

The International Dissemination of Grundtvig's Educational Ideas

II: A World Map of Folk High Schools

By K. E. Bugge

During the 1990s the global dissemination of Grundtvig's educational ideas was a theme of considerable interest. Several projects were launched with the purpose of recording the process. At the turn of the decennium the need for an inclusive survey of these became obvious and consequently was implemented. In 2003 a report was published (in Danish) comprising (1) a schematized registration, 52 pages, (2) a verbalized report, 25 pages, and (3) a wall map visualizing the distribution of the 695 registered institutions. When an interest in the dissemination theme reemerged in 2011-12, it was decided that the time had come for translating report no. 2 into English. The Danish title of that second report was *Folkehøjskolernes Verdenskort*, i.e. *A World Map of Folk High Schools*, published by the Grundtvig Museum in Udby.

Two updates on India and Australia respectively and a few explanatory notes have been added in this translation.

The First Steps

At the impressive exhibition celebrating the Grundtvig bicentenary in 1983, the Museum of National History at Frederiksborg Castle featured a map, designed by Svend Erik Bjerre, Principal of the Frederiksborg Folk High School, illustrating the world-wide influence of Grundtvig's educational ideas. The information on the map was painted on two large cardboards and supplemented by a wealth of photos and texts available in the exhibition catalogue (Eller 1983). When, some years later, the board of the Grundtvig Museum in Udby wished to exhibit this map, it did no longer exist. It was, therefore, necessary to start from scratch. In that endeavour the museum received valuable assistance from the Association of Folk High Schools in Denmark (in Danish Foreningen af Folkehøjskoler i Danmark, abbreviated FFD), which forwarded a map illustrating the establishment of folk high schools in the five Nordic countries: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland. Included were also the three home rule territories Greenland and the Faroe Islands in the North Atlantic and the Åland Islands in the Baltic Sea.¹ This map was

¹ The map was originally used as a cover illustration on a pamphlet providing information about the folk high schools in the Nordic countries. It was published by the boards of the Nordic Folk High Schools. The illustration is dated 1990 by the artist, whereas the pamphlet itself is undated. It must, however, have been

then exhibited at the museum in Udby. At the same time its Director, J. E. Biering-Sørensen, initiated the production of a map showing the world-wide distribution of folk high schools.

Inter-institutional teamwork

In 1992 a newly established research center, Nornesalen,² launched an investigation into the promulgation of Grundtvig's educational ideas in countries outside of Scandinavia. A few months later the two institutions, Nornesalen and the Grundtvig Museum in Udby, decided to cooperate in this enterprise. A coordinating committee consisting of the Director of Nornesalen, Lilian Zøllner PhD, and two representatives of the Grundtvig Museum operated during the first three years, 1993-96.

In the autumn of 1992 the first task was to decide the scope of the investigation. In other words, it was necessary to determine its chronological and geographical limits and its main focus. It was agreed to concentrate on the present day situation and only incorporate historical information to a limited extent. Secondly it was decided to exclude Nordic folk high schools. The reasons for this decision were two: (1) Literature concerning the Nordic folk high schools was easily available to a satisfactory degree; (2) The situation in the Third World required immediate attention—not least because the climatic conditions often made preservation of documents difficult for the archives; it was important to secure such materials before it was too late. Finally it was decided that a definition of Grundtvig inspiration should not be too narrowly conceived. In the course of the dissemination process his ideas were necessarily modified and adapted to socio-cultural contexts which often differed considerably from the situation in Northern Europe. These problems were thoroughly discussed at an international conference convened in November 1994 at Liselund, Slagelse, and organized by Nornesalen (cf. Zøllner & Andersen 1995).

With these points sufficiently clarified, the next batch of questions concerned the practical procedure. Nornesalen undertook the task of collection and storage of relevant source materials. The representatives of the Grundtvig Museum were to constitute an overview of earlier writings on the subject. It was obvious that even when only dealing with a single institution, background literature might be of such dimensions that a registration of all relevant information—however interesting it

published approximately at the same time, as its most recent information refers to the years 1989-90.

