teaching about the Orient

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by

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UNESCO
This leaflet is addressed to teachers in the schools of Occidental countries — the term Occidental being used in its cultural rather than its geographical sense. It is intended to remind teachers of the importance of giving their pupils a more rounded and up-to-date picture of Oriental peoples and cultures and to suggest some of the ways in which this can be done.

It should be the aim of all teachers to help their pupils to understand the momentous changes going on in the world around them and to appreciate the need for co-operation with peoples of other nationalities, races and creeds. One of Unesco's objectives is to stimulate better teaching for this end, and particular emphasis is being given at the present time to a subject that has been too often neglected — that of improving understanding between peoples of the East and the West.

Ignorance of Eastern cultures should be thought of as a privation which the West should be impatient to overcome. Today, more than ever, young people look farther afield for their future and livelihood than did their fathers and grandfathers. There is more opportunity for travel both for work and for pleasure, but the fact that one can reach Asia in a matter of hours by air is of little avail to the traveller if his comprehension of what he sees and experiences is coloured by out-dated notions or frustrated by ignorance.
Many educators recognize the fact that improved teaching in Western schools about the countries of the East has become an educational imperative. For example, the report of the International Advisory Committee on the School Curriculum convened by Unesco states: 'In a world which is shrinking rapidly and where relations and contacts between Eastern and Western peoples are becoming increasingly frequent and intimate, and sometimes even explosive, there is an alarming relative ignorance by peoples of one set of cultures on the life and culture of the other... Such a situation needs urgent remedy through a more balanced programme of education and through a greater concentration in the schools of each side on the sympathetic study of the life and culture of the other.'

Obviously the task of promoting better understanding in schools is not an easy one and there are practical problems concerning curricula, syllabuses, teaching methods and materials to be taken into consideration. More subtle, perhaps, are the problems involved in changing the attitudes which both pupils and teachers have already acquired. The purpose of this booklet is to point out some of these problems and to suggest some practical ways of dealing with them.

SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The years which young people spend in school are the most impressionable in their lives. It is then that their minds can be opened to new horizons of knowledge. Scholars from East and West have long been studying each other's cultures, but unless some of this knowledge reaches the ordinary school child in the ordinary school, there can be little progress towards the understanding on which the peace of the world may depend. The teacher's responsibility, however, is not just to rouse academic interest in the cultures and ways of the East but also to develop a tolerance of differences between cultures, and humility in measuring other cultures against one's own. The real objective is to develop enlightened and sympathetic attitudes which will be reflected in behaviour and understanding after the pupils have finished school.

To develop such attitudes it is necessary to:
1. Study how peoples of other cultures live, and what their hopes, problems and difficulties are.
2. Study their achievements and their contributions to human culture in general.
3. Demonstrate that in spite of cultural differences there is a basic human solidarity and brotherhood.
4. Cultivate a sympathy and an urgent sense of responsibility for the improvement of the human lot through international co-operation for the relief of suffering and misery.

Most teachers would probably agree that these are worthy aims. But when we come to consider the teaching about Eastern peoples and cultures that is given in the Western schools, can we say that these aims are being fulfilled? Is it possible to fulfil them? Some teachers no doubt feel that their schools already provide adequate education about the East through various courses. This may be so, in some instances, but it is apparently not the general rule. Indeed there is good evidence to support the view that teaching about Eastern peoples and cultures is generally unsatisfactory.

For example, a report on *The Treatment of Asia in Western Textbooks and Teaching Materials*,¹ based on an analysis carried out by teachers from 17 Western countries, shows that the treatment of Asia is superficial, episodic, incomplete and impersonal. The report also points out that, in the teaching of history in the West, the treatment of Asia is largely confined to political and military aspects of Western expansion and Western interests. Moreover the achievements of ancient and Eastern cultures are neglected and there is a facile but often false assumption of the superiority of European culture because of modern scientific progress. As a result, the student is left with an incomplete and often out-of-date picture of other cultures, which can lead to misconceptions and lack of understanding.

