

INTRODUCTION

Unesco's Enquiry

CONSULTATIONS

As part of Unesco's programme for 1951, the General Conference, at its Fifth Session (May-June 1950), adopted the following resolution (4.1212):

"The Director-General is authorized to arrange, in co-operation with the National Commissions and appropriate international organizations, for an enquiry into the place of the teaching of philosophy in the several educational systems, the way in which it is given, and its influence upon the moulding of the citizen."

At its Sixth Session, in June 1951, the General Conference adopted the following resolution (4.41) as part of Unesco's programme for 1952:

"The Director-General is authorized, on the basis of the enquiry, previously undertaken on the teaching of philosophy, to draw up specific suggestions for Member States and for the appropriate international organizations on the measures best suited to the development and improvement of this teaching, with special regard to the contribution it can make to education for international understanding."

A number of countries were selected early in 1951 for this enquiry, on account of the diversity of problems which each might present as regards philosophy teaching: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Ceylon, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, France, German Federal Republic, India, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom, United States of America and Yugoslavia.

A questionnaire¹ was drawn up by the Secretariat, in consulta-

¹ Unesco/CUA/11. See Appendix.

tion with the International Federation of Philosophical Societies, and with the assistance of three experts from different countries: Professor Donald Mackinnon of the University of Aberdeen (United Kingdom); Senator Ibrahim Madkour of the Fuad I Academy of the Arabic Language, Cairo (Egypt); and Professor Richard McKeon of the University of Chicago (United States of America).

Several copies of this questionnaire were sent to the National Commissions of the countries selected, and to certain national organizations, philosophic societies, etc., named by the Commissions. The questionnaire was also sent to a list of philosophers and teachers of philosophy in those countries drawn up in consultation with the International Federation of Philosophical Societies.

During 1951, the Secretariat received the official comments of the National Commissions of four countries (Egypt, France, India and the United Kingdom) and, early in 1952, the comments of the Union of South Africa.

Furthermore, three other countries (Belgium, Cuba and India) supplied collective reports from national societies grouping the majority or a large number of each country's philosophers and philosophy teachers (the Société Belge de Philosophie, the Cuban Philosophical Society and the Indian Philosophical Congress).

In other countries, the questionnaire was widely circulated by the National Commissions and certain societies, so that the body of individual replies received gave a fairly complete picture of the national position and of the opinions of authoritative circles (this was the case with the United States of America).

In other instances, there were too few individual replies for them to be regarded as constituting a general survey of the national system, however interesting the views expressed by their authors—although these views are of considerable importance for the formulation of general conclusions and suggestions.

Lastly, the Secretariat, throughout the enquiry, was able to refer to similar studies recently carried out in certain countries, such as the volume *Philosophy in American Education: Its Tasks and Opportunities*,¹ prepared by the American Philosophical Association as a sequel to a broad enquiry conducted in 1943, and the report on a conference convened by the Western Reserve University in October 1949.² It also obtained useful

¹ Edited by Professors Blanshard, Ducasse, Hendel, Murphy and Otto. Harper and Brothers, publishers, New York and London.

² *The Teaching of Philosophy*, edited by Professor Frank P. Harris, Cleveland, Ohio, United States of America, 1950.

information from the *Revue de l'Enseignement Philosophique*, the Bulletin of the Association des Professeurs de Philosophie de l'Enseignement Public Français, Paris.

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

The replies received as a result of the above-mentioned consultations revealed the complexity of the problems connected with the teaching of philosophy, and the diversity of national systems.

In order to draw up general and specific suggestions on the basis of the replies received, an international committee of experts was convened at Unesco House, Paris, from 26 to 30 November 1951. Its purpose was not to make a detailed study of each of the existing national systems, but to facilitate exchanges of views and a clarification of the degree of agreement on the significance of philosophy teaching and its role in education. Existing systems were to be studied only so far as they might guide the committee in formulating its views on the spirit of philosophy teaching, its influence and importance, and on the ways and means of expanding and improving it.

The committee consisted of the following nine experts: Professor Guido Calogero, of the University of Rome (Italy), Director of the Italian Institute of Culture, London.

Professor Georges Canguilhem, Inspector-General of Philosophy Teaching in France.

Professor Eugen Fink, of the University of Freiburg (Germany).

Professor Donald Mackinnon, of the University of Aberdeen (United Kingdom).

Senator Ibrahim Madkour, Member of the Fuad I Academy of the Arabic Language, Honorary Professor at the Fuad I University, Cairo (Egypt).

Professor Gustave Monod, Honorary Director of Secondary Education in France, Honorary Professor of Philosophy.

Professor Merritt H. Moore, of Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois (United States of America).

Professor N. A. Nikam, Secretary-General of the Indian Philosophical Congress, Professor at the University of Mysore (India).

Professor Humberto Piñera Llera, Chairman of the Cuban Philosophic Society, Professor at the University of Havana (Cuba).

The International Federation of Philosophical Societies was represented by its Chairman, Professor H. J. Pos, of the

University of Amsterdam and, in his absence, by Miss Suzanne Delorme, who attended the meeting as an observer.

The Director-General of Unesco was represented by Professor Bosch-Gimpera, Head of the Division of Philosophy and Humanistic Studies, and by Mr. J. Havet of that Division. Mr. Lionel Elvin, Director of the Department of Education, spoke to the committee on certain aspects of Unesco's programme concerning education for international understanding.

Professor Gustave Monod was elected chairman, Professor Donald Mackinnon and Senator Ibrahim Madkour, vice-chairmen, and Professor Guido Calogero, rapporteur.

The committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Exchanges of views on the main aspects of philosophy teaching and on ways and means of ensuring that it is turned to the best account in the various countries.
2. Formulation of a joint statement by the experts.
3. Exchanges of views on the publication of the results of the enquiry in the form of a volume in English and French.

The committee's discussions on the first of these three items were used as a basis for the drafting of the "Conclusions and Suggestions" at the end of this volume, which were approved by the members of the committee. "The Joint Statement by the Experts" on the teaching of philosophy is given in the pages immediately following.

Lastly, the committee recommended that the volume, whose publication in English and French is provided for in Unesco's programme for 1952,¹ should comprise, in addition to the conclusions and suggestions arising out of the enquiry, a general statement on the importance and significance of philosophy teaching, followed by chapters written by the committee's members, on the position of philosophy teaching in their respective countries. The committee recommended that Mr. Georges Canguilhem should be the editor of the volume and should write the chapter containing the general statement. The present volume has been arranged in accordance with these instructions.

¹ Resolution 4.121.