

Janusz Korczak International Newsletter  
N° 21 (January 2007)  
<http://korczak.info>

Amsterdam, on January 5th, 2007

Dear Korczak friends world-wide,

We have the pleasure to send you the International Janusz Korczak Newsletter no 21. As the first one in 2007, it takes us the opportunity to wish a prosperous 2007 to you and a better world for adults and children. A world with less war and violence. We also wish you happiness and health in your personal life.

In this newsletter, news from POLAND and GERMANY, RUSSIA, ENGLAND and The NEDERLANDS (please mind the links to our new website: <http://korczak.info> for detailed texts):

- Poland and Germany
  - Erich Dauzenroth Homage and exhibition
  - IKA General meeting
- Russia
- Germany (bis)
- The United Kingdom
- The Netherlands

## POLAND & GERMANY

Two important events took place in Slubice (Poland) on the 24th and 25th of November, organised by the Collegium Polonicum (European University in Frankfurt-Oder/Slubice) and the Janusz Korczak International Society in Warsaw. The first one was the commemoration of Prof. Erich Dauzenroth who passed away two years ago and the second one was the IKA general meeting.

## I - A life to Korczak, a life to the Children

The colloque On Friday the 24th, as a homage to the professor Erich Dauzenroth and his literary in heritage, the Polish Janusz Korczak Association and the Collegium Polonicum in Slubice organised a special exhibition of all the documents, publications and objects that Erich Dauzenroth left to this institute.

Preceding the opening of the exhibition all guests listened to three speeches:

- Janusz Korczak in the documents of the Jewish Historical Institute, by Jan Jagielski
- Erich Dauzenroth as human and untiring encourager of reconciliation, by Konrad Weiss
- Janusz Korczak as 'pons inter nationes' by Michael Kirchner

Between each speech was a short intermezzo with different quotations, of Erich Dauzenroth or Janusz Korczak (later we will receive these texts and put them on the website)

The meeting ended with several personal memories of friends and colleagues of Erich. Johanna Dauzenroth closed with rendering thanks to everybody.

### Ad.1: Janusz Korczak in the documents of the Jewish Historical Institute

by Jan Jagielski, director of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw

Jan Jagielski told us the story of the Ringblum-archives during the ghetto-period. How they were hided in different places and sometimes in a very strange way, like in big milk-cans. After the war two-third of them were found. Fortunately many documents about Janusz Korczak were safe and available for the future.

### Ad. 2: Erich Dauzenroth as human and untiring encourager of reconciliation

by Konrad Weiss, publicist and former cineast.

Well-known from his impressive and famous film 'Ich bin klein aber wichtig', ( "I am little but important") about life and work of Korczak, Konrad Weiss delivered his testimony (summary below).

## My memories of Erich Dauzenroth

"I started in 1987 together with the writer Walther Petri, a documentary about Janusz Korczak. Living in the DDR we wanted to bring this film on the screen in our country. Barbara Engemann, member of a small research-group, was our adviser.

The material we had in the DDR was not enough to make a good film.

For that reason we made contacts with the Polish, Israelian and German Korczak Associations. Erich Dauzenroth as co-president of the German Korczak Association, immediately offered his help and support and passed a lot of books and documents. From that moment our long-lasting friendship started. I suppose that not all the materials arrived, because of the strict check on the mail from the 'non-socialistic' countries. I offered Erich to participate intensive in the making of. Summer 1987 our film-team utilized the new change to travel to Poland looking for places and sets in Warsaw and to do the archive-research. It was a great opportunity to record a talk with Igor Newerly, some days before he died. Igor Newerly was Korczak's secretary and co-editor of the 'Little Revue' (Male Przegląd). It is one of the most precious moments in the film. Some months later we invited Geula and Leon Harari to East-Berlin. It was for Geula the first time after her escape with the youth Alijah that she visited Berlin and the grave of her mother.

The correspondence Erich and I conducted gave the alarm to the STASI and they started a file about our contacts. A postcard from Erich with the words 'Lieber Konrad Weiss, herzlich grusst und wartet ihr Dauzenroth' was the first reason to it.

