoke about the need to rebuild society after a stirring history of racial conflict. Most South African young people, however, are low-skilled and have no access to resources that will help them to develop critical skills. This situation urges South African policy makers to make a case for a firm professionalisation of its fragmented, underdeveloped youth work. Some remarks clearly pointed at the risk of youth work becoming a practice of uncritical "individual guidance", pushing young people into the labour market without any further questions on the conditions of young people's lives.

Therefore in order not to lose touch with the "social" in youth work, it was argued in the workshop that "professionalism" is the key issue rather than professionalisation. Volunteers in youth work are not excluded from professionalism. As Maurice Devlin

(Ireland) has put it: the "doing of youth work ... requires a particular combination of knowledge, skills and personal qualities. This is the case whether the person in question is a volunteer or a paid worker...". The question remains, however, what particular combination of skills and knowledge is needed then to be a good youth worker? With some quotes from youth leaders during the youth week in 1944 in Ireland Maurice Devlin showed that inspiration is a crucial part of positive relationships and good youth work. As a social profession youth work also has to maintain a constructive relationship with public agencies, but it is equally important not to lose touch with broader grass-roots social movements. The political and pedagogical aspects in youth work professionalism make it difficult to define a clear-cut identity and position. This somewhat uncomfortable position also manifests itself in relation to the other social professions, which are mostly better developed and have a clearer defined body of knowledge and working territory, which makes it easier to be recognised. There is certainly a tendency to reduce youth work as an instrument to their ends. The sensitivity of this point was revealed in workshop discussions on youth work and sports, youth work and schools, youth work and social (case) work, where the question was raised if youth work is "deeper", "richer" or "more genuine" compared to sport, school and social (case) work. To avoid instrumentalisation, youth workers tend to withdraw from other social professions or even from "the social". They feel threatened in their autonomy and rather prefer to cherish some kind of a splendid isolation. As argued in the previous workshop by Christian Spatscheck (2009) this has a paradoxical "desocialising" effect leading to a pretty useless autonomy.

Moreover, there is a manifest risk that the tendencies to desocialise youth work will obscure the dilemmatic nature of youth work practice, and thus inevitably lead to practices and policies that empower the powerful and cool out the vulnerable (Walther, 2003; Coussée et al., 2009). The eternal challenge for youth work seems to (re)connect to other social professions, without being co-opted. This is a huge challenge in a welfare state tormented by an economic (and cultural) crisis.

➜ The ongoing construction of the social

Depending on different welfare regimes, the emphasis in the social sphere was shaped either by claims on public equality or by the call for individual freedom (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Telling illustrations are the recent developments in post-communist countries (see Peter Wootsch for Hungary) and the abrupt transformations from a communist regime to a neo-liberal one. In both cases the function of the social is not very "open". There is simply not much need to discuss the relationship between individual and society. A striking case in point was the Dutch situation (presented by Hans van Ewijk) where a depillarisation and depoliticisation to a large extent "dismantled" the social as opposed to the situation in Ireland (Maurice Devlin), where the social is fostered (or occupied) by numerous corporations, associations, organisations. As illustrated by Johan Van Gaens, Gauthier Simon and Xavier Hurlet for the different Belgian communities, the same goes for other corporatist welfare regimes.

The void that is left when the social is neglected or omitted is often filled with more technical interpretations of "social" interventions, not discussing the relationship between the individual and society, but simply trying to integrate individuals under the prevailing societal conditions. There are also other influential factors like economic conjuncture (in times of transformation and crisis, discussion on the social sphere and its pedagogical impact pop up again with more intensity, see Castel, 1995), or the size of the country. As shown by Howard Williamson (Wales)

smaller countries seem to have more opportunities (and threats at its drawback) to have deliberate discussions between researchers, youth workers and (other) policy makers on the management of the social.

The constantly changing context (together with the social status of youth) has an important impact on youth work developments. Therefore the social (and thus youth work) is always "under construction" and it is impossible to reflect on youth work without linking youth work practice, policy and research to the social (pedagogical and political) context. This identification of youth work as social work helped us to grasp the inherent youth work paradoxes resulting from the inescapable pedagogical and political questions that together reflect the confrontation between the basic values in all capitalist democracies: freedom and equality. In the discussions after the presentations, we elaborated further on this basic scheme and tried to make it more focused on the youth work discussion and to connect it to the concrete actions of youth workers, policy makers and researchers. The social may always be under construction and there may not be one eternal and universal youth work concept. But nevertheless the need remains to conceptualise "a youth work identity" in a comprehensive and promising way, though without formalising the informal or restricting youth work identity to a methodical identity, be it Scouting (in one way or another a very prominent method in youth work discussions in all countries) or another method. This "methodisation" is what has happened to "social work", in a more narrow interpretation. This can lead to sterile discussions about boundaries and methodical identities between the youth work "sector" and social work "sector", as pointed at by Lwazi Mboyi for South Africa (and Bernard Davies for the United Kingdom in the first seminar). This implies that the discussion on youth work identity cannot be a purely introspective discussion; it must be connected to other social pedagogical practices.

