

The Rights of the Child
and
the Changing Image of Childhood

by

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CHAPTER VII

Janusz Korczak and the Right of the Child to Respect

The Polish pediatrician Henryk Goldszmit (1878–1942)¹ was in his early thirties when he visited Forest Hill² in London. He was, at that time, already a well-known author who wrote under the pen-name of Janusz Korczak. In the Polish journal *Swiatlo*³, he expresses his envy of the lovely twin houses, one for girls and one for boys, the lawn, the workshop, the animals and the small museum, and his astonishment when asked: ‘What is so interesting about it?’ Indeed, for a Jewish pediatrician who knew the terrible conditions of Warsaw’s orphanages, the two children’s homes in Forest Hill⁴ must have been a revelation.

During his visit to London Korczak made the crucial decision never to have children. *The Century of the Child* had been translated into Polish and Korczak must have read Ellen Key’s words: “Conscientious young people see it nowadays as their duty to miss the pleasure of parenthood, rather than to pass on an unhappy heritage.”

When Korczak was eleven his father became mentally ill and died in a psychiatric hospital. In those days psychiatrists believed that such diseases were inherited.

“Instead of having a son I chose the idea of serving the child and his rights”, Korczak wrote many years later about this decision.⁵ Those moments in a London park were the turning point⁶ in his life.

Korczak served the child and his rights as no one else in history did. Not only did he formulate ideas about the rights of the child, but he put them into practice for more than thirty years.

From 1912 till 1942 he was the Director of a Jewish Orphanage *Dom Sierot*, (the House of Orphans). During many of those years he was also involved in the non-Jewish Warsaw orphanage *Nasz Dom*, (Our Home).

Korczak’s Ideas

In 1929 Korczak published *The Right of the Child to Respect*,⁷ wherein he protests against the attitude of many educators who behave “as if there were

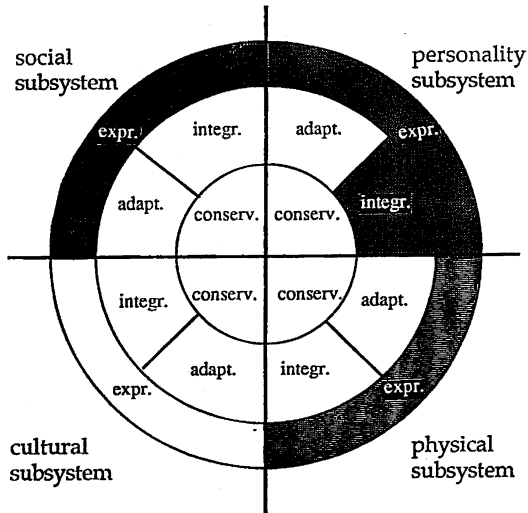


Fig. 7.1. Rights formulated by Janusz Korczak. Interpreted by the Systemic Quality of Life Model.

two lives, one serious and respectable for adults and the other indulgently tolerated and less valuable for children.”

“There are no children as such,” says Korczak. “There are only men. Men with different experiences, different drives and different reactions.”⁸ Child-innocence he calls a sweet illusion. In his book *How to Love a Child*⁹ we read: “One the worst blunders is to think that pedagogy is the science of the child, when in reality it is the science of men.”

What Korczak means by *the right of the child to respect*, is clarified when he writes about respect for failure and respect for the child’s tears. “Even the tears of a child are treated like a joke, made to seem less important, irksome,” he bitterly remarks.¹⁰ Respect should also be shown for the labour of developing knowledge. “We are constantly at odds with the children. . . . We nag, admonish, scold and punish them, but we don’t inform kindly. How poor would the child’s knowledge be if he didn’t have his peers to rely upon, and if he didn’t eavesdrop and pick up scraps of adult conversation.”¹¹

“The child is a foreigner who does not understand the language of the street plan, who is ignorant of the laws and customs. Occasionally, he likes to go sight-seeing on his own. When he encounters a difficulty, he asks for information and advice. Wanted: a guide to answer questions politely!”¹²

“Unintelligently we divide years into less and more mature ones. There is no such thing as present immaturity, no hierarchy of age, no higher and lower grades of pain and joy, hopes and disappointments.”¹³

Korczak often expresses his wish to give children a higher status in society. With empathy he quotes a child: “When Father spills the tea, Mother says: ‘Never mind.’ But she always makes a fuss when it’s me.”¹⁴

“Let us demand respect for the clear eyes, smooth foreheads, youthful effort and confidence,” he recommends. “Why should dulled eyes, a furrowed brow, untidy grey hair, or bent resignation command greater respect?”¹⁵

Since Korczak’s intention was to give children more influence and a higher social status, we classify his *right of the child to respect* in the *expressive mode* of the *social subsystem* of Shye’s ‘Systemic Quality of Life Model’.