May 1988 we continued our film-shooting in Warsaw during the International Korczak Conference. Finally in October 1988 we met for the first time. Erich forced the officials in the DDR to give me permission to travel and to visit a Korczak Seminar in Rauschholzhausen. I learned to know him as a open, cordial and modest man, who really received me with open arms and open heart.

He introduced me to the Korczak friends in Germany and invited me to spend some days in Giessen. I was impressed by his mission for the reconciliation with Poland and the dissemination of Korczak's books and thoughts. I discovered that we had much in common: the love for Poland, Janusz Korczak, the modern social catholicism that I learned in Poland and the many friends we had in common.

At the end of 1988 the film was ready and during their visit to Berlin I could show it to Leon and Geula Harari. In April 1989 I travelled for 6 months to Germany and had the opportunity to present the film to Erich Dauzenroth. (What was Erich's reaction? Red. Korczak Int. Newsletter)

Then, October 1989 the miracle happened. Our team, my wife, Walther Petri, and Karin Wolff, (translator) received a visum for Israel. We were the first non-jews who got the permission, perhaps thanks better political relations between the DDR and Israel, to visit the country.

Unfortunately after 1989 we had fewer contacts and our correspondence decreased. His death came so suddenly for me and I would have tell him a lot, but most of all my thanks. But I'm happy that in the exhibition I can share my good memories of Erich with all of you".

## Ad. 3: The way to understanding, drawing together and reconciliation

by Prof. Michael Kirchner (a summary)

Michael Kirchner deliver an impressive text as a tribute to Erich Dauzenroth:

### Janusz Korczak, as 'Pons inter nationes'

"Erich Dauzenroth characterised the humanity of Janusz Korczak always as a bridge between nations. But looking at all the materials Erich left to the library of the 'Collegium Polonicum', part of the 'European University Viadrina, we must come to the conclusion that he himself was a bridge-builder in the burning triangle between Poles, Germans and Jews.

In his work of conciliation he was inspired by Janusz Korczak.

I like to touch on this concept of reconciliation , found in Korczak's and Dauzenroth's work.

There are four important and essential elements in this reflection.

1. The creative "I do not know" of Korczak
2. The man near me as a 'hieroglyphic text'
3. The tracks of the past and the sparks of longing in the meeting of the other
4. Ways to reconciliation

### *The creative I do not know*

The creative Not-Knowing is an attitude that takes off the ideological glasses. We look at the other, free from systematic schemes and prejudices. Not-knowing means an open attitude and approach to the new situation, to the new 'hearing'.

'Creative' gives us the possibility of changing our perspective in looking. It means also renounce our image we built from the other. In the relation with a child everyday is the Day of Creation.

The 'creative Not-Knowing' gives us a new ethic seeing, a new hearing and ethics that consider the other and starts from the other.

### *The other/the others as a 'hieroglyphic text'*

When we are ready to meet the other with an open eye, whether it is a child, a partner, a neighbour or just a stranger, we will discover that he is a hieroglyphic text that we have to decipher. It is a key-concept in Korczak's work. For Korczak und Dauzenroth is the 'creative Not-Knowing' and the reading of the hieroglyphics a source of power. In 1938 Korczak wrote in a letter to Jozef Arnon: "July was fairy-like, 20 new children to decipher, like 20 books, written in a half-known language, with missing pages..."

- The open look at this hieroglyphics is the open look at the face of the other ('angesicht'). Not the look from above, not from aside, but the look from face to face.
- The tracks of the past and the sparks
- of longing in the meeting of the other

Our observations need to be open, but there is always an influence of the past and the utopia's and longings for the future. Reading the 'face' of someone else carries your personal memories. But at the same time you know that the other also carries his past. Each child carries the traces of his life, even the traces of previous generations. Korczak: 'Not only the child at this very moment is crying, many centuries full of pain wail over'.

Korczak has always seen his Polish and Jewish countrymen with their own background and history. He never used cliché's and judged them as individuals. Important is that we not only see with our own eyes, but also through the glasses of the other with his personal context and history.

### *Ways to reconciliation*

This way of understanding makes us modest without a matter of self-evidence and we have to question ourselves. Korczak remained true to open encounter, drawing together and reconciliation till his last days in the Warsaw ghetto. (Remind the story of Korczak standing for the window looking at the German soldier with his rifle). If you can talk about your enemy in such an understanding way, it will encourage us not only to raise our hands, but to reach out the hands to the other in the way Korczak did.