➜ Managing the social

Their explicit social mandate turns youth workers into "managers of the social". Throughout all presentations there were recurrent examples demonstrating that the social can be managed from very different points of view. Some take the public sphere as the starting point to address and shape the social; others depart from the values prevailing in the private sphere. A simple comparison between the Young Pioneers Organisation of the Soviet Union (the Pioneers) and more recent Russian student movements illustrates this very clearly. While the Pioneers used the Scouting method (*Vsegda Gotov*)[2] they were definitely steered by state ideology. Many present day student movements are involved in social action. Although some of them are pro-Kremlin, most movements base their social action on the needs felt by their members, not on public ideology. Yet, there is one more aspect. Irrespective of the starting point, the social can be fostered in an open way or it can be formalised and predefined. This can also be illustrated in a comparison between the historical manifestations of Scouting in communist countries and the Pioneers. Scouting aimed at individual leadership, whilst the Pioneers considered collective spirit of paramount importance. They had a totally different starting point to conceptualise the relationship between individual and society, but they are in a sense both predefined, thus reducing the social to a kind of transit zone between individual and society.

All workshop presenters showed implicitly or rather explicitly how their societies tried to cope with this tension between the private sphere of freedom (exclusivity,

2. Ed. note: be prepared.

choice and autonomy) and the public sphere of equality (inclusivity, law, interdependency) by constructing and maintaining this social buffer zone. Management of the social is in fact of great relevance to the present youth work discussion. This was definitely illustrated in the accounts from those countries that observed huge social transformations in recent times (Hungary, South Africa), but in a sense it was also, though less explicitly, part of the other stories. The so-called depillarisation in the Netherlands and in Ireland, for instance (see also Louis Vos in the previous seminar), leaves a social void and thus has huge implications for the management of the social and for the reconciliation of individual aspirations and societal expectations, and at the end of the day, for the establishment of a society where social justice and individual freedom can be co-valued. Describing the position of youth work as "social" work thus unveils that youth work has inevitably a political and a pedagogical nature, whether these questions remain implicit or are made explicit. How do we relate to each other? Which society do we (want to) live in? What are social problems? Whose problems are they? How do we guide young people's orientation towards society? Which reality do we (want to) show? The central subject for debate, however, is whether youth work practice is guided by these questions or rather steered by predefined answers. These questions link again to the autonomy of youth work and also to the role of the state.

➜ The youth worker as personal adviser, social educator and/or public employee?

One of the remarks of participants in the first workshop was that the role of the state in the youth work discussion has been underexposed. The role of the state and policy making came to the fore in this second workshop as a complex and layered area, even within one country. The discussion after several contributions showed that youth work and policy at the different local municipalities could contribute and amend youth policy at the federal level, but that this is not self-evident. As Johan Van Gaens, Gauthier Simon and Xavier Hurlet showed for Belgium, youth policy making in Flanders happened in recent years with the development and proliferation of the local youth policy plans in a more designed and planned way compared to the more incremental and sporadic approach in the French-speaking and German-speaking communities of Belgium. Although it was argued that some "incrementality" is needed to leave space for spontaneous, wild ideas (see Giesecke, 1963 for some critiques on a strictly "planned youth policy").

The role of the state was also discussed in relation to "the social". It was argued that the relation between government and civil society is contested, and partnerships between state and civil society organisations need to be treated with care. Defining youth work as a "social pedagogical" practice inevitably raises the point to what extent the two core questions – the youth question or "the management of growing up", and the social question or "the management of living together"– are state responsibilities and to what degree the answers to these questions should be left to civil society organisations. In this sense the invention of the social in emerging capitalist democracies had the aim to guarantee freedom of acting, but at the same time making it possible to intervene (through social organisations) in the private life world. This shows how the social and the youth question are tied together in a complex relationship in dealing with social questions by guiding educational processes. The same can be said of the relationship between the state and "the social professions". The buffer function of the social makes it paradoxical in nature: supporting political participation while tempering all too radical political passions, providing support from society on the condition of responsible behaviour while at the same time protecting from all too intrusive public interventions … the social

has the purpose of realising a societal project while at the same time supporting citizens to participate in the creation of this project. The frontiers between public and private are blurred and always "under construction" and the social professions definitely have an active role in this construction work (Lipsky & Rathgeb Smith, 1989). The Irish quotes (Maurice Devlin) clearly showed an ambivalent relation between youth work practice and democracy, sometimes disturbing the established social order and causing instability by being oppositional, and sometimes shaped and represented by the interests of the state or the church.

Given this dynamic interpretation of "the social", it is not surprising that there was unanimity among the workshop participants about the impossibility (and, arguably, undesirability) to define a clear-cut relationship between youth work and the state. This would imply that youth work could exist only in certain types of welfare regimes. The question was raised as to whether youth work can exist in non-democratic regimes. The answer seems affirmative. It is clear, however, that youth work in that case is not put into practice by youth workers, but – as Peter Wootsch put it – by public employees using a youth work method. For that matter, such a "colonisation" of the social is not limited to non-democratic regimes. Reference was made to the presentation of Bernard Davies (2009) in the first seminar and his mentioning of the Connexions personal adviser in England, who has been called social pedagogue or youth worker, but could in most cases be defined as a public employee. The social can be occupied and formalised, but it can also be neglected. This is what happens when youth work gives up its "social" identity by withdrawing in itself. In that case youth workers are no more than private consultants or animators.