Korczak’s viewed society as consisting of two classes, one with the adults who had all the rights, and one with children who depended upon the adults.¹⁶ He demanded respect for the child’s belongings and his or her own budget. “Everyone has the right to property, no matter how insignificant or worthless. Whatever property the child has, chestnuts, earrings or chocolate wrappings, they must be dealt with as if they were a file with secret documents.” In his children’s book *The Bankruptcy of Little Jack*¹⁷, the boy Jack asks the Minister of Finance to found a bank for children. This ‘right to respect for the child’s belongings and budget’ can be classified in the *expressive mode* of the *physical subsystem* (more control over the physical environment).¹⁸

Elsewhere Korczak pleads for the right to privacy. This we classify in the *expressive mode* of the *physical subsystem* (privacy in a room or a corner of a room) and also in the *expressive mode* of the *personality subsystem*, (for instance to keep a diary which is not read by the parents). This right overlaps with *the right of the child to have secrets*, (already discussed as Example Six in Chapter III) which we have classified in the *expressive mode* of the *personality subsystem*.

In his book *The Child’s Right to Respect*, Korczak formulates ‘the child’s right to be himself’. “We foolishly desire that no one should ever be out of place, that not one of the ten thousand seconds of the school hour (count them!) should raise difficulties. We demand uniformity of virtues and moments and, in addition, that they all suit our tastes and patterns. Can a case of similar tyranny be found in history? A generation of Neros has proliferated.”¹⁹ The ‘right to be oneself’ belongs in the (*expressive mode* of the *personality subsystem*). In as much as it allows the child to act according to his or her essential characteristics, it also belongs in the *integrative mode* of the *personality subsystem*.

Closely connected with the ‘right to be oneself’ is ‘the child’s right to the present day’. “Children are not people of tomorrow, they are people today,” says Korczak. “The child lives today. He has value as an individual today. Because we think of the child as ‘a citizen in embryo’ or ‘a future man’ valuable years are lost.”²⁰ We can interpret this ‘right to the present day’ as a means for giving the child a higher status. It is classifiable in the *expressive mode* of the *social subsystem*.

Korczak warned against over-protection of children by adults. Provocatively he formulated ‘the child’s right to his or her own death’.²¹ This was not a plea for euthanasia but an explanation that risks should be taken in

education. Korczak thought that we should not be too anxious that a child might hurt himself. He did, however, not advocate a *laissez-faire*-education in which too much freedom is allowed. In his children's book *King Matt the First*²² he warned that a Children's Parliament might well turn into chaos.

According to Korczak, the child has *the right to express his or her feelings and thoughts, to ask questions, but also not to express him- or herself*.²³ This we classify in the *expressive mode* of the *personality subsystem*.

Korczak and the Declaration of Geneva

In 1929 Korczak wrote in *The Rights of the Child to Respect*: "The authors of the Declaration of Geneva have mistaken duties for rights. Instead of making demands they try to persuade. The Declaration is only an appeal for good-will, a request for more understanding."

Korczak himself wrote a great deal about the right of the child, but never formulated a *Declaration*.

Patricia Piziali²⁴ tried to answer the question whether there was a difference between Janusz Korczak's child advocacy concepts and documented historical public Declarations. She prepared a so-called 'Child Right Comparative Matrix', consisting of the ten Principles of the 1959 United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of the Child*, listed horizontally, and national and international selected contributors including Janusz Korczak, listed vertically. If a 'child advocacy concept', or 'right' had been publicly advocated by a certain contributor, the appropriate box was marked with an 'X'. The same was done for Janusz Korczak through an examination of his literary and educational works.²⁵ The child advocacy concepts were tabulated, analysed, and interpreted. In order to compare Korczak with contemporary contributors (selected by Piziali according to criteria she does not explain) Piziali formulates a *Declaration of the Rights of the Child of Janusz Korczak*, and concludes that in his book on children's rights Korczak does not place priority on any one of his declared rights, but that they all have equal value. According to Piziali, Korczak acknowledges that the child always has a right, simply because the child is a person with dignity and respect. "He considers the spiritual, physical, social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual needs of each child, as set forth in *Korczak's unique Declaration*,²⁶" which in reality is only Piziali's selection and interpretation of Korczak's work.