Erich Dauzenroth took the hands of the Poles and the Israeli for further common projects of reconciliation.

His great desire was: (during a speech in Giessen)

"Let's present to the other these flowers of understanding, of drawing together and reconciliation; - flowers with the smell of the bitter-sweet Jasmin..."

After the inaugural speech everybody could see the excellent and interesting exhibition. A joy of recognition.

[with a photo of Mrs Dauzenroth opening the exhibition]

## II - The IKA general meeting the 25th of November

Report of the 2nd day of the Janusz Korczak Conference in Slubice:

“General Meeting” of the International Korczak Association.

IKA meeting Representatives of 11 Korczak Associations (from the 22 in total) met each other in Slubice to make some important decisions and to vote for a new president. Being the president of the IKA for many years, Professor Jerzy Kuberski, decided to retire because of bad health. Many of the participants spoke with appreciation of Mr Kuberski and some nice gifts were handed.

Some important events in the IKA-history were marked (like the publishing of the Works of Janusz Korczak in Polish and German)

In the afternoon we started with discussing the future of the IKA. Members received (by-mail in advance and during the meeting) the 8 main proposals of the Preparation group from France, Switzerland and the Netherlands (see below):

- A strong and reduced international Board  
To see: facilities as: meetings 2 times a year, transports compensations, etc.
- To found a Centre for Janusz Korczak Research  
(The composition is to be discussed)
- To collect document examples of Korczak’s ideas being put into practice  
‘How can children be respected at school, in the crèche and at home?’, ‘What does this mean in practice?’, etc.
- To develop cooperation (strategic alliance) with local, European and Global Organisations  
(as Defence for Children International, Alliance for Childhood, Warchild, etc.)
- Rejuvenation  
Korczak Associations should offer the new generation (students, young workers in schools, institutions, volunteers) a possibility to participate in practical projects.
- A better working network between the Korczak Associations  
(as Defence for Children International, Alliance for Childhood, Warchild, etc.)
- The newsletter, the website and other ways
- Budget
  - Fees of each registered National Korczak Associations
  - Payment for Copyright of Korczak materials (after checking)
  - The eventual part of any International Korczak Foundations
  - Fundraising

Gerard Kahn, representing Switzerland, explained the headlines of his article ‘Does Korczak has a future?’ This leading article set the tone for the discussion. Also the article of Joop Berding was a document of vision and action (see below).

The feeling was that we have to change the policy of the IKA.

Batia Gilad, president on interim The president nominated Batia Gilad from Israel as the new president. But the participants wondered why not to propose a second or

third candidate. Many members suggested to vote for Theo Cappon, chairman of the Dutch Korczak Association. Juridical obstacles (according the regulations the president should have the Polish nationality) made that we decided to vote for Batia Gilad as interim president for 1 year. In the coming year she, with help of some of us, will prepare the new regulations of the IKA.

The German Korczak Association invited all of us to come to Mannheim, October 2007, to participate in the 30 years jubilee of her Association and to do the election for the new president and the board during these days.

The meeting finished with short reports from several Korczak Association. They were well prepared with photo-pictures, slides, video's etc. It gave a good impression of all the activities in these countries. Last but not least, there was an interesting report of the Academy of Special Pedagogy and Education in Warsaw. Professor Adam Fraczek, director, told about the Korczak Chair under the patronage of the UNESCO and the curriculum-elements related to Korczak.

A meeting like this is of course also a reunion gathering with 'old' friends. Such meetings always put a heart into us. Finally the we could assess a positive result of the Conference.

A double English language report by Theo Cappon

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- In French language, see the Bernard Lathuillere reports (on "korczak.FR")
  - The full Michael Kirchner article (on korczak.INFO, in Deutch)
  - Direct access to the photos on the web:
    - Dauzenroth Homage and exhibition album
    - IKA general meeting album
  - Documents and articles distributed at the general meeting
  - Mail to the Korczak Associations, 2006-11-09 [PDF 62 Ko, 2 p.]
  - Resolutions, 1st version [PDF 98 Ko, 2 p.]
  - Suggestions to renew the statutes - 1st version [PDF 90 Ko, 2 p.]
  - Propositions pour de nouveaux statuts - version 1 [PDF 88 Ko, 2 p.]
  - "Does Korczak have a future?", Gerard Kahn (CH)
  - "Teaching Education in Russia", Dr. Tatyana Tsyrlina (RU)
  - "Reaction and proposals", Dr. Joop Berding (NL) - [PDF 80 Ko, 2 p.]