² The center was established by a group of Grundtvigian organizations and situated in Ollerup near Svendborg on the island of Fyn (Funen). – In Scandinavian mythology “Nornesalen” is the abode of the goddesses of wisdom and guidance.

might be—was an impossible task. It was therefore first of all decided to register those publications that attempted to describe the development in a world-wide perspective—or within a major geographical region. The most important of the publications found were the following (here listed chronologically):

Fridlev Skrubbeltrang (1946), “Højskolevirksomhed i andre Lande” (Folk High School Activity in other Countries), Skrubbeltrang, *Den danske Folkehøjskole*, 190-210.

Erica Simon (1960), *Réveil National et Culture Populaire en Scandinavie*, 714-716 (about folk high schools in the Third World).

Peter Manniche (ed.) (1969-78), *Rural Development and the Changing Countries of the World* (1969, 361-525; second, revised and abridged edition 1978, 221-288).

Thomas Rørdam (1980), *The Danish Folk High Schools*, second edition, 173-178.

Svend Erik Bjerre (1983): “Langt højere Bjerger”, Povl Eller (ed.), *Grundtvig og Danmark*. Exhibition catalogue. The Museum of National History at Frederiksborg, 88-94. (The title refers to a popular song written by Grundtvig: “Langt højere bjerger”, i.e. “Much higher mountains are found on Earth”).

Grundtvig's Ideas in North America (1983), edited and published by Det Danske Selskab / The Danish Institute.

Erica Simon (1989), “ – og solen står med bonden op – ”. A short history of the Nordic folk high schools with an Appendix (145-165) on the distribution of Grundtvig's ideas in other parts of the world. (“ – og solen...” etc., i.e. the sun rises with the peasant, refers to a popular song by Grundtvig on the importance of “life enlightenment”).

Internationalt Udvalgs Spørgeskemaundersøgelse og Base pr. 1.9.92. Kontakter i Asien. Udskrift (The International Committee of the FFD. Investigation by questionnaire and database as of September 1st 1992: Contacts in Asia. Transcript).

In the year 1992-93, while this literary investigation was going on, two young scholarship holders, Birgitte Ingsø Laursen and Brian Lorentzen,

were employed at Nornesalen with the specific task of establishing the above-mentioned collection of relevant materials, for example letters, interviews, seminar reports, newspaper cuttings and articles from periodicals.³

Furthermore, they made a commendable effort to establish the precise geographical location of each school, sometimes a quite time-consuming task!

Also, in the future, the collection of materials established by these two young scholars will be an important source of information in the study of this specific area of investigation. Its immediate effect, however, was the forming of a basis for a catalogue published by Nornesalen in 1996 in both Danish and English: *Catalogue of International Contacts in the field of people's enlightenment inspired by the Grundtvigian tradition*. In a wider perspective this catalogue also became of practical importance for the series of publications which were produced by Nornesalen from the mid-nineties onwards. But first some details about the catalogue.

The Nornesalen Catalogue 1996

The Nornesalen catalogue was issued in two volumes, respectively in Danish and in English. A loose-leaf system was employed in order to facilitate continuous revision and updating. The relatively large pages (A4) provide ample space for information and exemplify a consumer-friendly layout. The materials presented are divided into 12 numbered sections. Of these the first one brings a preface and the concluding section provides an instruction concerning the updating procedure. The remaining ten chapters are divided between the five continents of Africa, America, Asia, Australia (incl. Oceania) and Europe (minus the Nordic countries, cf. above). Of the two sections allotted to each continent, the first one informs about the schools and the second lists the organizations involved. After the name of each school special subsections record the name of the Principal, the postal address of the school, its telephone and fax numbers and finally the name and address of contacts in Denmark. At the bottom of the page we find two subsections headed "Information" and "Literature". Here the reader may find some brief information about the institution, its founding and distinctive character, and finally a guide to relevant reading.

In several respects the Nornesalen catalogue is an impressive effort. Not only is the catalogue copious (223 pages); also to a large extent it

³ Among the periodicals especially *Højskolebladet* published from 1876 onwards proved to be a goldmine of information.

has achieved its objective. The aim was to facilitate communication between institutions and individuals actively involved in “folkeoplysning”, education for the people. In other words the intention was to create “international networks within the sector of people’s enlightenment”, as stated in the Preface. In this it succeeded. With all the names, addresses, telephone and fax numbers here assembled, the Nornesalen catalogue from 1996 is presumably—at least in some respects—still the most comprehensive collection of international folk high school data.