Our interpretations (see Figure 7.1) of the rights formulated by Korczak, lead to different conclusions. We think that Korczak especially emphasised the *expressive mode* of the *social subsystem* (higher status for children), as well as the expressive modes of the *personality and physical subsystem*.

Betty Jean Lifton, could also not resist the temptation of formulating "Janusz Korczak's Declaration of Children's Rights"²⁷ in her excellent biography of Korczak.²⁸ These attempts to formulate Janusz Korczak's Declar-

handkerchief?' asked Stefa. Korczak had to admit that he had not. Mrs. Stefa gave him one. Korczak continued on his way. Stefa shook her head and muttered: 'Just like a child, forgetting his handkerchief, while he has a cold.'

In 1914 the war took Korczak to Kiev, away from the children and his writings. Stefania Wilczynska ran the Home alone. From a letter she wrote eleven years later, reflecting upon this period⁴⁴, we understand how difficult the work in *Dom Sierot* was: "It was so terribly lonely when Dr. Goldszmit went to the war in 1914. My circumstances were better than yours, because Korczak had already created a valuable educational system in the House. On the other hand this was an enormous responsibility. God helped me, and this valuable educational system was not destroyed."

In June 1918 Korczak returned to Warsaw, bringing with him the manuscript of *How to Love a Child*. "I wrote this in a field hospital under the sound of cannon fire," he commented.

In November 1918 Poland became again independent and Josef Pilsudski became its Chief of State. Richard Watt describes that "of the many 'new' nations that were born or reborn in the wake of World War I, none was faced with the variety and enormity of problems that Poland encountered during the first months of its existence."⁴⁵ According to Watt only about fifteen percent of the Polish industrial workers were employed. Nearly half a million Poles had been killed while serving in the Austrian, Russian or German armies. Another million had been wounded. Spanish influenza was sweeping through the country and there were serious outbreaks of typhus. Starvation was widespread."⁴⁶

There was much work for Korczak in his Jewish orphanage with its hundred children between five and fourteen. Nevertheless he made time available for *Nasz Dom*, the orphanage for children of Polish workers who had been imprisoned and persecuted.⁴⁷ This Home was managed by Maria Falska, an active member of the Polish Socialist Party. She, too, devoted her life to the orphans and implemented many of Korczak's ideas.

In *Dom Sierot*, meanwhile, the system of self-government became better established. At a time when methods in many schools were authoritarian, and warm relationships between pupils and educators were often unthinkable, Korczak wrote about the despotism of educators. He devoted a great deal of thought to methods for preventing the adults in *Dom Sierot* from being authoritative and unjust. In order to ensure fair treatment for the children he established a court and a 'code of law' or *codex* for all the pupils, independently of age or status. The court, consisting of five children, held weekly sessions.⁴⁸ Stefa was the court's secretary.

According to Korczak's one-time secretary Igor Newerly,⁴⁹ when Korczak created the court of peers, he had been inspired by Bronislaw Trentowski's book *Chowanna* (1842), and by the 1783 report by the National Educational Committee which nobody had ever studied as seriously as Korczak.

"The court must defend the vulnerable," writes Korczak, "so that they

will not be bothered by the strong. It must defend the conscientious and the hard-working, so that they will not be annoyed by the careless and idle."

Korczak himself was several times summoned before the court. Many former pupils remember that he was once brought to court by a small and shy girl for putting her on a high bureau and leaving her there as a practical joke. The satisfaction was visible when the court announced its verdict: "The defendant guilty as charged, according to paragraph 100 of the codex ("the court declares that the charge is justified")". From then on the children sometimes called Korczak 'Setka' (one hundred in Polish).

