

University of Tartu, Estonia

The report presents a historic survey of the development of art education in Estonia and its present-day problems. I shall start with a short introduction of the historical background of art instruction. For a thousand years Estonia has been situated at the crossing point of the interests of the Great Powers. Germans, Swedes, Danes, Poles and Russians have ruled in Estonia. Thanks to this, Estonians have received various cultural impacts. In the 13th century, the Germans conquered the lands of Estonia. The culture of Baltic Germans as well as the Estonian peasant culture existed side by side, being isolated from each other by status as well as by a language barrier. In the nineteenth century Estonia was multicultural: as Estonia was a part of Russia, the Russian culture was dominant but it found no support among the local inhabitants. The German culture was the culture of high classes; the Estonian nation formed the lower class - the peasants. Artists working in Estonia were mainly of German origin. In the 17th century, three-year peasant schools emerged, where teaching was performed in Estonian. In towns, the tuition fee was also charged for primary education, which to a prevailing extent was rendered in German. In the 1880s the teaching in Estonian popular primary schools began to take place in Russian. In the 18th century, the Russian county schools had two forms, and 4 hours a week was devoted to drawing. Estonian pupils had to speak Russian at school. In the year 1920, Russia recognized Estonia's independence. From the end of the 19th century till 1940 there was an attempt to develop the national culture, taking the European standards as an example. Estonians studied in art schools of both Russia and Germany, worked in France and other European states. Art teachers were educated; the first Estonian textbooks in art were composed. It became possible for Estonians to acquire a higher education in art in Estonia in their mother tongue. This resulted in a sharp rise in the art-related activity and the Europeanization of art, but also the loss in the original, national part of the Estonian art. An example was drawn from many countries, from Finland a national romantic trend spread into Estonia, the works on the theme of a national epic "Kalevala" by Gallen-Kallela set the pattern. At this time in Estonia a national epic was also founded, being illustrated by many artists. Estonian artists came in touch also with impressionism and abstractionism. At common schools of Estonia at this time tuition took place in the mother tongue, of course. ·Drawing took place 2 hours a week, from primary school till the end of a secondary school. In the classes, drawing after imagination and nature, the study of colour with watercolours, decorative drawing and talks on art took place. ·From 1926 to 1933 the project method widely spread in the United States was tested at Estonian schools. According to this project, all subjects were attempted to be taught by a single teacher. ·In 1934, a transition to the subject system took place, where teachers of a special subject set to work mainly from the 4th form. In the years from 1940 to 1990 Estonia was overwhelmed with the ideology of the USSR. In 1939, on the call by Hitler, the Baltic Germans returned to their old homeland. In June 1940, the Soviet Union occupied Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In Estonia the continuity of cultural heritage was ruined by the Soviet occupation in 1940. A system of double-dealing in values and hypocrisy came into being. On the one hand there was an apparent loyalty to the communist party, on the other hand memories from the culture of the independence time and the influence of modern art. ·Till 1950, an old pre-war teaching system prevailed in Estonia. In 1950 in relation with the fight against nationalism, Estonia adopted the teaching programs worked out in Moscow. Art instruction lessons were decreased to one hour per week and the teaching lasted till the 8th form. Later on art education in the 7th and 8th forms was replaced with technical drawing. ·In 1963, a new teaching plan and a program, developed by the Estonian supervisors was approved. Artistic education continued till the 6th form, one hour per week ·In 1970, an experiment was made in the primary school forms of Estonia, combining manual training and art education. ·In 1988, the high