However, even a registration as complete as this has its limitations. First of all, before long its information will be outdated—a fate shared with other similar registrations. The adopted loose-leaf system was designed to counteract outdated. Nevertheless, an updating has not taken place. The reasons are manifold. The first and most obvious of these is the fact that no updating sheets were received. A number of unforeseen circumstances may have thwarted the basic intention. An institution being compelled to close does not necessarily inform the rest of the world that it will no longer be found on the map. A Principal moving to another job normally will only be interested in establishing himself in his new situation. If such a change is to be communicated to Denmark, the task presumably is handed over to his equally busy successor. Whether the pertinent information refers to an institution as such or to a single person, the question arises how much time and effort could and should be invested in an updating procedure.

Other difficulties crop up in the subsections *Information* and *Literature*. The information provided here seems somewhat randomly selected. Perhaps this was unavoidable. Each school might require up to years of intensive study to collect, select and examine the requisite sources. Furthermore, some schools have deliberately refused to distribute this information. This was the case with some schools situated in the Third World or in the former communist Central and Eastern Europe, where the schools sometimes were established in opposition to the government. In such a situation it could be dangerous to broadcast who did what, when and where. But even in a so-called normal context it may turn out to be quite a demanding task to understand the particular social, economical and cultural background that motivated the foundation of each individual school.

Difficulties such as these had to be dealt with. It was recognized that the most efficient method of gathering reliable and updated information where this was not supplied by an organization was to visit the schools and make observations on the spot. But this approach also has its drawbacks. It was indeed a demanding procedure in terms of time and money, but not to be circumvented. It was decided that the operational framework was to be a series of publications.

The Publications

During the years 1994-96 a small group of potential authors met. Lilian Zøllner was willing to write about Japan, the Philippines and Israel, countries with which she had previously established good working relations. Additionally she would be interested in visiting the USA and South America. K. E. Bugge took on Canada and Bangladesh. Finally, Dr. Jindra Kulich who had just been pensioned from his tenure as Lecturer in Adult Education at the University of British Columbia, Canada, volunteered to write not only about the Baltic States but also Eastern and Central Europe. Dr. Kulich had an intimate knowledge of these countries and spoke the relevant languages. Assignments concerning the remaining countries were referred to later decision.

The first volumes published by Nornesalen appeared in 1994-97. In September 1998, however, the board of the institution decided to close the series.⁴ The book on Bangladesh accordingly was published by the Odense University Press and the book written by Kulich printed by the then newly established Vartov publishers in Copenhagen. The above-mentioned report from 1995, *Enlightenment in an International Perspective*, had in a way been an overture to the series which was terminated in 1998/99. It had brought not only updated information about a number of folk high schools in different parts of the world; it had also initiated a discussion of some theoretical and methodical problems.

The books appearing in the Nornesalen series were the following five:

Lilian Zøllner (1994), *Grundtvig's Educational Ideas in Japan, the Philippines and Israel* (in Danish as well as in English).

K. E. Bugge (1997-99), *Canada and Grundtvig* (in Danish 1997, in English 1999).

Lilian Zøllner (1997), *Grundtvig's Educational Ideas in USA, Argentine and Chile* (in Danish only).⁵

Update 1. *A volume on India was planned and some preliminary investigations carried through. The famous Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore developed an interest in Grundtvig's educational ideas and visited The International People's College at Elsinore no less than three times, in 1921, 1926 and 1930. The folk high school idea has clearly influenced*

⁴ The reasons behind this unexpected closing seem to have been of both a financial and a personal nature.

⁵ No English edition appeared. A manuscript on Africa was not completed.

Tagore's own educational institution Shantiniketan (Lawson 1996; Chowdhury 2008 and 2009). Approximately at the same time—in the 1920s and 1930s—the Danish missionary Anne Marie Petersen founded and ran a school inspired by Grundtvig's ideas. An interesting detail is her co-operation with Gandhi, who in 1921 laid down the cornerstone of the new school (cf. Smidt Hansen 1998, chapter IV).