Frost⁵⁰ calls the codex an approach of graded social engineering ranging from persuasion and guidance through reprimand to sanction vis-à-vis the offender. Thus the Court could ask individual A 'to forgive individual B'. However, the Court could also render the verdict: 'We do not forgive'. The Court could recommend expulsion of the offender from the Institution. Expulsion, although hardly ever used, was not a hollow threat. It actually figures a number of times in the annals of the Orphanage.⁵¹

The codex had one thousand paragraphs. The first ninety-nine paragraphs provided for dismissal of a charge or for a statement that the court did not try the case. For example:

- §4 The Court declares itself satisfied that nothing of the kind will ever happen again. Case dismissed.
- §10 The Court finds in the act committed by A not guilt but an example of civic courage (gallantry, uprightness, honesty, lofty impulse, sincerity, good-heartedness).
- §11 The Court expresses thanks to A for notifying it of his guilt.
- §13 The Court, expressing regret for what has happened, is of the opinion that A is not guilty.
- §53 The Court pardons A since there was no intention on his part to offend B (infliction of mental pain).
- §54 The Court pardons A on the ground that it was a joke (a silly joke).

Minimum punishment starts at paragraph 100.

- §200 The court rules that A acted incorrectly.
- §300 The Court rules that A acted wrongly.
- §400 The Court rules that A acted very wrongly.
- §700 Rules that the text of the judgement must be sent to the family.
- §800 Summons the family to the orphanage to discuss the situation. Paragraph 900 seeks a 'guardian' (another child) for the child in question to help him or her behave well. All children had such a

guardian or *apotropos*) during the first few months of their stay in *Dom Sierot*.

§1000 Gives the Court (of peers) the power to expel the child from the Home. However the expelled child has the right to apply for readmission after three months.

Former pupil Ignacy Cukierman⁵² wrote me: "Before I was admitted to *Dom Sierot* at the age of 11, I lived on Ostrowska Street among thieves, prostitutes, pimps, and an extremely poor Jewish population that supported itself by peddling rags for paper mills, and potato peels for cow food. I was proud to be a pupil of *Dom Sierot*. Sometimes there were small incidents such as children's reaction to what they perceived as unreasonable demands by staff members. The offended child usually summoned the offender to Court where the dispute was resolved by ruling who was at fault. There was no appeal to the ruling."

Jacques Dodiuk⁵³ remembers that Korczak even tried to extend jurisdiction for his pupils into the schools they attended in Warsaw. Often the schools were unwilling to co-operate on this point. "Once I took action against a school teacher who had slapped my hand with a ruler. I was outraged because in the orphanage the educators never touched us. After my complaint Mrs. Stefa talked with the headmaster of the school who made me come into his office with the teacher who subsequently disappeared from the school. At another time I was a judge. This was a great distinction. But I have also often been judged and once I was even punished according to Article 800."

Simona Kowal⁵⁴ tells that she once had to appear before the court: "Yes, for coming late or for having been at odds with a girl-friend. Example of a punishment: to clean up some mess with a broom."

Arie Sadé⁵⁵ relates how once, when he was a judge, Stefa incriminated herself because she had screamed outrageously at a child.

Srulek Szwarzberg⁵⁶ remembers the responsibility of being a guardian. "If the other boy was again summoned in Court, they would put the blame on me, the guardian." Proudly he adds that the behaviour of the other boy improved so much that he subsequently became a guardian himself.

All my interviewees confirm that the Court was a very important social institution in *Dom Sierot*. Less clear is the function of the Home's Parliament. According to Hanna Mortkowicz-Olczakowa⁵⁷ this Parliament had twenty-two elected deputies who met once a year. Korczak himself writes: "The Parliament is composed of twenty deputies. Five children are a constituency. Any candidate receiving four votes is elected. The Parliament endorses or rejects laws drafted by the Judicial Board."⁵⁸ It seems that during the years Korczak experimented with the Parliament it was sometimes more and sometimes less important. Most of the former residents I interviewed hardly remember the Parliament. However, Izak Skalka⁵⁹ who was one of its mem-

bers recalls that the Home's Parliament mainly enquired into the fairness of requests made by children.

Former pupil G. Mandelblatt⁶⁰ found Parliament too preposterous a name for a commission which mainly handed out tasks and rewards for having done them properly.

Most former pupils of *Dom Sierot* with whom I spoke, did not appreciate the *plebiscite*, introduced by Korczak. A child was voted into one of several categories. In *Mister Doktor*⁶¹ by Hanna Mortkowicz-Olczakowa, the Polish names of the categories are translated as 'difficult new-comer', 'indifferent inhabitant', 'pleased companion', 'citizen', 'king and friend of the children.'