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## RUSSIA

The IKA family On the 14th of December there was an interesting meeting in the Pedagogical Institute of the Moscow University. We had the official presentation of the special "Korczak's idea's today" of the pedagogical Magazine 'The Democratic School', vol. 2006 no 2.

It was an initiative of our colleague Prof. Irina D. Demakova and her friend Mrs Nata Krylova, publisher of 'The Democratic School' and the undersigned, to collect from different countries in the West and Russia articles concerning the timeliness of Korczak's ideas.

The presentation was part of a pedagogical seminar for teachers from all over the Russian Federation ( from Kaliningrad in the west till Sachalin the far-east: 10.000 km distance). About 150 participants were listening to Korczak presentations held by Roza Valeyva (chairman of the Russian Korczak Ass.) and students from Kazan, Tatiana Tsirlina, head of the Korczak movement in Kursk [you can read here her recent article about it] and her students, Irina Demakova and the volunteers of the Nash Dom summercamps, Helena Levina from Saint-Peterburg and Theo Cappon, chairman of the Dutch Korczak Ass.

The book is published in Russian language. We hope to find some money to publish it also in English. With permission of the editor we will put the english texts on the International Website in the coming months.

Theo Cappon

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On the photos, the Signature of some of the authors of the work presented above (Rosa, Irina and Helena) and a student group singing the anthem of our Nasz Dom Summercamps, our ten years success story beetwen Russia and The Netherlands. (The photos will be more visible in a better size on the site).

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## GERMANY (bis)

We received from Michael Kirchner an interesting text spoken by Lola Lewin during an International -Symposium at the Justus-Liebig University Giessen, 1973. The text was found in the archive of Erich Dauzenroth.

She called her story "Memories of Janusz Korczak'. She told how she came in contact with Korczak, when she was a student in Warsaw. They met each other in the evening and had intensive conversations about psychiatry. Korczak admitted that he did 'nt know much about the psyche of very young children. The full text of this personal testimony is to be found on the International website.

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# ENGLAND

## The Korczak exhibition in London

Joop Berding of the Dutch Korczak Association, and his daughter Laurien of 19, visited the Korczak Exhibition in London. Here is their report.

On December 5, 2006 a unique exhibition was inaugurated in the Jewish Museum in London: an exhibition entirely devoted to the life and works of Janusz Korczak. Its title: 'Champion of the Child - Janusz Korczak'. An accurate and topical title: in his lifetime Korczak was indeed a champion for children and their rights and up to the present time his convictions are influential - though perhaps still not as influential as we would like - throughout the world.

During the Christmas holidays we visited the Museum. The exhibition gives a detailed and balanced account of Korczak's life, his work as a physician and writer, and of course pays much attention to his work as an educator in the orphanages of Warsaw. There are about fifteen large panels, with beautiful photos and illustrations, texts by Korczak, and commentaries that reveal certain aspects of his work.

On many of the panels Korczak's ideas and practices are connected to topical issues, such as the problems of refugees, and of homeless children and orphans due to Aids. We find this one of the fortunate aspects of this exhibition: it does not only investigate and present the past, but also poses questions to the worldwide treatment of children and youngsters in our own time.

Quite a large amount of space is devoted to the last years of Korczak and his orphans in the Warsaw ghetto and their removal to the Umschlagplatz and Treblinka on August 6, 1942. A very special element of the exhibition are the watercolours made by Yitzhak Belfer, a pupil of Korczak's who survived and crafted his memories and experiences into these beautiful and moving paintings.

There will be a number of special presentations in the museum, at which Mr Belfer will be present, see the program on the museum website. In a box a letter dated October 29, 1940 is presented, with the signature 'Goldszmit Korczak' in which Korczak pleads for help with the American Jewish Distribution Committee. For us, this was the first time we actually saw Korczak's own handwriting.