The exchange of folk high school ideas between Denmark and India continued during the post-war years. The University of Education Commission appointed by the Government of India chose as one of its 10 members the prominent American folk high school pioneer Arthur E. Morgan. A result of this appointment can be seen in the appendices of the final report dated 1948-49 (quoted by Bhattacharya 1994, 109-127). Here the report recommends that the programme of "the Danish People's Colleges" be adapted for implementation in India. It was, therefore, no coincidence that the first Danish development project to be launched in India in the post-war years was a combined folk high school and agricultural centre, founded 1959 near Mysore in South India (Steen Folke & Jens Herluf Jensen 1968). A wall in the entrance hall of the building is adorned with pictures of Nehru, Grundtvig and Gandhi side by side (Eller 1983, Holm 2012, 150).

A few years later Dr. Ramlal Parikh, Principal of the Gujarat Vidyapith in Ahmedabad, combined the ideas of Grundtvig and Gandhi in his educational practice and visions (Parikh 1983). The Grundtvig bicentenary in 1983 was celebrated at several universities and educational centres throughout India. – At the turn of the millennium Asoke Bhattacharya organized a number of initiatives in order to introduce Grundtvig's ideas at the Jadavpur University in Calcutta (now: Kolkata) where he was head of the ACEE, i.e. the Adult, Continuing Education and Extension Centre (cf. Grundtvig-Studier 2000, 184-189). His efforts were crowned by the UNESCO award for outstanding achievements in the area of adult education.

The most comprehensive of Indian educational institutions inspired by Grundtvig is probably Mitraniketan located in the southwest corner of the subcontinent. It was founded in 1956 by K. Wiswanathan, a graduate from Tagore's Santiniketan and a personal friend of Gandhi. Through educational studies in USA and Scandinavia he became acquainted with the Danish folk high schools. At Mitraniketan, a community of approximately 500 members, education and vocational training is offered primarily to the socially underprivileged from different age-groups—children as well as adults (www.mitraniketan.org).⁶

⁶ Wiswanathan's choice of USA and Scandinavia was inspired by Arthur E. Morgan's participation in the University Education Commission. About the Arthur Morgan School in North Carolina, see Zöllner 1997, 204-230. – The organization

Under the Aegis of the Association

While working on the Bangladesh book the author of these lines consulted the Development Adviser Gunhild Skovmand Jensen, member of the International Committee of the Association of Folk High Schools in Denmark (the FFD, cf. above). During our talks on the developments in Bangladesh we discussed the possibilities of initiating a new project aiming at a registration of the world-wide dissemination of Grundtvig's educational ideas. We agreed that an implementation under the aegis of the Association would be an obvious and practical solution. The Association welcomed the idea and offered to defray the expenses of meetings, paperwork and postage.

At the central office of the FFD in Copenhagen a preliminary meeting was held in January 2001, where the two originators mentioned above discussed a procedure with Lotte Fabrin as representative of the Association. It was decided to invite a small number of key persons to partake in the process.

The invitation was accepted by three experts: (1) Thorstein Balle who was then employed at the Danish Broadcasting Corporation and later became Principal of Den Frie Lærerskole (The Independent Teachers' Training College), (2) Ove Korsgaard, Professor of Education at Danmarks Lærerhøjskole (renamed The University of Education), and (3) Rex O. Schade from the Ryslinge Folk High School who had excellent contacts to the schools in Poland. Apart from these a much larger number of individuals and associations were consulted. Among the contacts most frequently approached were Swedish and Norwegian associations supporting folk high schools in the Third World. Furthermore we corresponded with Dr. Jindra Kulich who at this juncture was finishing his book on the schools in Eastern and Central Europe (cf. above).

The committee decided to meet twice a year. In between, the two originators would meet separately to discuss the materials and information received and plan new approaches. During committee meetings, with all five members convening at "Højskolernes Hus" (the House of the Folk High Schools) in Copenhagen, quite naturally the Nornesalen Catalogue was thoroughly discussed and its merits and drawbacks noted. Last but not least, the procedure for registration was discussed at nearly every meeting. Finally the following criteria were agreed upon:

The registration should encompass schools and organizations having been established under direct or indirect inspiration from Grundtvig's educational ideas. An indirect inspiration could have been received

of Mitraniketan reminds us that Grundtvig himself had advocated a combination of theoretical and practical pursuits at the "School for Life" (cf. Mitra & Bhattacharya 2003, 40-45).

e.g. through Norwegian and Swedish folk high schools or from other folk high schools in the country concerned. Furthermore, the registered schools must have functioned in the year 2002-2003 and/or have had contacts with Danish folk high schools.