Votes, giving each resident, child or worker, an evaluation, were regularly taken. The evaluation was either expressed by a *plus*, which meant that one was a much liked person, or a *minus*, which meant that one was not appreciated as an resident, or a *plus-minus*. A former co-worker⁶² of Korczak told me that she thought the system was a progressive, educational one, since a child was placed in a category according to his or behaviour rather than according to intelligence. Some former pupils told me, however, that, since belonging to the highest categories carried certain privileges, they used to 'lobby' before the vote was taken.

Korczak the Educator

Korczak was a charismatic educator. He greatly inspired the twenty students or *bourgists* who, in exchange for room and board, worked four hours a day with the children. The idea of educating educators was introduced into the Home in 1920. "We lived on the first floor of *Dom Sierot*," says former *bourgist* Jochevet Cuk.⁶³ Every evening the *bourgists* recorded their observations. In the same notebook Stefa added her comments in red ink. These observations were discussed with Korczak once a week.⁶⁴

With Korczak the children felt more relaxed than with the serious Stefa whose role was to demand things. Korczak was the one who gave warmth and joy.

Ignacy Cukierman, now living in Montreal, wrote to me that he remembers how the Doctor took part in the children's games, something Stefa never did. Children climbed on the Doctor or sat on his lap. He often looked like a tree with many small birds in it.

Stefa had excellent assets for running a home with more than hundred children and very little help. Some former pupils⁶⁵ speak highly about her, but others remember that she did not hide her preferences for children who looked pretty, were intelligent and behaved well, thus causing jealousy and grief.

Stefa's task was difficult. With the help of a housekeeper, a cook, twenty *bourgists* and two paid educators, she managed a Home for hundred destitute children. In 1925 she wrote: "I am so tired, although I do not have physical

complaints . . . I never tried to pity myself. . . You did not know me in the past. But now I have become so one-track-minded. It is so difficult to go away from the Children's Home even for a few hours."⁶⁶

All the children had duties, such as helping to clean, wash and cook. Some children would wake up others. As a reward they received 'work credits' with which a postcard or 'commemorative card' could be earned.

Shlomo Nadel⁶⁷ described the home as "a place so organised that it ran like a Swiss watch." Another pupil who wants to stay anonymous, relates how, during the Second World War, when she was living in Siberia and had to use the lavatory outside the house, she used to dream of the clean bathrooms of *Dom Sierot*. While Stefa saw to it that everything functioned well, Korczak sometimes broke the rules by making jokes or behaving like a naughty boy himself.

Was Korczak's Self-Government System Unique?

Korczak was not the only educator in his time who experimented with self-government. Dan Mulock Houwer⁶⁸ tells us about what he called the *Socio-Educational System* in residential care. In this system the individual needs of the child are second to the effort of building an ideal community.

In the village of Freeville in New York State 'Daddy' William R. George created a private residential community, the *George Junior Republic*, with self-government by the adolescents or *citizens*. David and Roxa van Dyck report: "Modeled after the American republic, it includes: the legislative branch, the monthly town meeting of all free voting citizens (an earned distinction), the executive branch, a President, Vice-President, Secretaries of State and Treasuries, all elected, plus the Attorney General and other appointments. The judicial branch has seven court levels and requires citizens to study authority, have a degree of self-control and a basically sound mental state as well as a willingness to leave an unhealthy past."⁶⁹ Punishments in the *George Junior Republic* were stricter than in *Dom Sierot*. Among the major negative sanctions were fines and expulsion.

In Poland the *Medem Sanatorium* near Warsaw, also experimented with self-government.⁷⁰ However, no contact was maintained between Korczak and the *Medem Sanatorium* group. The educators in the *Medem Sanatorium* raised the children in Yiddish while the pupils of *Dom Sierot* had to speak Polish from the day they entered the Home. Moreover their surnames were often changed into Polish names. The *Medem Sanatorium* became especially known for its children's parliament, the 'Kinderkreis'.

In 1910 Paul Geheeb started his *Odenwaldschule* for an elite population in Hessen. In this *New School* pupils, teachers and the director had the same rights.⁷¹ The children were responsible for keeping order, but there was no *Court of Peers*.