peak in art education arrived: from the 1st to the 5th form, two hours per week, and from the 6th to the 12th form, one hour per week was devoted to art education. In 1991, Estonia restored its independence, but the majority of the young people had lost their national feeling. At present, a generation has grown up, who prefers welfare and popular culture. National culture is a memory from the past that is being introduced at the museums and in the school classes. People have become interested in world - wide trends, international co-operation. Export and import of culture is extending thanks to a close communication (television, computer, video, art projects, exhibitions etc.). Art education has also become more diversified, where new forms of esthetical thinking have emerged as well as connecting traditions and the nation's roots with the present day in a new form has been practised. Although the programme of art education of the present day is more diversified, the main focus is still on art history, which is being illustrated with several practical tasks. The incorporation of computer study, video and art education of exotic countries in the programme of art education depends on a school's finances. We would observe the more spread standpoints of the present day: **Art instruction is closely connected with the development of art.** From the beginning of around the year 1970 teachers have begun to assess the works of pupils from the point of view of their originality and the level of creativity. Design, abstract art, expressiveness and subjectiveness penetrated into art instruction at schools. Beginning from the year 1990 the learning of different cultures in art instruction became popular. Every culture has its interpretation of art, this means that in art instruction one must deal with several ages and forms of art. The art of both the primeval period as well as art of the 20th century is observed through the European art. The pupils of our schools as a rule know nothing about the Chinese, Japanese or American art. To counterbalance this art teachers have in the recent times started to deal with the art of exotic countries. Besides traditional frontal chronological treatment a chronological observation of segments of art (e.g. portrait painting, colour treatment etc.) classified on the different bases has been spread. Critical interpretation of works of art was introduced in art instruction, where no certain final conclusions were drawn, but it was maintained that everything is changing. From post-modernistic art the ideas of H. Risatti came into art instruction, where one neglected clean forms and aesthetic values and started to deal with social issues. One attempted to solve the problems of ecology, citizenship right and feminism by means of art. Under the slogan of art there was a fight against the existing world order. Several projects have spread into the art instruction of schools from here. For example a Finnish art scientist M.-H. Mantera carried out a project (1992), which was directed to the solution of ecological problems. According to his opinion it is possible to contribute to a **formation of a better environment and lifestyle through art instruction.** One aim of the project was to incite interest towards the nearest surroundings of a school. The near surroundings of a school were drawn on a map and pupils were given a point on a map that they had to depict in their work. An exhibition was made out of these works. There was a discussion with pupils, which place in the surroundings of the school was the most nature friendly. During the discussion pupils explained, which ecological, aesthetic and ethic connections the schoolhouse has with the surroundings. A corresponding exhibition was carried out also in Estonia. In Estonia there have also been carried out projects, where pupils go to a dump and collect several items from there for the still life. According to the opinion of the authors of the project, his helps to develop the pupils' sense of humour and to find the symbolic meaning of objects. **Connection of art instruction with national culture.** The future of the culture depends on the attitude and value judgements of pupils. In order to keep the continuity of culture pupils should have an understanding of the presence, past and the future. On the basis of the inquiries carried out at Tartu Grammar School of Art and on the basis of the corresponding works of pupils one can maintain that pupils' sense of culture is not deep. They have a playful attitude towards culture, adding their fantasy to symbols and signs intrinsic in culture. Their relationship with the culture remains on the level of emotions, not senses. Motion pictures, pop music and

advertisements make a much deeper impact on them than their own national culture does. We are largely under the influence of mass culture. The attitude towards the teaching of national culture at school as well as national culture in general is under a strong social suppression. A standpoint is spreading that a nation and a national state is historically decaying, with which also the fate and the status of national culture is imminently turning more cloudy. It is still more evident that this is due to the search in mental roots, characteristic of the transition period. In economically and culturally more stable states the national culture has its secure place. An example from the common exhibition of pupils' works of art carried out by the Scandinavian schoolteachers can be brought, where the initial forms of national culture of their countries were depicted. For example gods, a human being's myth of being born was depicted, the book called "The loss of roots" was illustrated. Estonian schools have a close co-operation with the museums, where national art values are introduced, museum lessons are carried out and exhibitions are organized.