➜ Youth work – Transit or forum?

The final session of the workshop harnessed these different conceptualisations of the social to characterise youth work as a transit on the one hand, or a forum on the other hand.

Youth work as a transit zone – How to earn a living

In this approach societal development is seen as a natural consequence of harmonious individual development. Youth work has the task of managing the process of growing up and shaping good citizens by supporting individual development of the young and if necessary by controlling their individual behaviour. Pedagogical ideas are focused on the individual. Individual autonomy is a high value product. The individual pedagogical relation is central to good youth work. Group work or even community work is accepted, but its paramount role is to have an impact on individual development and the prevention of undesirable or anti-social behaviour. There is certainly an emphasis on non-formal learning and "guidance without dictation" (as Baden-Powell would have said), but if this approach does not have a sufficient impact on the individual development of young people, some formalisation and compulsory action is not excluded. Empowerment and autonomy are key words.

In this approach the social is conceptualised as a passage, a transit zone, guiding young people's development so that it leads to a smooth integration in society. However, the above-mentioned preceding question of which society we want is not under discussion. Social integration in this sense is restricted to integration into the institutions that occupy the social. The final mission of these institutions could easily be "de-socialised", which means that their function is restricted to a

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transit zone, a passage from point A (or a point below A) to point B. Final destination (point B) is unquestionable. The actual organisation of society is constructed as historically inevitable. The youth work discussion concentrates on questions of "who comes in" and "what comes out", which means that the identity of youth work is basically situated outside "the social". Accessibility and participation are key words, but at the same time they are restricted to the accessibility of and participation in youth work, not accessibility and participation through youth work, to other "social" work practices or to any wider activism and possibly subversion. Public expectations are constructed as "natural". Individual aspirations are tolerated, even supported, to the extent that they lead to point B or in other words as long as they fit in the societal project and the maintaining social order.

Youth work as a social forum – How to live a life

In this approach "social" work is less concerned with imposing individual solutions on social problems, rather it is the task to engage with young people in defining problems. Social cohesion is not seen as the result of the harmonious development of all individual citizens, but as a social learning process that takes into account diversity, but problematises inequality. Participation is also a key word in this approach. The "social" functions as a forum where problems can be "re-socialised"; the existing social order can be discussed and public expectations – but also personal aspirations – can be critically assessed through authentic dialogue. Professionalism is a keyword rather than professionalisation, emancipation rather than empowerment. The question is about how youth work supports young people in their orientation on society and enables them to reflect on their life and on their place in that society. Thus, the question is if youth work is useful for young people, rather than if youth work is accessible to young people. The pedagogical relation is central to good youth work in this approach too, but not only as an instrument to have influence on young people's values and aspirations, but to foster confidence between people and to be able to get to know the frame of reference of others and to contextualise behaviour.

In an open pedagogical relation lies the sincerity and open-endedness of the social forum, for there is no preordained image of the ideal society to which we can work up to through the ideal development of society's members (Heyting et al., 2002). Or as Rosseter (1987: 52) argues with regard to the social pedagogical task of youth workers: "The essential nature of their work is concerned with bringing about change. It is about moving young people on in some way from point A, not necessarily to point B or C, but to some position beyond A".

Either transit or forum

The main question thus seems to be whether youth work practice, policy and research should aim at increasing youth work's additional contribution to individual development or rather at valuing youth work's contribution to societal change (Coussée, 2009b). As all presentations showed, however, in most countries both approaches exist next to each other, although they may be treated differently and they may reach different kinds of groups of young people. In this second seminar it became clear, for instance, that South Africa and the Netherlands in more recent years have tended to focus on transit zone youth work in their policies. In the Netherlands especially there is even a kind of laissez-faire attitude towards the surviving social forum forms of youth work, which paradoxically could lead to the withdrawal (and thus the desocialisation) of this kind of youth work from the social sphere and isolating themselves in a self-obtained youth space where

having fun and being young together are the main frames of reference. Hans Van Ewijk, however, emphasised the context in which these choices have been made. In times of crisis, social transformations and uncertainty, young people need guidance and support, which implies that it is not inappropriate to give priority to this kind of youth work forms. Moreover, as stressed particularly by Van Ewijk, the philosophy that youth work should be "a breeding place for a new society" did not work with marginalised young people. This analysis is only partly the same as in the Irish or Belgian stories where policy makers deliberately try to develop a two-track strategy, but clearly with the intention to integrate both approaches in one policy. The danger of this strategy is the tendency to constantly discuss which approach is "the real youth work approach" or which approach leads to better outcomes (see also Verschelden et al., 2009).

It was very clear to the participants that the transit zone approach to youth work is more vulnerable to instrumentalisation in the service of externally defined objectives and to co-optation by other sectors. Youth work practice then loses its social mandate and is guided by public concerns. A consequence of this vulnerability is that youth workers who foster a social forum function are tempted to turn their backs to their (bigger) caring, curing and policing neighbours. In doing so, paradoxically enough, they exclude themselves from the social discussion and they tend to focus on private concerns. As an unintended consequence they restrict the "service-ability" of their practice for young people, in particular for young people facing huge social problems.