Of all the pioneers Korczak stands out because he not only formulated



Picture VII.2. 'Mister Doctor', some staff and children of Dom Sierot. (Courtesy: Sz. Nadel.)

ideas on children's rights, but also dedicated his life to trying them out. Korczak's ideas are often misunderstood.⁷² He claimed that *respect for the child* was the basic requirement of an educator. A novelty was that he formulated this as a *Right*.⁷³

The Last March

On September 1st, 1939, the Germans invaded Poland. On February 15th, 1940, Stefa who had in 1936 visited some former pupils in Israel, wrote them through the International Committee of the Red Cross: "We are healthy. I work a little in the orphanage but Korczak works very much. I did not come, because I could not come without the children. Yours Stefa."⁷⁴

On August 6th, 1942, the Germans liquidated Dom Sierot. Among those who saw the children march to the train for Treblinka, was the social worker N. Remba.⁷⁵ "This was no march to the train," he writes. "It was a silent protest against banditry! All the children were lined up in fours. Leading the procession was Korczak, his eyes fixed ahead, holding a child with each hand. A second group was headed by Stefania Wilczynska." Regina Itkin-Arzylewicz says that Korczak held the hand of three-year old Romca Sztokman, the child of her sister Rozka, a worker and former pupil of Dom Sierot.⁷⁶ Chawa Kempinski-Hurowitz, who also witnessed Korczak's last march wrote me: "I remember seeing Janusz Korczak walking with the

children and many other people. There were many Germans around them. When I came home and saw my dear parents, I cried because I knew this would probably be the end for all of us."⁷⁷

NOTES

1. In *A Chronology of the Life, Activities, and Works of Janusz Korczak* (prepared by Maria Falkowska, Maria Bronikowska and Alexander Lewin of the Instytut Badan Pedagogicznych in Warsaw in 1978 and translated into English by Edwin P. Kulawiec in 1980 and published by The Kosciuszko Foundation in New York) we read that "In 1911 Korczak was *in all likelihood* in London, where he visits various educational centres, among others, a school and a home for orphans in Forest Hill near London." Since Korczak never mentioned when he was in London, we shall probably never know the exact year.
2. Józef Goldszmit, Korczak's father (a well-known lawyer in Warsaw), kept putting off the official registration of Korczak's birth for a number of years.
3. Korczak, J., 'Forest Hill', in: *Swietlo*, 1912, No. 2, pp. 30-32.
4. After a *tour de force* (the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, the Greater London Record Office and Historical Library, the Public Record Office, the Social Care Association, the University of Essex (Oral History Department), the National Children's Home, the Library of the Department of Education and Science, the Library of the Home Office, London Boroughs of Greenwich) I turned to *The Times* Newspaper who mentioned *The London Borough of Lewisham*. Their archivist Carl Harrison finally sent me *the Annual Report of the Boys and Girls Industrial Homes, Forest Hill* (1910). We read in this Annual Report that the aim of the Boys and Girls Industrial Homes was "to give the children a fair start in life, in the hope that they will become capable and honest and God-fearing men and women." Described are what kind of children were admitted:

- * Mother dead; Father, a carman, left with nine children under 15 years of age.
- * Father too ill to work; Mother delicate; ten other children, three only earning, therefore, eight under 14 years to be supported.
- * Mother in an asylum; Father nearly blind, earning 5 to 7 shillings a week; another child with grandmother.
- * Father and Mother both dead; five children, two eldest earning a few shillings each.
- * Father, a sailor, signed off at Sydney, has not been heard of since; Mother left with five children under 11 years.
- * Father dead; Mother, in domestic service, contributes a little towards boy's maintenance.
- * Father suffering from consumption; Mother can hardly earn anything; seven children under the age of 14.

Mr. Harrison wrote me in a letter dated October 22nd, 1985: "The Forest Hill Industrial Homes were *Homes*, not Schools. At Shaftesbury House and Louise House the children did work (shoemaking and gardening for the boys, laundry work for the girls) which earned money for the Homes, and which might help them to find employment when they left. But for their academic education the children went daily to a school unconnected with the Homes. In the 1870s this was the Christ Church National (that is Church of England) School in Church Vale, Forest Hill. In 1911 it was the Rathfern Road London County Council School in Catford, not far from Shaftesbury House. The teacher who received Korczak was presumably at Rathfern Road School. The Homes were in no way connected with the School Boards, or the Education Act of 1870. They were charitable foundations, supported entirely by private donations, and the income from the work done by the children." In the *Directory of Child Saving Institutions* of these days two homes in the Forest Hill neighbour-

hood are mentioned: *Shaftesbury House*, a home for boys, founded in 1873, with 40 boys (from 7–10 years of age) and *Louise House*, a girls home, founded in 1881 for 30 girls (age 6–10 years) Both homes were called 'industrial schools'. Korczak mentions a workshop in his article.