Such criticism should end any complacency regarding the quality of education in the West about Asian cultures and peoples. It in turn leads to other considerations: How much should a teacher or a pupil learn about Asia? What aspects of Asian history, religions,
cultures and problems should receive attention? How much time can be found for these studies and how may they be fitted into the syllabus without overloading it still more seriously?

One point must be stressed at the outset: the spirit in which the teaching is carried out is as important as the factual content of the lessons.

There is a danger that teachers may transmit their own fears, anxieties, timidities, hostilities, dogmatic attitudes and complacencies, which can originate from historical or contemporary experiences of their society or in their own personal lives. Teachers and pupils alike may acquire attitudes of suspicion or hostility regarding the people of other countries. Although some prejudices are deeply rooted, they can often be modified when brought to the surface and examined in the light of objective fact. What is important is that the teacher should recognize his responsibility both in word and action, be aware of his own shortcomings, his own ‘kinks’ and face up to them honestly. The teacher who is free from prejudices concerning colour, race, religion, culture, language, wealth and class can lead his pupils towards positive feelings of tolerance, sympathy and understanding when they study other peoples, their ways and lives.

The pupils themselves encounter and absorb prejudices in their everyday lives in all societies, in all countries. They live amongst them in their homes, they meet them in the playground, in the school, in the street and in the market-place. They acquire them also from the screen, the radio, the papers and the books they read. A child’s fear of what is strange or different can also result in prejudices, hence the need to familiarize him with as many people from foreign countries as possible.

A teacher may be shocked to discover the stereotypes of other nationalities which children acquire and the emotive words, redolent of repugnance and distrust, which they use in referring to them. Nearly every
language has its vocabulary of slang terms for peoples of other nations, classes, races and religions, and with them may be associated crude and distorted concepts. Children may identify China and its people with villains on the screen and think that all the Chinese wear pigtails, bind their feet and live on bird’s-nest soup. Or they may think of the Japanese in terms of hara-kiri and prison camps, or, if they are slightly more sophisticated, in terms of tea ceremonies, flower arrangement, and Madame Butterfly. They may be unable to distinguish between the different Asian peoples and cultures, having only a vague composite impression of strange religions, customs, poverty and starvation. They think in such terms as ‘backward’, and ‘undeveloped’, ‘ignorant’ and ‘savage’, which gives them a feeling of their own superiority and intelligence that may surprise the teacher who knows how near illiteracy the children themselves can be.

When the teacher discovers these prejudices he can arouse, indirectly, interest in Eastern people through their lives, customs, food, religions, arts, music, problems and achievements. Eastern customs and traditions should be studied and explained against the background of the religious, social, economic and cultural heritage of Eastern peoples. For example, it is an error to discuss the status of women or caste systems from a purely ‘Western’ point of view, without attention to their cultural and historical context or to modern trends. Teachers must also resist the temptation to concentrate on the exotic and ancient elements of Asian life and to over-emphasize contrasts. Today young people of the East and the West have many interests and problems in common, and these, as well as the differences between them, should be brought out. This will help pupils towards a comprehension of the essential human unity underlying differences, which is the basis of international understanding.
Taught in the traditional way the usual school subjects — for example, history, geography, literature, sciences and the arts — do not necessarily lead to greater international understanding. Indeed, they may even produce the opposite effect. But if factual material is rounded out with a more human approach and presented in a way which will enable pupils to identify themselves with children in other countries and with their problems, a deeper and more sympathetic interest can be aroused. The children must be able to think of other children as being 'like themselves'. This effect can be achieved without upsetting the curriculum, overloading the time-table or in any way distorting the true meaning of the subject.

Some of the suggestions submitted in this booklet are based on the experience of schools taking part in the Unesco Associated Schools Project in education for international understanding. This programme was designed to stimulate education for international understanding by helping schools to explore new possibilities for teaching about other countries, about the activities of the United Nations and Specialized Agencies and the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The results can be studied in a booklet published by Unesco.¹ It contains examples of achievements in classroom and out-of-class activities, describes methods and materials used, and offers practical suggestions based on the work of the schools.