Therefore most participants preferred a both/and strategy. This was also stressed by Finn Denstadt (European Commission) for the European level. In the discussion after his presentation it was argued – with referral to the introduction of Tony Jeffs – that it could even be more appropriate to see this relationship as a dialectical one. It is not a question then of merging the two, but rather of keeping the tension open. Arguably, the two perspectives need and enrich each other, and they are not mutually exclusive.

➔ Conclusion: youth workers as managers of the social

In all countries the fostering of the social is now the subject of much discussion. In regimes strongly influenced by a neo-liberal wind, the conviction is gaining ground that the neglect of the social has a pernicious impact on social cohesion. In corporatist welfare regimes depillarisation and increasing secularisation necessitate the discussion on the management of the social in order to fill the social pedagogical gap and to prevent counterproductive compartmentalisation. In post-communist countries or relatively young democracies, this question is self-evidently at the heart of social-political discussion. There are also differences between those countries according to historical antecedents. In the Russian Federation – which in contrast to Hungary had never been a democracy – there was a certain reluctance to form organisations and to foster associational life. This parallels the post-war period in the Dutch story where politicians had seen the destructive power of mass organisation and the abuse of social pedagogical ideas.

Both workshops have illustrated that youth work exists in all circumstances. Despite the occupation or neglect of the social, there are always movements, groups, associations or organisations trying to open up the social sphere in society. Youth work has always operated across a range of communities, issues and aspirations, making young people feel at home while offering new experiences and making connection to the lifeworld while broadening horizons. These workshops offered a strong

case for different approaches, from grass-roots movements to public agencies, but above all it became clear that youth work is a "social" animal and needs to be underpinned by a social pedagogical approach (Williamson, 2008).

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The social and pedagogical identity of youth work – Learning from two history workshops

➜ Introduction: the youth work dilemma

History cannot show us the one and only, universal and eternal fixed youth work identity. "Youth work histories" however, can show us the richness and risks of different youth work shapes and developments. They can throw light on previous discussions in youth work, discussions that may parallel many contemporary debates. In other words: though youth work history may not instrumentally serve present evolutions and policy objectives, it has the power to frame them in a broader context, thus feeding and inspiring the present discussion on youth work as a social practice. It is therefore important to analyse which views on youth work and young people are underpinning our youth work and youth policy debate. Youth work history is a tool to inspire political discussion (Ulrich Bunjes) and a weapon to overcome methodisation (Tony Jeffs, Walter Lorenz).

In both the first and second Blankenberge workshops, each presentation started (and in most cases also ended) with the same question: What is youth work? This synthesis of both workshops is not going to give the definitive answer to that burning question. Rather

it will try to identify in a genuine dialogue with history, as Tony Jeffs put it, some tools that could enable us to cope with the inherent dilemmatic nature of youth work: we distinguish an identity crisis and an efficiency crisis.

In most presentations this "what is youth work" question remained unanswered. For sure, in many, if not all, European countries youth work has become an important topic on the youth policy agenda. This growing attention is partly spurred by the European youth policy agenda and partly stimulated by the renewed belief that youth work contributes positively to individual and social development. This belief is underpinned by an overwhelming body of academic research stating that participation in positive, structured youth activities appears to be of great advantage to a number of areas: it contributes to academic results (Fletcher et al., 2003), to the development of social and cultural capital (Dworkin et al., 2003), to a stronger position in the labour market (Jarret et al., 2005), to the nurturing of democratic skills and attitudes (Eccles et al., 2003). To put it briefly: youth work contributes to social inclusion. This finding inevitably leads to one central priority on many youth policy agendas: "Tackling the problem of becoming accessible to non-organised or marginalised young people is now felt by all key players to be essential to increasing participation by young people" (European Commission 2006: 9).

As a consequence the actual youth work discussion in most European countries focuses on questions of accessibility and efficiency. Youth workers who invest in programming structured activities face big difficulties to reach socially excluded young people. Given this problem of accessibility it seems as if the positive relation between youth work and social inclusion fulfils itself. Youth work contributes to the inclusion of young people who are already fairly close to prevailing standards of social inclusion (Coussée et al., 2009). Certainly, there are youth workers who succeed in reaching the hard-to-reach. They set up more open and accessible forms of youth work without pre-programmed activities and explicitly outlined schemes of intervention (Williamson, 2005). But then, there is the efficiency question since, rather ironically, the increasing political attention for youth work seems not to advance these kinds of open youth work initiatives. These initiatives are often blamed for not producing the same positive outcomes as the more structured youth work initiatives. Academic research finds these open initiatives ineffective (Feinstein et al., 2006) or even counterproductive with regard to social inclusion (Mahoney et al., 2004). As a consequence youth workers working with excluded young people are increasingly confronted with demands to concentrate on measurable, individual outcomes in order to prove their effectiveness. It is even no longer extraordinary to find recommendations to introduce an element of compulsion to young people's participation in structured, positive extra-curricular activities (Margo and Dixon, 2006).

This "what works" logic goes together with a tendency of standardisation, individualisation and formalisation of youth work and thus leads to paradoxical consequences: the hard-to-reach are excluded from youth work because it is too hard to reach something with them.