Middleton, N. *When Family Failed, The Treatment of Children in the Care of the Community during the First Half of the Twentieth Century*, London, 1971, Victor Gollancz Ltd. Here we read "The staff who stood *in loco parentis* were singularly reluctant to take up any role other than that of the authoritarian. Yet, these were the key people in dealing with children in institutions." See also: Veerman, Philip, E., 'Janusz Korczak and the rights of the child', in: *Concern* (magazine of the National Children's Bureau, London) spring 1987, No. 62, pp. 7–9.

5. Letter to Mieczyslaw Zylbertal, March 30, 1937, in Korczak Archives, Kibbutz Lohamei Haghetatot, Ghetto Fighters House, Israel.
6. These turning points are often called 'epiphanies'. See: Denzin, Norman, K., *Interpretive Interactionism*, Newbury Park, CA, 1989, Sage. Also: Denzin, Norman, K., *Interpretive Biography*, Newbury Park, CA, 1989, Sage, p. 70. "In epiphanies personal character is manifested. They are often moments of crisis. They alter the fundamental structures in a person's life. Their effects may be positive or negative.
7. This book is not yet published in English. There is a German translation available: Korczak, Janusz. *Das Recht des Kindes auf Achtung*, published by Van Den Hoeck & Ruprecht in Gottingen and Zurich. Parts of this book are also in: Korczak, Janusz, *Selected Works* (edited by Martin Wolins). Warsaw 1967, published for the National Science Foundation in Washington D.C.
8. Korczak, Janusz, *How to Love a Child*, published in Warsaw in 1920. It is not available in English, but is published in Gottingen as *Wie Man ein Kind lieben soll*, 1979.
9. Korczak, Janusz, *If I were young again*. Also not translated in English. There is a German translation: *Wenn Ich Wieder Klein Bin*, published by Van Den Hoeck & Ruprecht.
10. 'The Right to Respect', in: *Selected Works of Janusz Korczak*, Op. cit., p. 487.
11. Idem.
12. Idem, p. 486.
13. Idem, p. 489.
14. Idem, p. 487.
15. Idem, p. 499.
16. Lewin, Aleksander, *Système Moderne de l'éducation et la patrimoine des pédagogues-novateurs: J. Korczak, A. Makarenko and C. Freivet*, Warsaw, 1976, Institut des Recherches Pédagogiques.
17. Korczak, Janusz, *Bankructwo Malego Dzeka*, Warsaw, 1924.
18. *Selected Work of Janusz Korczak*, Op. cit., p. 487.
19. The Right to Respect in: *Selected Works of Janusz Korczak*, Op. cit., p. 493.
20. Idem, p. 471.
21. I do not agree with F.H.O. Rest's interpretation, ('Das Recht des Kindes auf seinen Tod, Die Bedeutung Janusz Korczaks für die Erziehung in der Sterblichkeit', in: Beiner, Friedhelm, *Janusz Korczak, Zweites Wuppertaler Korczak-Kolloquium*, Wuppertal, 1984, Universität-Druck, pp. 221–236). Rest: "Die Kindesrechte sind als Menschenrechte zu verstehen; eine Sterbeerziehung muss wie eine Pädagogik 'zum Tode', zur Erziehung in der Sterblichkeit erweitert, zuendgedacht werden, weil das Sterben nicht Leben beendet, sondern ein Teil des Lebens ist, jener Teil, der dem Leben gehört, seitdem es sich anschickte, Individualität und Geistigkeit hervorzubringen.
22. Korczak, Janusz. *Krol Macius Pierwszy*, Warsaw, 1922. In English: *King Matt the First*, New York, 1986, Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Bettelheim considered the book a Bildungsroman wherein we are told about the emotional, moral and personal development of a hero like Goethe's Wilhelm Meister or Tolland's Jean Christophe.
23. Kahn, Gerard, 'Das Recht des Kindes auf Achtung', in *Schweizer Lehrerzeitung*, 3, February 1988, pp. 5–10.