It was agreed that the criteria should be flexible so that they could cover a number of schools that apart from adult education also accept students who are a little younger than those enrolled in Danish folk high schools. Such flexibility was deemed necessary in order not to exclude institutions which in other respects were eligible for registration. For some time also registration of Grundtvig/Kold inspired schools for children was considered. The idea was finally dropped. In countries outside Denmark such schools were too few to attract international attention.

Additionally, in the practical execution of the decisions care should be taken to

- register **schools** which in the year 2002-2003 offer an adult education programme, the basic ideas and content of which approximately correspond with the current praxis of the Danish folk high schools—and in some cases also the Danish so-called “Efterskoler”, i.e. non-examination schools for 16-18 year-olds.
- register **organizations** ministering to the interests of these institutions.

The final phase

At the close of the year 2002 it was obvious that there were few—if any—chances of gaining additional information. At some points the registration was regrettably incomplete, as a number of schools and organizations had not answered repeated requests. The explanation may have been that the institution in question no longer existed, or else it had neither resources for participation nor any deep interest in the project. In such cases it was concluded that without a direct confirmation of the factual existence of an institution it could not be registered. Other difficulties were, for example, that the same school sent diverse or conflicting answers. Possibly the purpose of the registration had not been sufficiently clear to the recipients. Furthermore, for financial and/or political reasons an uncertain situation might in some cases prevail in the local context, causing the answer to be postponed or totally discarded.

In the final phase the original focus of the investigation had imperceptibly been changed. Originally the aim was to produce a world map similar to the one created by Svend Erik Bjerre for the exhibition in 1983. It was also such a world map the Grundtvig Museum in Udby

had envisaged. In other words: a registration was to be conducted as a basis for a new world map. By 2002-03 registration had become the primary concern and the map the secondary. Obviously, the situation called for some renewed thinking about the method of publication.

It was finally decided to present the information received in a schematic layout where 15 to 20 schools could be registered on one A4 page. In this way the register became handier than the heavy catalogues from 1996. In addition, should a revised edition be called for sometime in the future, production costs would be limited. As for the actual information to be delivered, it was decided to cancel the subsections *Information* and *Literature*. Furthermore, telephone numbers were to be replaced by email addresses and home pages on the internet.

These decisions reflect the rapid development that had taken place in the communications sector over the preceding five years. Schools not yet having such tools at their disposal would probably acquire them within a short time.

While the Nornesalen Catalogue from 1996 did not register folk high schools in the Nordic countries, it was decided to welcome them in the new survey. Quite often, commenting on the committee's queries it was suggested that the Nordic countries be included; the situation there might of course be well-known to Scandinavians but not necessarily to interested inquirers abroad. This information was easily and quickly provided by the Association.

Finally the practical production of the registration pages had to be thoroughly discussed. Obviously, the task was demanding and time-consuming as a high level of accuracy had to be attained especially in regard to the email addresses. Otherwise the information would be useless. Fortunately, one of the secretaries at the FFD, Charlotte Olsen Goldenberg, was found to be willing to undertake the task in her free time. External funding was secured, and the new catalogue was produced within a year to the full satisfaction of everybody.

Grundtvig on the internet

In the autumn of 2002 a contact was established with Revd Bjørn Krab-Johansen, Director of the N. F. S. Grundtvig Foundation. A few years earlier the foundation had received from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs a grant earmarked for the production of a home page informing about Grundtvig and the aftermath of his ideas in Denmark and abroad. The practical implementation of the programme which was to be completed by the end of 2003 was to be effectuated by Carsten Oxenvad at the Skaarup Teachers' Training College in Funen. Co-operation concerning the special area of Grundtvig's educational ideas was suggested and accepted. In April 2003 Revd Krab-Johansen extraordinarily took part

in one of our final committee meetings. It was decided that the N. F. S. Grundtvig Foundation should receive the registrations on a diskette as soon as the last emendations had been inserted.

Through the co-operation with the N. F. S. Grundtvig Foundation two obvious advantages were attained. Firstly, the information accumulated in the registration is easily accessible for users all over the world. Time will show whether it is possible also to add a visual world map. Secondly, it would not be necessary to establish a procedure by which the information could be bought as all data are accessible on the internet (www.Grundtvig-Byen.dk). Should some users prefer versions on paper these could easily be printed. If necessitated for technical reasons, an acquisition through the Association is still a possibility.