➔ Imposing solutions, reinforcing the dilemma

This paradoxical consequence of strategies that concentrate on imposing individual solutions to social exclusion has been described as a "pistachio effect", in which the harder nuts to crack are, at best, left until later, or, at worst, simply disregarded (Tiffany, 2007). This effect shows us that there is no straightforward way out of the youth work dilemma. The dilemma simply takes another shape and

confronts policy makers, researchers and practitioners with other dilemmas which we identified in the first book on different levels:

- the identity of youth work: or youth work between distinct activity and contingent practice;
- the politics and policy of youth work: or is the youth work agenda defined by young people themselves or driven by societal concerns?
- the pedagogy of youth work: or youth work between emancipation and control;
- the practice of youth work: or youth work between lifeworld and system.

It is clearly impossible to go beyond the youth work dilemmas if the discussion remains confined in a straightforward logic deeply embedded in the youth question (how to manage the process of growing up). In this logic, non-participation in positive, structured youth work activities is seen not just in correlation to other social problems, but rather as cause to their effect (see Colley and Hodkinson, 2001). This brings us to the conclusion of the first Blankenberge workshop in which we described the disconnection of pedagogical work with young people from the social question (how to manage the conflicts inherent in "capitalist democracies"). Pedagogical work is inevitably instrumental in supporting young people to adapt to central values in competitive market societies. Pedagogical work is needed to form and reform individual young people, but also to prevent exclusion and to preserve the cohesion of society (Heyting et al., 2002). This is the social mandate of youth work (see Lorenz, 2009), which in a sense makes youth work an instrument for guiding the process of growing up of young people, but also an instrument for community development. The "desocialisation" of youth work (skipping or neglecting the social in youth work) however, obscures this instrumentality and therefore makes it difficult to have a clear discussion on youth work's identity taking into account the complex and dilemmatic character of all professions regulating the relationship between individual and society.

This reframing of the social question into the youth question and thus the pedagogisation of social problems, was extensively described in the first workshop. Various speakers from various countries illuminated how we witnessed throughout the last centuries the development of youth as a separate life stage and the invention of adolescence as a crucial life phase. At the beginning of the 20th century these developments were strengthened by several societal changes: compulsory education, a certain moral panic after World War I about the situation of the youth, the rise of Scouting and other youth organisations.

Youth work became an important educational method, but it seemed to have lost its specific social identity. Youth work rather found itself in a permanent oscillation between individual aspirations and societal expectations. The negligence of a social pedagogical perspective however makes it very difficult to cope with this tension. Youth workers seem to be obliged to "take sides". Youth workers are the head of a movement aiming at liberating young people or they are an arm of the state domesticating young people (Menschaert et al., 2007). Practitioners, youth researchers and policy makers all try to find solutions to this tension between emancipation and control, but with every new solution the tension seems to take another shape and leads us to a new dilemma.

In the second workshop this dilemmatic character of youth work was renamed as "youth work between transit zone or social forum". Whereas youth work (policy, practice and research) in the first approach aims at increasing youth work's additional contribution to individual development, in the second approach the

aim is rather to value youth work's contribution to societal change. In the conclusions of this workshop however, participants emphasised that it is not a question of either/or, but rather a question of both/and. Throughout historical endeavour and trans-regional and international comparison we were able to observe how "skipping the social" leads inevitably to one-sided youth work subordinated to private aspirations or to public expectations.

The both/and perspective although is not a question of co-existence, but should refer to a dialectical relationship. The transit and forum types of youth work often exist next to each other, creating dividing lines between young people and their lifeworlds. Sometimes they push each other aside resulting in fluctuating policies where now the one type of youth work gets the upper hand and then the other type (not by coincidence often nicely in line with economic conjuncture). Therefore it became clear throughout the seminars that we need to revalue youth work as a social animal (Williamson, 2008) and discuss youth work in close relationship to the invention and ongoing construction of "the social".

➜ The social, the personal and the political

The birth of youth work in Europe is inextricably related to radical changes in European nation states. The Enlightenment and the French and other revolutions enforced other, more dynamic, views on the relationship between individual and society. The Industrial Revolution definitively denaturalised the maintaining power relations in society. This denaturalisation implied that people should learn to behave as responsible citizens. Caritas and repression could no longer be sufficient to secure the social order. The shaping of a social cohesive society was felt as an urgent political problem. Therefore social pedagogical concerns were at the heart of social policies (Mennicke, 1937). As the division of labour and the increasing organisation of social life have diminished the pedagogical strength of the traditional socialisation milieus (family, local community or guilds and corporations) the need is felt to develop a new and all-embracing network of social pedagogical entities. This intermediary register between individual and society has been called "the social" (Donzelot, 1984). The social functions as a buffer zone between the private lifeworld, built around personal freedom and exclusivity, and the public system, aiming at equality and cohesion. The social is the field where people learn to participate, where they learn to relate their individual aspirations to public expectations. It provides a democratic forum to participate in the shaping of society, but it also canalises all too radical political passions (Donzelot, 1984). Through the social the system also provides support to citizens who need it. At the same time the social protects citizens against too intrusive interventions from the system. The social is the sphere where the inherent paradoxical fundamental values of our capitalist democracies, freedom and equality, are balanced. The social sphere is vital for the cohesion of society and for balancing cohesion with diversity. Therefore the social itself is always "under construction".

