

## IN SEARCH OF TALENT

The progress of society is based to a large extent on the training that it is able to provide to its members. In contrast to what was the situation in times past, when there was no training beyond that acquired by working next to the fathers and/or members of the tribe or group, or when, later on, educational processes were progressively developed that were only available to the elites; in current times, education has become massive and follows universal principles. To make education available to the whole of the population, and to provide it at an adequate level are primary responsibilities of the governments.

Together with the structuring of the educational process, and as part of its implementation, is the detection and development of the exceptional talents existing among the young, which constitutes as well an unavoidable condition for the progress of society. It requires of ideas and mechanisms that allow an early identification and effective promotion of possibilities to evolve and reach the highest possible achievements. In the beginnings of life, home and school are to play a central role, but the educational techniques must propitiate the identification by teachers of those characteristics that could announce an outstanding physical or intellectual ability amenable of being properly nurtured. In this manner it will be possible to motivate and encourage the flourishing and consolidation of special qualities and abilities, as well as to achieve a larger expression of innate skills that must be complemented with appropriate physical and intellectual conditions.

It is necessary to create systems and establish mechanisms that facilitate and make possible to set off the process of training and improvement in those areas detected as having the best option of success, whether individually or in

groups. There are numerous experiences of great value in this sense that demonstrate that it is feasible to work successfully in that direction.

The implementation of sport activities is perhaps that which has a wider diffusion and support, given its markedly popular nature. The importance of the organization of Olympiads in the different branches of science, from the local to the national and international levels, must be stressed as an activity that should receive all the official support it deserves. The youth festivals of science, successfully carried out in several countries and organized by the Associations for the Advancement of Science also constitute outstanding examples that should also be largely and unconditionally supported by the governments.

A notorious and far reaching and press covered example is the Venezuelan system of children and juvenile orchestras, a long lasting undertaking that has received large official support. It is an initiative oriented primarily to the recovery and social incorporation of youth belonging to marginal social classes, more than to the development of exceptional talents. However, in certain areas of musical activity, such as that of orchestral conducting, it has had a most decisive impact in the detection and development of exceptional talents.

There are numerous examples, but the intention of this note is not to list and review them. What is considered of utmost relevance and should become a primary focus of attention by educational, scientific and cultural authorities is the importance and need of counting with attitudes and possibilities to implement and stimulate the search of exceptional talents, and of providing the means required so that, once detected, the necessary environment and the required funding for a full development be available.

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