Problems and decisions

In the preceding pages some of the problems encountered have been reported. In connection with problems a solution is usually mentioned. During the project it became increasingly obvious that in several instances it would be meaningless to talk about solutions, as the problem in question was not solved; since the issue did not disappear once and for all, it would be more accurate to use the word decisions. Under all circumstances, a decision had to be made in order to enable the project's continuation. Two examples shall be cited, one of a practical nature and one a problem of principle.

The practical problem concerned how to visualize the dissemination on a world map. On the map from 1990 the geographical location of the schools was indicated by approximately 400 small black dots on a map of the five Nordic countries. At the outset we had the idea that a similar solution could be adopted on our world map. But then we ran into the problem of ascertaining the accurate location of the individual schools. Up through history the folk high schools have ever so often moved to new and more advantageous venues. Furthermore, if the location was a small town or village, it could be difficult—if not impossible—to find. Faced with these predicaments, we recurred to the map produced by Svend Erik Bjerre in 1983. Here the location of the individual schools was not indicated, but the fact that folk high schools were established in a particular country was illustrated by a red dot on the map. In other words just one dot for each country which was relevant in this respect. Thus Bjerre's map provided a very lucid illustration of the situation. Instead of *location* he had chosen to indicate *distribution*. We settled for his solution. But we did add something new by using labels showing the relevant number of schools. In that way we could indicate both the *distribution* of the schools *and* the actual *number* of these in each country. Nevertheless, all problems were not yet solved.

The idea was that all relevant information should be presented on one map. Among the available world maps the most suitable was a wall map with the dimensions 40 cm x 75 cm. But even on a map of that size, small countries such as Denmark, Holland and the Baltic States disappeared under the label used! We, therefore, ended up with labels of different sizes. Though hardly a satisfactory solution, we avoided the clumsiness of working with two maps.

Much more serious than towns and villages, maps and labels was a problem of principle concerning two folk high schools in Israel. One was situated in the self-governing region Gaza, and our fundamental principle was that the schools were to be registered under the state where they operated. An argument for making an exception in this special situation was the fact that on the 1990 map depicting the distribution in the Nordic countries, the location of the folk high schools in the three home rule regions had been indicated by the different flags of these territories. Somehow we had to find a solution, whereby was indicated both the still existing political cohesion of the state (Israel) and the self-governing region (Gaza) *and* the conviction that sooner or later a two-state settlement would be a reality. In 2002 prospects of a two-state solution seemed much more positive than in previous years. We therefore ended up by choosing a compromise: The existing cohesion of the state was indicated by writing 1+1 on the one and only label for both schools. The then quite possible future two-state situation was indicated in the schematic version by registering the Gaza school under the heading "Palestine". Also in this case we were compelled to accept a not wholly satisfactory decision.

Disappointments and a breakthrough

In the course of our investigation we—as is often the case in such ventures—encountered a number of disappointments. It was regrettable that we were unable to register the presence of folk high schools in Switzerland and France where Fritz Wartenweiler and Erica Simon had pioneered efficiently in the years before and after World War II respectively. Furthermore, the two folk high schools which were situated in Iceland in 1990 had closed down. The same applies to the previously existing folk high school in Argentina. Regrettably, we had to abandon the hope of indicating a distribution from the far North to the far South. Finally, it was a major disappointment to realize that we were unable to indicate the presence of folk high schools in Australia.

Update 2. *Before, during and shortly after the Grundtvig bicentenary in 1983 we had been informed of a promising interest for Grundtvig in Australia. The details of this interest we owe to Erica Simon, first orally*

and then in the newly re-discovered Appendix to her book “ – og solen står med bonden op – ” (1989). Here we learn that a co-ordinating institution, “The Australian Folk High School Association” was established in 1984 in close co-operation with the Australian Ministry of Education and the Danish Association FFD. A suitable location had been found and it was decided that a major issue to be taken up in the teaching at the new institution could be the relation between a multi-cultural society and an Australian identity.

This promising information which we had received in the 1980s was (briefly) confirmed by the Nornesalen Catalogue from 1996. In chapter 9 a Department of Community Programmes is registered under The University of Newcastle, Australia. The registration of this university department could lead to the clearly untenable conclusion that this is a case of an Australian folk high school. Nevertheless, a contact to the Danish folk high school movement is undeniably corroborated. However, we possessed no information of the actual situation in 2003.