In many participating schools, tests and methods of evaluation regarding changes in attitude were used to discover the attitudes of pupils before and after special courses of lessons or special activities. The extent of such changes was measured by comparison with similar

investigations of ‘control groups’, usually in other schools where no special course was introduced. The results showed that, in nearly all instances, the special courses did produce desirable changes in attitude towards the peoples and countries studied and that, at the same time, the pupils’ attitudes towards other peoples and countries also improved. This will assure the teacher that even if he has time to study only one Asian country, there is a strong likelihood that his pupils will be predisposed to a better and more sympathetic understanding of peoples of other countries as well.

The Associated Schools Project shows that, although one teacher can achieve results by working in one subject only, there is a far greater impact when several or most of the teachers in the school can be involved in a special project or if they all teach for international understanding. The impression thus made is much stronger and more lasting. While it might at first seem that the study of Eastern culture should be the task of history or geography teachers, in actual fact teachers of all subjects can contribute to it.

**Organisation of Projects**

The organization of special projects and the place given to them in the school programme will depend upon the circumstances and resources of each school. Broadly speaking, however, two approaches have been found particularly effective. In one a specially designed project is planned on one or more Eastern countries or regions. It takes the place of the usual school work in several school subjects. Although it demands careful preparation it has much to commend it. A special course of one term or longer is refreshing for both teachers and pupils and it is good to break away from the usual syllabus. The impact of new ideas, new methods and better correlation of subjects is considerable. More-
over, it is remarkable how the pupils mature as a result of such projects, which call upon their imagination and initiative.

The main steps to be taken in a project of this kind are the following:
1. Obtain authorization for the project from the head of the school and from other authorities, if necessary. Their interest and support can be of great value, and they should be kept informed of progress as the project goes forward.
2. Plan the project in collaboration with the other teachers concerned. There should be agreement on aims, subject matter, materials and methods, coordination of work and methods of evaluating results.
3. Select and assemble the materials to be used, in collaboration with the other teachers concerned.
4. Draw up the syllabus or 'units' for the special instruction to be given in the courses involved, and plans for related out-of-class activities.
5. Arrange regular meetings of the teachers concerned during the execution of the project. Each teacher should keep a record of work and report to his colleagues.
6. When the project is completed, prepare a written report describing it and evaluating the results.

Another approach is to introduce teaching about Eastern peoples into all the usual school subjects as occasion permits or at points where it is relevant, the teachers making efforts to find such occasions at the different stages of primary, secondary and advanced education. This is a long-term process which can be backed up by out-of-class activities such as exchanges of correspondence, dramatics, art competitions, exhibitions, international relations clubs etc. For example, a girls' (11 to 12 years old) secondary school in Switzerland chose Japan as the theme of a special project. The work was spread over a period of 18 months and
mostly done in French, history, geography and art classes; translations from Japanese literature were used for exercises in grammar, vocabulary, composition and elocution. Photographs, letters and small gifts were exchanged between Japanese and Swiss children of the same age. Some of these were used, with other materials, in the preparation of a booklet on Japan which, together with an exhibition, was the focal point of the project. The programme covered history, geography, language and writing, literature, theatre, painting, music; garden and flower arrangement, lacquer work, pottery, customs and traditions such as buildings, costume, food, festivals, funerals, the tea ceremony, Bushido; religions, beliefs and legends; women and the family; modern Japan, and cultural life. Some chapters of the booklet were composed by groups of pupils and some by individuals. When the documentation was difficult for the children to understand it was first explained by the teacher and discussed in class—especially such subjects as social questions, reforms, relations with Western countries and comparisons of civilizations. During this period, Japan and Japanese things were the main preoccupation in out-of-class activities. The Japanese Embassy lent documentary films and an official talked about modern Japan; the Unesco travelling exhibition of Japanese woodcuts visited the school, the children staged a performance of Japanese plays and a Japanese visitor showed the children flower arrangements and helped them to prepare and serve a typical Japanese meal.