All in all, this exhibition is especially rewarding for people who are 'first-timers' to Korczak, and who have time to absorb all the information. For children and young people however, this exhibition misses an element of action and interactivity. Nevertheless, we think that with the help and explanation by a teacher or counselor, young people also may find many points of interest and reference in this exhibition.

Joop and Laurien Berding

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The notice of the exhibition [PDF 68 Ko, 1 p.]  
 The notice on the Web  
 Jewish Museum London website  
 Press release and full program [PDF 216 Ko, 4 p.]

# THE NEDERLANDS

The Dutch friends asked the newsletter team to repeat their call for the Janusz Korczak International Youth Meeting 2007. Please print the text and pass it to colleagues and friends. See below.

Amsterdam, November 2006

Dear Colleague's,

The Dutch Janusz Korczak Association proudly presents:  
International  
Janusz Korczak Youth Meeting  
which will take place in Holland  
from 22-28 September 2007

An interesting en unique conference with educators from all over the world!  
From September 22th till 28th, 100 international educators (age 18 till ± 35)  
will come together in Bergen aan Zee (Holland) to discuss, learn and talk about  
their work and the relation between their daily work ('way of work) and Janusz  
Korczak's way of working and thinking.

We will focus on the following topics:

1. Growing up in two cultures; Problems vs positive experiences in a multi- cultural and multi-ethnic society
2. The need of education for citizenship; active participation of children in society.
3. Children and multimedia (tv, internet, video-games, mobile telephone); risks and opportunities; influence of consumer society.
4. The right of children and youngster on sexuality.
5. "Learning for life". How can children be active in their own learning process?
6. Integration of disabled children and youngsters in society
7. The Right of Children to mental and physical protection (or: Our fight against mental and bodily child abuse)
8. How can we help children and young people to deal with aggression?

The topics are presented in different workhops. They will be discussed in groups. Experts will give lectures, but we also need your experiences and input. Beside the workshops we will use: games, presentations, acts, round-tables etc.

It will pass in games, little acts and in the ways you will bring them.  
In all activities there will be place for your own input.

### Practical information

Spoken language: English

Dates : 2007 September 22th-28th

Place: "Het Zeehuis", Bergen aan Zee, Holland.

This place is a house for nature lovers, on the edge of a big forest and only 300 meters from the North Sea: also close to Amsterdam! (40 km).

Conference fee: 225 Euros.

(Price including overnight stays, meals and cultural visits. This price does not includes travel costs)

Organized by : The Dutch Janusz Korczak Association

### Contact :

If you are interested to receive more detail information or to receive the final invitation, please let us know. Elder people are welcome if they invite some young people too.

- E-mail address: "info [[@]] korczak.nl"
- Telephone: + 31 20 644 70 18
- Telefax: + 31 20 644 81 54
- Post address: Janusz Korczak Stichting, PO-box: 70048, 1007 KA

Please join us, we hope to meet you in September 2007!

Use the FIRST RESPONSE PAPER below and send your answer before 12th of February 2007

Theo Cappon, president of the JKSN  
(The Dutch Janusz Korczak Association)

## *First Response Paper*

Name (Male/Female): .....

Date of birth: .....

Address + Country: .....

E-mail: .....

Tel.: .....

Work or Study: .....

I'm interested to participate in the Janusz Korczak International Youth Meeting 22-28 September 2007 in The Netherlands.

My three favorite topics are:  
(we need this information to prepare the themes)

1.- .....

2.- .....

3.- .....

I like to present for the "Open Podium" or Music/Theatre part of the meeting

Do you have special questions or suggestions for the meeting?

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.....  
.....  
.....

After receiving your response paper, we send you the Registration Form. We prefer to do the correspondence by e-mail at "info (AT) korczak.nl".

Send this paper by e-mail, fax: + 31.20.644.81.54 or by post to:  
Janusz Korczak Stichting Postbox 70048 1079LH Amsterdam. The Netherlands

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*An happy new year!*

A good,  
healthy and productive 2007,  
with the hope that the Korczak  
movement will flourish as never before!

The contributors and editors  
of the Janusz Korczak International Newsletter on-line.

"Thank you to use our new special e-mail address for the newsletter and the website, also with the Contact form of the site, to send us your articles, photographs, videos, songs, poetries, etc!

"ikanews [[@]] gmail.com"

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(Change [[at]] with "@" )

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