The social question: social movements, social care, "social" work

This symbiosis of pedagogical and political functions is an essential part of the youth work identity, for it is one of the segments of this "social" field. Many of these "social" organisations came into being in the 19th century, a period of big transformations and consequently also concerns around social cohesion. It seemed that flourishing capitalist economies, instigated the "desocialisation" of large parts of the working class. The invention of the social was also meant to find an answer to this social question. In the social sphere there emerged different institutions

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aimed at working-class children and young workers. In many cities patronages or Catholic youth groups were installed. In 1843 in Turin, John Bosco was one of the first to start with such an initiative providing a combination of care, recreation and education. Next to these youth groups, often run by priests or well-meaning people from the bourgeoisie, movements organised by the working classes themselves came into being. In Flanders, as in other countries, socialist young workers organised themselves to fight – next to their fathers – for better working conditions. The Young Guards are often described as a youth movement, but it was in the first place a "social" movement. The emphasis did not lie on being young together, but on social issues. The whole spectrum of social care institutions and social movements organised by different groups and layers in society can be called "social" work.

The youth question: youth movements, youth care, youth work

Another perspective on questions concerning social cohesion (or social in/exclusion) manifested itself some decades later, first in the middle and higher classes. The "youth question" was an expression of the tendency to differentiate lower age categories from adults. Spurred by the fact that school attendance became more and more prevalent in large sections of the population, and underpinned by the emerging science of developmental psychology, youth became a distinguished population group and adolescence was constructed as a specific stage of life. Like young workers, students organised themselves in a movement. Whilst workers' youth fought against inhumane working conditions, the Flemish student movement fought against things that were seen as a hindrance to their emancipation, such as the dominance of French language in schools and society at large (in Flanders) or the strict and rigid, paternalistic society in which young people self-evidently followed the steps of their father. So, these second types of youth movements were also "social" movements spending time to study social issues and to undertake social action. In this sense we could argue that all youth work is "social" work.

From "social" movement to youth "work" as an educational method

The start of the 20th century initiated a double evolution. Developmental psychology was more prescriptive than descriptive in construing adolescence as a crucial life stage in which constructive experiment in a fairly isolated youth world was essential. Youth work was designed as a safe place in which pedagogical interventions were inspired by considerations of individual positive youth development and not of social and political collective action. Moreover it was the development of middle-class college boys that was taken as a model for a positive development in the direction of an ideal youth stage. This evolution from direct to indirect participation seems to have clipped the wings of the first youth movements. In other words, the individual pedagogical aspect of the work was overemphasised while the social political component was obscured. Next to this confinement, the evolution from social movement to youth work meant a double jeopardy for the working-class young people as their development – and their youth organisations – were now defined as immature, deficient and even undesirable. Youth work was now an educational method. In between the world wars in Flanders, as in many other countries, the middle-class, uniformed youth organisations were set as a standard for all youth work.

The re-socialisation of the working class

In this pedagogisation of the social question youth work has become a powerful instrument to "re-socialise" a part of the desocialising working class. The first youth

movements gradually are adjusted to adult, middle-class concerns about the desir-able development of young people and they are fitted into a whole range of youth organisations differentiated according to gender, class and age. Questions about social cohesion are fundamental to youth work's existence, but they are pushed to the background. The youth work discussion now focuses on methodological aspects concerning the acquisition of democratic skills and attitudes. The obscur-ing of the social political aspects of youth work's identity is consolidated in a new methodical youth work concept, that was initiated in the United Kingdom by Baden-Powell but in no time conquered the world: Scouting, an a-political method (Lewin, 1947) which confirms the shift from social struggle and social justice to cultural renewal and character building.

Most existing youth organisations were transformed and remodelled according to the Scouting method. The necessary "re-socialisation" of the working class has turned into a civilising strategy, with youth work functioning as an "equaliser", an instrument to clone the middle class. Some organisations, like the other world-wide youth organisation the Catholic Worker's Youth (from Canon Cardijn), did reach out to some working-class young people and succeeded in fostering indi-vidual social mobility, but it is not surprising that youth work did not appeal to large parts of the working class youth. After the Second World War the relation between youth work and so-called socially excluded young people became an issue in youth work policies. In order to increase the attraction for working-class kids some youth workers deliberately dropped the explicit pedagogical aspects of youth work and evolved to providers of leisure activities for young people. In doing so they unwittingly eroded what was left of the social pedagogical identity of youth work and youth work risks to become an a-political and a-pedagogical instrument, standing for nothing, falling for everything.

➜ The death of the social?

In some respects this is an oversimplified description of the conception of youth work. The sum of all contributions from the different speakers from all over Europe in both Blankenberge workshops give a richer view than the schematic perspective on the birth of youth work described above, but the latter may have the power to show us how the attention for the "social" has gradually disappeared from the youth work discussion. The social pedagogical perspective on youth work has not only become undesirable, but even unthinkable. The social question has not disappeared, but is constricted in the youth question. This is an evolution that is strengthening developmental, psychological and youth sociological questions in youth work practice, policy and research, but it underexposes the social peda-gogical perspective and thus the inextricable relationship between politics and pedagogy. In the youth work discussion this evolution favours a narrow interpreta-tion of emancipation and an a-political interpretation of social cohesion and thus social in/exclusion.