These two approaches do not exclude each other, and there is no suggestion that one is better than the other.
THE INTRODUCTION OF EASTERN THEMES

SCHOOL SUBJECTS

Geography

The teacher's job is to show how the pattern of human life is affected by environmental conditions. Relief, rainfall, products, resources, population, agriculture, industries and transport are amongst the factors which affect the lives of Eastern peoples as well as of others. The teacher should make a conscious effort to select and emphasize those factors which will help the children visualize Eastern countries not merely as abstractions or parts on a map but as living, dynamic societies where people work, play and, like ourselves, sometimes experience misfortune. Showing how the way of life and the problems of people are related to environmental conditions will help the pupils to understand many things about the East which might otherwise remain obscure and will give them a sound basis for thinking about the problems and future possibilities of Eastern nations. They should also have a clear idea of the economic and cultural interdependence of Eastern peoples and countries.
All this does not mean that geography as a science is to be neglected, but rather that its implications and impact on human beings should be emphasized. The teacher can explain why civilizations developed early in the East and why modern science and technology have progressed faster in the West. Contrasts between life in the jungle of Malaya and the desert of Central Asia can be explained in both geographical and human terms. (Here the teacher might make use of Unesco filmstrips ‘Man against the Jungle’ and ‘Man against the Desert’.) Living conditions in different parts of India—the Ganges delta, the Terai, the Deccan—can be explained and contrasted to show the relationship between human life and environment, and the many factors which contribute to the unity of India.

Choosing one or two towns or villages and studying them in as much detail as the material will permit is an excellent way of helping the Western child to see that what is strange and unfamiliar to him is quite ‘ordinary’ to the child in an Eastern country. The children will come to understand also that basic human needs—food, shelter, work, health, education, leisure—are the same the world over and that in the East as well as in the West mankind is striving to make the fullest use of resources to satisfy these needs.

There is a temptation either to present Asian countries in their full exotic splendour with their elephants and camels, pageantry and colour, temples and pilgrimages or, at the other extreme, to present a picture of squalor, poverty, disease, ignorance, famine and floods. Too often neglected are the growth of industry, the construction of great dams, the improvement of agricultural methods, the spread of education and the establishment of democratic governments. The pupil should understand what these projects and improvements will mean to the people, how they will affect their daily lives, their economy and their future, as these aspects capture the interest of the child. The picture should be
balanced so that the pupil will see that life in Tokyo, New Delhi, Cairo, Karachi, Singapore and Hong Kong is similar in many ways to the life he has seen in Western cities. Films, filmstrips and talks by people who have lived in Asian countries will bring the similarities even nearer to him.

The increasing pressure of population on resources is a fact of great importance in the Asia of yesterday and today. It is one of the main problems of the Asian continent and unless the child grasps this he will not fully understand why living standards are generally lower than in the West and why they may be forced still lower unless vast programmes of economic development are carried out. Recent events in Asia can also be understood better in the light of this fact.

**History**

In view of the pressure of public examinations, the claims of national and European history and the short time given to the study of history in school time-tables (usually not more than two hours a week for pupils of 14 to 15 years of age), how much can a history teacher in the West be reasonably expected to introduce about the East? Where courses of world history are offered, increased emphasis on Eastern history is a practical possibility. However, courses in world history are as yet, unfortunately, the exception rather than the rule in most Western schools. Even where they exist, they pose some important issues and cause some misgivings. Should the treatment of Eastern history be narrative and chronological? This hardly seems possible because of the number of countries involved and the complexity of their domestic history. This approach may also lead to over-emphasis on political and military events and to the neglect of social and cultural aspects—faults from which history as a school subject already suffers too much. It would seem preferable to concen-
trate on a few of the great civilizations, for example, those of China, India and Persia, tracing the broad lines of their development from antiquity to modern times.

Even here there is a risk to be avoided. Cultural history can become too general, too 'potted', too much a list of great writers, artists and thinkers and very little else. However, the teacher can select a manageable number of outstanding figures and achievements to represent the cultures and times with which he deals. This approach through biography is particularly rewarding with younger children.

It is of course important to point out that great Eastern civilizations were flourishing at a time when the West had practically none to speak of. It should also be stressed that these cultures have not become static and lifeless, but have survived as living forces in the lives of Eastern peoples.