Relation of art instruction with other subjects. In art instruction as well as in other subjects many drawings are used. A drawing consists of lines and points. Their different connection signifies a sign, a concept that may differ according to the different cultures. There are periods in history, where the understanding of a drawing displaced literacy. In common schools also many picture illustrations are used to receive a better understanding of the text. In lessons of the Estonian language the topics of the reading texts are drawn, in the lessons of natural history schemes are made of the build-up of plants and the circulation of water in the nature is depicted. Art instruction is not just drawing. Art instruction has much broader opportunities that originate from its peculiarity. Art making originates from a child's inner need. Art instruction has no such strict rules than in other subjects. On the one hand art instruction develops flexible thinking because both teaching different trends of art as well as creative tasks on their own, in course of practical work, facilitate the rise in originality and tolerance. On the other hand we can teach a child observation, a realistic perception of the surroundings, which follows certain rules. In realistic depiction a child must for example have a feeling of perspective and teaching of proportion. Art instruction is also cultural teaching. Differently from the subjects being taught where knowledge ages, losing its value, here years long traditions and standpoints maintain their value. Old and new are together in culture. A. Efland (1992) compares science and art. In his opinion the teaching of science helps to understand nature and the universe. There a contradiction can arise between new and old knowledge. No such conflict arises in art instruction. Art instruction gives the understanding of the society and the culture, facilitates tolerant attitude. Only art can save the society that is blind in relation to moral and social problems. Problems in the society and in the norms of morality are solved through personal experience, which is rendered an artistic shape.

The peculiarities of art instruction. The main peculiarity of art instruction, when compared to other subjects is its activity that develops creativity and working on one's own. This is as if pupils in the music lessons mainly dealt with independent musical composing, but in the lessons of physics found explanations to physical phenomena and construed a theory in physics. The peculiarity of art instruction lies in the fact that on a certain level it is within the powers of every pupil. This is the only subject, where every child can make creative work. A teacher must not smother the creativity. The teacher must render initial knowledge, but one must also demand that one would not suffocate the spirit of originality hidden in a human being with creative aptitudes. If the supervisor is diligent and suggests a pupil in the exclusive truth of his / her method, the decentralisation of the personality is easy. It is difficult, if not impossible to restore the suffocated rights, because the rising aptitude is extremely gentle, it is easily retouched. The best that the supervisor can do is to help to understand art in its most general sense. The farther, the more specific it is. And the same failure: one cannot teach understanding, one can only understand. Delving into colours is a purely individualistic process. Military-like drill is the enemy of art. The formation of a creative art is always in some sense the spoiling of rules. One can spoil the rules only in case they have

been acquired. The acquiring of rules does not mean a limitation but the acquiring of a previous experience, the extension of possibilities, thus the freedom. Examples of the **integration policy in Estonia**. One of the problems in Estonia is inhabiting side by side with other nations. As historically already the Estonian nation has had to exist together with other nations, the basic population is psychologically ready for it. For this reason there has been no grave conflict on the basis of the nationality in Estonia. Rather the Russian speaking late migrants, who have settled down in Estonia from the Soviet Union and cannot find motivation in order to learn the language and culture of a local small nation, are these experiencing difficulties. For this reason the maintenance of one's national culture and the language on one's own territory remains the basic problem of an Estonian. In the recent time thanks to internationally supported state integration policy still certain improvements have been made, where art instruction has also its share. I would bring one example of this. The book with the name "Loe veel" ("Read more"), published in 2001, the editor is Larissa Levina. Young Russian students translated products of the Estonian authors into Russian. The book contains illustrations of the Estonian children, mainly pupils from Tartu Grammar School of Art and contains texts both in Estonian and Russian. The purpose of the book was: 1) to help a child to understand that he/she lives in Estonia, among Estonians, who have much in common and much in difference when compared to other nations, 2) to help children not only to study Estonian language, but also to understand values of national culture, 3) to help a child to understand that he/she is not alien in this society, to help him/her to maintain his/her linguistic and cultural peculiarity and to explain its essence in the light of integration processes, 4) to help within the limits of means to form the personality, to favour the extension and deepening of non-Estonian cultural environment. 5) to publish a book that would help Estonian children to study Russian language with the aid of a familiar material. 6) to help Russian translators to issue their first book.

Used Sources: 1. Efland, A. "Curriculum Problems at Century`s End :Art Education and Postmodernism"- " Power of images", InSEA congress, Helsinki, 1992, lk.116-128. 2. Mantera, M.-H. "Environmental Education and Art instruction" - " Power of images", InSEA Congress, Helsinki, 1992, lk.17-19. 3. Levina, L. "Loe veel", 2001. 4. Kärner, E. "Art Education in Estonia", A Report at the Conference of the Estonian Art Education, 2001.