Every now and then wider concerns about young people, individualisation, uncer-tainty and the social cohesion of our society crop up (Castel, 1995). These are the moments that a social pedagogical perspective senses a revival and critical voices from youth work practice find a renewed response. However, since Thatcher pro-claimed that "there is no such thing as a society", it seems very difficult to broaden the discussion and to take it beyond uncritical questions concerning the smooth adaptation of children and young people to values and competences important in (and for) a competitive market society. In doing that, prevention and posi-tive development have become key concepts of youth policies in most European

countries, but the discussion is mainly framed in a discourse that restricts social integration to institutional integration: integration in schools, in labour market, in youth work and so forth.

All young people are entitled to receive the educational support they need, but entitlements are self-evidently translated to questions of the accessibility of the existing agencies, organisations and institutions that occupy "the social". The agencies themselves do not have too much space to play their "social" role. It is important to turn a critical eye to the role that youth workers themselves play and played in this reduction of their work, but as shown in both workshops it is a fact that in many countries youth work's role as a democratic forum has diluted. Youth work has become a question of risk management, a question of preventing undesirable behaviour and stimulating healthy behaviour. The social in youth work is restricted to a "transit zone" from point A (immaturity) to point B (maturity). This seems to be a one-sided interpretation of the essential "social" nature of youth work. This finding urged Giesecke (1985) to call for "the end of education". With this statement he did not mean to say that we should stop investing in the education of children and young people. Quite the reverse, his call was a plea for acceptance of pedagogical modesty and a reaction against a too strong emphasis on pedagogy as individual risk management. In Rosseter's (1987: 52) words: "[youth work] is about moving young people on in some way from point A, not necessarily to point B or C, but to some position beyond A." Most participants in the Blankenberge workshops favoured this open-ended, social pedagogical view on youth work, but did not fail to emphasise that it is hard to make this perspective concrete in practice, policy and research, and to fight against narrowing, technical perspectives on youth work as a social engineering profession, policy and research domain. In this aspect the relationship between professionalisation and professionalism seems to be a key theme in the discussion. The diversity of contributions, all very rich and comprehensive in their attention for social, political and cultural context of evolutions in the youth work field, enabled us to elaborate further on the significance of the "social sphere" and what it can mean to interpret youth work as a "social work practice".

➜ Transforming the social: re-defining and reframing youth work

Youth work in an activating welfare state

In the last two decades we can observe in many European countries, as on the European level, a renewed impetus for youth policy and youth work policy. There is a whole range of reasons and interconnected factors playing a role in this revaluation of youth (work) policy, but one central element is certainly the broader shift in welfare regimes. In most countries during the 1990s a shift was witnessed from a so-called passive welfare regime to an activating welfare state (Begg and Berghman, 2002). The traditional pillars of the welfare state – full employment, stable jobs, male breadwinner families – have been continuously eroded. This has led to a crisis of the Keynesian, "passive" welfare state and an increasingly felt need to redefine the role of the state and the relationship between individual and society. After a decennium mainly characterised by welfare cuts and increasing social exclusion and poverty (Piachaud and Sutherland, 2001), the discussion on what has been called "a new social question" (Rosanvallon, 1995) took a new direction. A further erosion of welfare policies was stopped and turned into a plea for a "social investment state" (Giddens, 1998): a welfare state that does not compensate for failure, but invests in future success.

Such a future-oriented reframing of the role of the government has far-reaching implications for the status of the younger citizens (Lister, 2003; Harrikari, 2004). Some welfare reforms are specifically child centred in that they aim at giving younger citizens a "flying" start in life. This is no unambiguous evolution. Child centeredness is not necessary departing from young people's perspectives. It is often driven by adult concerns and thus goes hand in hand with an increasing emphasis on risk aversion and monitoring individual developmental trajectories. Parton (2005) speaks of "the preventive state". Masschelein and Simons (2002) discuss the adult obsession to promote responsible autonomous behaviour and "entrepreneurship". The point of departure and at the same time desired product of such a youth policy seem to be the children and young people who can manage their own biography in a risk society. It is argued that too much emphasis on the prevention of risks and the promotion of individual competencies leads to the denial of opportunities and a further marginalisation of those who do not fit the picture of the entrepreneurial self.

This sketch of the socio-economic context that underpins youth policy is of course slightly different in the different European nations, but in general the main principles are to be found in all national policies, including post-communist (post-state socialist) countries that in most cases seem to have steadily adopted western European strategies to cope with the dilemmas of capitalist democracies. In their case the rupture with history is greater. This is important because it is the point where history comes in. The described tendencies lead to a reframing, or even a redefining, of the social and pedagogical work in our societies. Historical consciousness is an indispensable prerequisite for adapting to a changing social context without losing a sense of identity.