Most educators would probably agree that the history of the various cultures of mankind cannot be fully understood without due consideration to the role of religious beliefs and institutions. Thus, the Western teacher should provide some teaching about the religions and philosophies which have shaped the cultures of hundreds of millions of Asian peoples and influenced very deeply their daily lives, customs and thought. This may be done through the history course or in courses of religious instruction, where they are offered and where such teaching is judged suitable.

What can a child learn about the great Asian religions and philosophies? He can be introduced to the religions themselves by learning about the lives of the great religious leaders such as Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed, and their teaching about everyday relationships, the family, parents, self-discipline, charity, hospitality. The impact of religion on the everyday lives of the people should be shown. The child can become interested in how the great religions spread and
borrowed from one another and how Eastern religious philosophies contributed to the heritage of the West. He can learn about the pilgrimages, ceremonies and festivals, the temples, shrines and mosques, the prayers, services and rituals.

In order to have a clear understanding of contemporary events in the East, the pupil should have a fairly full knowledge of events in Asia and the Far East since the middle of the nineteenth century. Above all, the impact of the industrial revolution, which is as significant in Eastern history as it is in European history, should be shown.

Even where world history courses are not offered, various topics can be explored more thoroughly and objectively as a contribution to East-West understanding. For example, the teacher can open a discussion of the different points of view over matters in which Western powers were directly involved, e.g., the so-called 'opening up' of China and Japan, the Indian Mutiny of 1857; the Boxer Rebellion of 1900; colonialism and the struggle of Asian countries for independence. Other topics might be the contacts between East and West at different periods or the adventures of famous travellers. A detailed study of at least one Eastern country as an example of Eastern life can also be recommended. Such topics as these are also suitable for individual and group projects carried out by the pupils themselves.

The sciences

The opportunities of the science teacher to introduce Asian topics do not at first sight appear as rich as those of teachers of other subjects, partly because modern science has developed faster and further in the West than in the East. Unfortunately, the history of science is rarely taught in Western schools; it would provide opportunities for showing how much of Western
scientific knowledge has come from the East. For example, there is the contribution of the Arab peoples to the sciences of the Middle Ages (e.g., in such fields as algebra, trigonometry, chemistry, pharmacy, medicine). Much of Arab science had its source in Asia; the decimal system, the compass, art of making paper and many other kinds of knowledge were transmitted by these peoples from Asia to the Western world. This illustrates the important fact that discoveries and inventions have often been the work of scientists from many different countries, and that science is just as 'international' in character as music or the arts. At the lower level, pupils can put the mathematical knowledge they acquire to many uses in a study of the East. For example, they can tabulate elementary statistics concerning populations, languages, income levels, education and health. They can translate these figures into diagrams and charts which the less mathematically minded children can easily understand.

The natural sciences also offer possibilities. The biology teacher can make a highly important contribution by emphasizing the scientific facts about race.1 The botany teacher can elaborate on the types of plants, trees and flowers of the East which have been imported to the West. In courses of general science, information on the great technological changes taking place in the East can be introduced. This in turn provides an occasion to speak of the United Nations programme of technical assistance and to show how East and West are co-operating in many practical ways for their mutual benefit (e.g., eradication of malaria, control of locust plagues, development of natural resources, etc.). In courses dealing with nutrition and diet, attention

1. In dealing with this matter and related questions, the teacher can make use of the Unesco series of publications on *The Race Question in Modern Science; The Race Question and Modern Thought;* and *Race and Society.*
can be given to the diet and food problems of Eastern peoples, and the Eastern origin of some Western foodstuffs (e.g., tea) can be pointed out. The teacher of domestic science or home economics can contribute by giving information on typical Eastern dishes and their preparation, table manners and etiquette and family life.

Current affairs and contemporary problems

Many current events courses and some school radio programmes suffer from a lack of continuity. They tend to move from week to week and from crisis to crisis without any connecting links. Current affairs should be viewed from the perspective provided by historical or other studies. It is possible for a teacher to unify current affairs studies by planning a background course on events which he knows are coming up in the near future, for example, national elections to be held, anniversaries, conferences, etc. There are several good diaries of important world events published at intervals. These can generally be found in local libraries and they are invaluable for a teacher planning such a course.