On this background we contacted Max Lawson, Professor of Education at the University of New England in Armidale, NSW, Australia.⁷ His disappointing answer revealed that no Australian folk high schools inspired by Grundtvig’s ideas were actively functioning in 2002-03. The same applied to New Zealand. Lawson’s tentative explanation ran to the effect that Danish immigration to Australia and New Zealand had been negligible compared to the immigration to USA and Canada.

However, in 2012 new information turned up which confirmed the promising interest from 1983 and at the same time described the difficulties facing an establishment of a folk high school in Australia and thus confirmed Lawson’s observation from 2003. In 1983, J. E. Collins, the Director of the above-mentioned university department, had edited a collection of Australian Papers on N. F. S. Grundtvig 1783-1872.⁸ Grundtvig’s life and work, his ideas and historical context are carefully described. In a final paper by J. S. Ryan and N. Crew, the question of why it has not yet been possible to transfer the folk high school idea to Australia is thoroughly discussed. Other factors than the ones mentioned by Lawson are considered.

These disappointments were, however, amply compensated for by positive developments in other parts of the world. In 1996 five folk high schools were functioning in Bangladesh; in 2003 the number rose to six. In the Philippines the number has risen from one to five. While the number of folk high schools in North America has gone down, a new

⁷ Max Lawson had published a selection of Grundtvig’s educational writings in 1991 and in 1996 a history of The International People’s College in Elsinore (IPC).

⁸ Revd Aage Schiøler has kindly drawn our attention to this publication.

school has emerged in Nicaragua, Central America. In Africa the number was five times as high as at the previous registration. On this background it may be concluded that the actual world-wide distribution pattern resembles the situation in the Nordic countries: numbers vary from year to year. Some schools are closed down, others are founded.

Apart from disappointments and problems we also had a number of unforeseen positive experiences. We were fortunate to have been able to collaborate with the N. F. S. Grundtvig Foundation and with Dr. Jindra Kulich (cf. above). Another piece of luck was our well-established contact with Dr. Norbert Vogel, Professor of Adult Education at the University of Tübingen, Germany. Over the past years Vogel had visited Denmark several times and was currently involved in the translation into German of a selection of Grundtvig's writings. After we had asked for his assistance concerning folk high schools in Germany he approached the organization *Verband ländlicher Heimvolkshochschulen Deutschlands* which immediately sent us a complete register of the folk high schools functioning in Germany, Austria and Holland. After the name of each of these 82 schools were added their postal and email addresses plus their homepage on the internet.

The expression "breakthrough" is usually applied to an activity, where one works fruitlessly for a considerable length of time and then—suddenly and quite unexpectedly—a result turns up. In our particular context we had such an experience in our registration of the situation on the British Isles. In spite of numerous approaches to colleagues beyond the North Sea nothing happened. Then, in July 2002, Gunhild Skovmand Jensen coincidentally met Derek Tatton at an international conference. Tatton was Director of the *Association of Residential Colleges for Adult Education* (ARCA). He now learned about our project and promised to help us out. Two months later we received a complete list of all the 31 colleges which were members of the association. In one stroke we had all the information we needed concerning the folk high schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Considering our earlier fruitless approaches, this transmittal was felt as a decisive breakthrough. The fact that both the German and the British associations had added the email and homepage addresses on the internet convinced us that such information should also be included in our registration.

Concluding remarks

The above-mentioned large world map may be seen at the Grundtvig Museum in Udby which instigated this survey in 1990. Furthermore, the world map will be used in the information service of the FFD at Højskolernes Hus in Copenhagen. It has not been decided whether at

some later date the map should also be presented elsewhere. The schematic registrations which the committee regards as the most important outcome of its efforts may be acquired at the office of the Association (FFD). As the maps will shortly be accessible on the internet, the facility of acquisition at this office will very likely become superfluous in the future.

The background and course of this investigation, its aims and method, its problems and solutions, have now been described. Strictly speaking our project is not to be classified as a piece of *research*, whose aim, in the strictest sense, is the generation of new knowledge. Our aim was an *updated survey* of already existing registrations. It was our hope that such a survey might be of value for other interested parties.

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