Defined by history

In short, in this evolution to an activating welfare state pedagogical provisions suddenly find themselves at the heart of social policies. They never ceased to be in that position, but recent evolutions definitely re-attract our attention to the connection between education and social problems and re-emphasise the need to discuss this connection. This applies to formal education, but increasingly also to non-formal or informal sites of learning, such as youth work, in all its diversity. These trends also imply that youth workers are confronted with new partners who bring in new ideas, practices and "evidence" from the fields of youth care, health promotion, vocational guidance, crime prevention, parent support and so forth. On the pretext of joined-up thinking and so-called "integrated working" youth workers and other "social" workers are asked to co-operate with these new actors (Warin, 2007). This often brings youth workers into uncomfortable situations in balancing rights and obligations, the interests of children and those of parents, the objectives of labour market partners and those of children's health agencies. All this can produce confusion and such interwoven developments make youth workers yearn for a clearer identity. Is youth work just a multifunctional instrument flexible and available to all kind of purposes? Is it what Nörber (2005) denominates as an *Allzweckwaffe* (weapon for all targets) standing for nothing, falling for anything? As Ulrich Bunjes argued in his introductory speech, most youth workers would definitely answer "no" to that kind of question. But then there are different ways to disagree with tendencies to co-option or instrumentalisation. Simply turning our backs on policy makers is a popular answer for youth workers who tend to be horrified about instrumental thinking in the domains safety, prevention, education, care and so forth. Nevertheless this defensive reaction is seldom in the best interest of children and young people, especially not of children and young people who

are already facing social exclusion. As with all social phenomena youth work is to a large extent "defined by history" (Davies, 2009), so learning from history can help youth workers (and researchers and policy makers) to make sense of these reframing and not to simply acquiesce passively to and undergo this redefining of their work. For youth work is not only an answer to social problems, it is closely connected to the defining of these challenges (Giesecke, 1963). Youth work helps to give young people a voice and helps to create the "horizon of legitimate expectations" (Mahon, 2002). That is why youth workers need to be more explicit about their possible roles and practices.

Confident and deliberate youth work needs to be backed up by constructive and supportive youth work research. For social scientists not only describe realities but also bring into being what they discover (Law and Urry, 2004). Youth work practitioners, trainers, researchers and policy makers all need a historical consciousness, for knowing where we come from helps us to assess (and to shape) the way in front of us. In this sense our discussions in these workshops should be a stimulus for a critical appraisal of developments within youth work (Spratt et al., 2000), and for widening our horizons as to what is possible, questioning the historical inevitability of our practices (Baistow and Wilford, 2000). This is one of the big merits of these two workshops. Actually, the same merit has also been realised on the level of many of the different partners involved, who wrote for the first time a youth work history for their country or region as explicitly confirmed by Maurice Devlin (Ireland) and Gauthier Simon and Xavier Hurlet (French- and German-speaking communities of Belgium).

➔ Conclusion

The tension between forum and transit youth work could just be seen as yet a new shape in which the youth work dilemma shows itself. It seems useful however to situate youth work firmly in the social and give it a social identity as such and not just impose on youth work practice a derived identity, by constructing youth work as a bridge, passage or whatever between individual and society.

In no way is this a new role for youth work. That would be an a-historical statement and a neglect of actual youth work practice. Of course youth work offers a forum for young people to make themselves heard. Of course we should not keep silent about the thousands of young people who found in youth work a place to shape their identity, to gain unknown experiences, to acquire a distinctive style and to experiment with relations and behaviours, but all this happens on a fairly intuitive basis, which is at the same time the strength and the vulnerability of youth work. It creates the room to maximise the potential of one of youth work's core features: the pedagogical relation. But at the same time it gives youth work a blurred, unclear identity, which makes it difficult to defend open youth work practice with socially excluded young people. Above all, however, we fail to reflect on an essential part of our identity. Many youth workers underemphasise the "social" in their work. Their forum function is often predefined and social divisions between young people are consolidated rather than transcended. Other youth workers are being disempowered (or disempower themselves and the young people) by interpretations of the social as a transit zone and they are increasingly forced into formalised, methodical and individualised youth work concepts. History can inspire us in the ongoing construction of a youth work theory that gives us opportunities to revalue youth work as a social pedagogical practice and at the same time prevents us from seeking solutions in formalising the informal.

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The history of youth work in Europe – Volume 2

Relevance for today's youth work policy

Youth work starts where young people are. It is perhaps this general principle that seems to create a certain 'myopic view' in youth work practice, policy and research. We tend to concentrate on the questions of today and take them as a starting point for our future plans. This sometimes makes youth work an uncertain and fragile practice. The lack of historical consciousness makes youth work vulnerable to instrumentalisation, whether by policymakers or even by young people themselves, claiming youth work should fulfil the needs they define to be urgent and relevant.

Youth work is a contingent practice and history will not reveal us its one and only real identity. Knowing where we come from, however, is an important step in establishing a confident, though not arrogant, identity. Youth work is a social and pedagogical practice that must be adapted to very diverse historical, geographic and social contexts, but there are still some underlying, basic assumptions that have structured practices and policies to date and continue to do so. In this light, a cross-cultural and transnational perspective can be most enlightening.

This second volume of *The history of youth work in Europe*, presents the youth work histories of some very different countries: Belgium and its three communities, the Netherlands, Ireland, Wales and Hungary. The reader is also introduced in the history of the relatively young European youth policies, and is even given a glimpse beyond European borders with a history of youth work in South Africa.

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*The **Council of Europe** has 47 member states, covering virtually the entire continent of Europe. It seeks to develop common democratic and legal principles based on the European Convention on Human Rights and other reference texts on the protection of individuals. Ever since it was founded in 1949, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Council of Europe has symbolised reconciliation.*

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