Another alternative to the usual current events course is a series of lessons on present day problems in a country or region. The starting point can be found almost anywhere, e.g., in a newspaper or magazine article. Let us suppose, for example, that India has been chosen as the subject for study. The teacher will need to deal with the rapid population growth, to be seen in relation to the slow increase in food production; natural resources and the dangers of flood, drought and famine; industrial development and its effects on underemployment and poverty; the spread of education; political questions and the nation's role in world affairs. Such topics can be presented in terms of their effects in the village, the town, the State, and the federation, and they can be linked to the activities of the
United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, to technical assistance and other forms of international aid which supplement the efforts of the government and people of India. The picture should be a balanced one, showing the progress so far achieved in relation to what remains to be done, and demonstrating that the solution of India's problems is as much in the interests of the West as of the East for humanitarian, political and economic reasons.

India's problems can be taken as typical of those in many other Asian countries. The progress and effects of the industrial revolution in India can be compared with the industrial revolution in, for example, Japan and China. Asia's problems can then be compared with those of other regions, so that the pupil will see issues on a world scale.

Another approach is to study a problem of worldwide concern (e.g., nutrition, health, conservation and development of natural resources), giving due attention to their implications for Eastern as well as Western countries. This can lead logically to an examination of international efforts to deal with such problems and to the work of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, in which the important role of Eastern nations can be stressed.

Such projects require careful preparation, but can provide a good basis for understanding world affairs and current events. They help to give pupils a better grasp of matters which may well affect the course of their own lives.

**Literature**

While the literature of some Western cultures has been taught extensively in the schools of many Eastern countries, the masterpieces of Eastern literature are largely unknown in the West. Good translations exist in Western languages, but little has found its way into
school textbooks or teaching. Yet what better way could there be of interesting children in Asian cultures than to form class libraries of folk-tales, legends, stories, short novels, plays and poetry from Asian countries and to use extracts from them in literature lessons? Well-translated anthologies exist in many Western languages and suitable surveys of the literature of individual Eastern countries can be found in some. The teacher need not weary the student with long accounts of literary history, which may tend to become a meaningless list of names, dates and titles. Instead, he may concentrate on representative works which illustrate the differences and the similarities between Eastern and Western literature of various kinds. In dealing with Japanese literature, for example, the pupils will find it interesting to search for comparisons and contrasts between the No plays and certain classic Western dramas or to see how the form and content of Japanese poetry differ from and resemble some types of Western poetry. The teacher can also show how European literature has been enriched by borrowings and influences from the East, which are far more numerous and important than pupils will have imagined.¹

Languages

Although there is little possibility that Western schoolchildren will have the chance or the occasion to

¹. The following are a few of the many bibliographies available on Asia and Asian literature:

*Paperbound books on Asia.* The Asia Society, 112 East 64th Street, New York, 1960.


learn any Eastern languages, there are some ways in which language teachers can contribute to Asian studies. For example, they can explore with their pupils the etymology of words in their own language. The children will be surprised to learn how many of the words they use have Eastern derivations. This is an excellent way of showing how Western peoples not only borrowed words but also the ideas or objects they denote: algebra, tariffs, muslin, damask, calico, and names of various plants and flowers, etc. The same device can be used in the teaching of foreign languages, for all the European languages retain something of their Oriental origins.

The language teacher can also explain the language problems of some Eastern countries, and their vital significance for education and development. Europe speaks many languages, and in some countries more than one is commonly used, but it cannot compete with the East in diversity of tongues. For example, in India more than a hundred languages and an even greater number of dialects are used. It is important that pupils should understand the relation between language problems, which exist in many Eastern countries and have even been at the root of serious social disturbances, and such tasks as raising educational standards and realizing other social, cultural, economic or political objectives.

Art appreciation

For the art teacher, the possibilities of contributing to an appreciation of Eastern culture are numerous and the materials plentiful. The teacher's main problem, indeed, may be deciding where to begin and what to include. A practical solution is to limit the study to painting, sculpture and architecture in only two or three countries. This will be sufficient to demonstrate the rich variety of Eastern art and to arouse the in-
interest of pupils, who can then explore the field further on their own. Mutual East-West influences in art (e.g., the influence of Hellenic art on Asian art; the influence of Japanese art on European art) make a fascinating subject of study for older pupils.

Children’s art is also a good introduction and there are some small exhibitions available. It is remarkable how similar in execution and conception paintings by Eastern and Western children are—one finds the same bold colours, the same absorption in the subject, often the same jungles, elephants, temples and deserts, treated with imagination. Seeing these, pupils will recognize the kinship of children the world over and the international nature and appeal of the arts.

The minor arts might serve as topics for individual studies by the pupils: for example, engraving, work in bronze, ivory, silver and gold, lacquer and inlay, jewellery and jade, clothmaking and tapestry, costume, ceramics, gardens. These are attractive byways and it is remarkable how pupils can be absorbed in the sheer delight of putting together with illustrations a short account of their explorations in these fields and how much insight and appreciation they gain by doing so.

A wealth of material of all kinds lies to hand for the teacher to introduce his pupils to various aspects of Eastern art. These materials include albums, colour reproductions, post-cards, photographs, coloured slides, diapositives, filmstrips, and films. The Unesco World Art Series includes albums on Paintings from the Ajanta Caves (India); Ceylon, Paintings from Temple, Shrine and Rock; Persian Miniatures and Japan, Ancient Buddhist Paintings. The plates of some of these have been made available in the form of sets of coloured slides. There are also the coloured slides issued by the French National Commission for Unesco, ‘Orient-Occident encounters and influences in Fifty Centuries of Art’ and ‘The Art of Gandhara in Central Asia’. In addition,
nearly every Western country has museum displays of Eastern art and some museum services are being extended to schools even in remote areas. Many museums produce illustrated booklets or reproductions which may be useful. Also travelling exhibitions prepared by Unesco are available through the Unesco National Commissions. The International Society for Art Education can help the teacher with suggestions about other available materials and methods of using them in schools.

The theatre and films

Some account of the theatre is also worth while because the theatre is so often a bridge to the other arts; music and dancing and the combination of sight and sound leave a lasting impression. For example, as regards Japan, the child can see how the No theatre started as religious dances to which dialogue, music and moral teaching were added. The magnificent costumes and masks, the music and the dancing, the symbolic movements and gestures of actors and dancers can perhaps be interpreted in terms of Western ballet and mime. Visits to the West by companies of Asian actors and dancers are becoming more frequent and many children are familiar with their qualities through television.

Films should not be neglected when opportunity presents itself. Japan is the world’s leading producer of films and India ranks third. Iran, Egypt, Indonesia and the Philippines all produce a large number of films. Not only are there feature films but also documentaries which give interesting sidelights on culture and on contemporary life in Asian countries and

1. Many useful films about different countries are listed in Audio-Visual Aids for International Understanding, Washington, D.C., World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession, 1959.
stimulate fruitful comparison with similar films in the West.

Music appreciation

To those brought up in the traditions of Western music, much of Eastern music will at first seem alien and incomprehensible. But the more one listens and learns, the more this music can become a source of pleasure. For schoolchildren, folk-songs and dances seem the easiest approach, and here the Unesco albums of recordings or those of the International Music Council can be very useful indeed. By juxtaposing some Eastern music with the music of some European countries (for example, Arabic music with Greek or Spanish folk-music) the teacher can show how the former has influenced the latter from early times. The use by Western composers of Eastern subjects for operas, tone poems or songs can also be explored. Eastern and Western musical instruments and orchestral formations can be contrasted and compared. Children with musical gifts can investigate matters further.

Practical subjects

Opportunities abound for pupils to use their skills in the arts and crafts by making maps, charts, diagrams, illustrations and models of all kinds.

In art lessons they can learn a great deal by copying some of the masterpieces of painting, sculpture and architecture. They can be encouraged to represent in an imaginative way scenes from Eastern life. Models in cardboard, wood, clay, plaster and composition can also be very effective—models of houses, villages, mosques, temples, pottery, statuettes and metal work. Girls will enjoy copying some embroidery patterns, making Eastern clothes, and preparing Eastern dishes. The collection and arrangement of material of all
kinds for a folder, a scrapbook or an exhibition is an interesting possibility. A whole class can undertake the production of a book about an Asian country with writers and artists combining their efforts, and finally, there are pageants and translations of plays which can be performed as a group enterprise. While these practical activities have a special appeal for the less intellectual pupils, they are also valuable for others and make a welcome change from the academic routine.

AGE GROUPS

Special projects and teaching must of course be adapted to the age, ability and background of the pupils in Western countries. Broadly speaking, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Pupils under 11 years of age

At this age the best approach is through folk-tales, folk-songs and dances, legends and stories about children in Eastern countries and their daily lives. Suitably presented stories of the benefactors of mankind from all countries also have great appeal.

Pupils aged 11 to 15

In most Western countries the vast majority of the pupils leave school at the age of 15. The last years of their formal education are in most cases the last chance they will have to acquire accurate information about Eastern peoples. It is also the teacher's last chance to awaken their curiosity about the world in which they live and to foster healthy attitudes towards the other people in it. At this age it is especially important to relate what is presented about foreign peoples to the pupils' own basic interest in themselves, in the relations
of children with their parents, and in some aspects of their own society into which they are beginning to be initiated. Hence the supreme importance of this age group. Most of the suggestions in this booklet are purposely directed to the teachers who have these children in their charge, for it is here that the real impact must be made if any lasting success is to be hoped for.

*Pupils aged 16 to 19*

Those pupils who stay on at school are likely to have more academic ability and factual knowledge. Some of them will become teachers themselves and these constitute an important group.

In most Western countries at present, education between the ages of 16 and 19 is too specialized; that is, the students pursue only a few subjects at a higher level and their general education tends to be neglected. Eastern themes and topics taught along the lines already suggested would be a good corrective at this stage, not only as a contribution to a better understanding of Eastern peoples but also as a contribution to the general educational development of the student. Eastern culture, ways of life and present-day problems can be treated generally, the students being left to choose their own themes for more detailed work. The students of literature, history, art, music and the sciences can find plenty of topics allied to their usual studies, although it would be more stimulating for future engineers, for example, to study great religions of the East or Japanese painting, or for students of literature to learn something of social and economic problems in Asian countries. To encourage teachers and pupils at this stage, certain Scandinavian countries have included questions on Asia in general papers in public examinations.
Teachers in training

In the present training of teachers too little attention is given to the techniques the beginner needs if he is to contribute to international understanding by his work in the classroom. Yet the teacher has the key role: everything depends on his own general education, knowledge and tastes, training and technique, his enthusiasm and sincerity. He should realize that every school subject can contribute to international understanding.

The period for the training of teachers varies in most Western countries from one to three years. Many will argue that the course is already overcrowded, which is, of course, generally true. However, some of the suggestions made previously for introducing projects and adapting the syllabus of secondary schools apply also to teacher-training colleges. Students are quite often required to present a short thesis on a subject of their own choosing, and they can be encouraged to select Eastern topics. During his practice teaching in schools, the student could extend this and devote a series of lessons to his chosen topic. This is an excellent way of getting a student to rely on his own initiative and resourcefulness, as well as of teaching him how to adapt material and subject matter to children of different ages.

As part of their work in child psychology, training college students might explore the subject of 'prejudices'. This is a topic which they should be well equipped to deal with, as they are bound to encounter prejudices among their pupils sooner or later, particularly when teaching about other cultures.

Teaching should have a background in contemporary social conditions, but young teachers often tend to be too absorbed in their special subjects to follow closely what is going on in the world around them. For this reason, current affairs courses should be part
of every training college syllabus, and in such courses East-West relationships should be prominent.

For experienced teachers, it has been found very useful to hold short courses of a day, a week-end or a week on the theme of teaching for international understanding. Talks are given by the teachers themselves and the discussions and suggestions are practical and concrete. In some cases, schools group themselves together to draw up programmes of East-West studies, to share speakers and to hold conferences, from which both pupils and teachers can derive great benefit.