24. Piziali, Patricia Anne, *A Historical Study of the Origin and Current Status of Child Advocacy Concepts with Particular Attention to the Contributions of Janusz Korczak*, doctoral dissertation, Washington, 1981, The Faculty of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, the George Washington University.
25. Not many of Korczak's works were available in the English translation in 1980 and 1981.
26. The so-called "Janusz Korczak Declaration of a Child's Rights" (by Miss P. Piziali, 1981):
- * A child has a right to his and her own identity as a person, as a child – a right for the present moment, a right to the present day, and a right to be what he/she is.
 - * Any infant, any child born alive has the right to live.
 - * A child has a right to a premature death and has a right to die after birth.
 - * A child has a right to a family who wants him/her – the child's own family, if possible.
 - * A child has a right to the basics of life itself, enough good food and water, clothing, shelter, medical care, love, security.
 - * A child has a right to the kind of physical safety and health care for growth and development before and after birth.
 - * A child had a right to learn, to be educated about him/herself, the human race, the world – in order to find ways for self-protection, self-support, and ways to live with others in a spirit of peace and universal brotherhood.
 - * A child has a right to grow and ripen, to dream and labour at developing knowledge, toil of growth and youthful effort.
 - * A child had a right to err, to fail, to criticize, to make demands, to make conditions, to demand respect for grief and tears, to be respected as a child.
 - * A child has a right to enjoyment, a right to play, a right to active participation, a right to joy, a right to sorrow, a right to be a child.
 - * A child has a right to a name and a nationality from his birth, a right to a caring community and country.
 - * A child has a right to a family and friends who can help his/her life and growth.
 - * A child has a right to a belief, to truth, to a secret, to a mystery, to justice, freedom, dignity, and equality.
 - * A child has a right to professional help for himself/herself and for his/her family to stay and grow together.
 - * A child has a right to rehabilitation, if handicapped.
 - * A child has a right to a government that protects him/her from neglect, cruelty, and exploitation of any kind.
 - * A child has a right to be independent as well as dependent and to become a responsible citizen of his/her community and country.
 - * A child has a right to constitutional protection, a right to juvenile justice, a right to speak up, to make complaint, a right to childhood and to respect for the child's intellect.
 - * A child has a right to understanding, tolerance, acceptance on the part of all adults and to respect for what the child can become.
 - * A child has a right to adult models who demonstrate consideration for others, integrity in living, a desire to work out problems and offenses, a sense of ethical values and most especially compassion and empathy.
 - * A child has a right to a peaceful, non-racist world where violence and wars are considered obsolete.
 - * A child has a right to enjoy these rights regardless of race, colour, sex, religion, national, and social origin.
27. "Janusz Korczak's Declaration of Children's Rights," (by Betty Jean Lifton, 1988).
- * The child has the right to love. ("Love *the* child, not just your own.")
 - * The child has the right to respect. ("Let us demand respect for shining eyes, smooth

foreheads, youthful effort and confidence. Why should dulled eyes, a wrinkled brow, untidy grey hair, or tired resignation command greater respect?")

- * The child has the right to optimal conditions in which to grow and develop. ("We demand: do away with hunger, cold, dampness, stench, over-crowding, over-population.")
- * The child has the right to live in the present ("Children are not people of tomorrow; they are people today.")
- * The child has the right to be himself or herself. ("A child is not a lottery ticket, marked to win the main prize.")
- * The child has the right to make mistakes. ("There are no more fools among children than among adults.")
- * The child has the right to fail. ("We renounce the deceptive longing for perfect children.")
- * The child has the right to be taken seriously. ("Who asks the child for his opinion and consent?")
- * The child has the right to be appreciated for what he is. ("The child, being small, has little market value.")
- * The child has the right to desire, to claim, to ask. ("As the years pass, the gap between adult demands and children's desires becomes progressively wider.")
- * The child has the right to have secrets. ("Respect their secrets.")
- * The child has the right to "a lie, a deception, a theft." (He does not have the right to lie, deceive, steal.)
- * The child has the right to respect for his possessions and budget. ("Everyone has the right to his property, no matter how insignificant or valueless.")
- * The child has the right to education.
- * The child has the right to resist educational influence that conflicts with his or her own beliefs. ("It is fortunate for mankind that we are unable to force children to yield to assaults upon their common sense and humanity.")
- * The child has the right to protest an injustice. ("We must end despotism.")
- * The child has the right to a Children's Court where he can judge and be judged by his peers. ("We are the sole judges of the child's actions, movements, thoughts, and plans . . . I know that a Children's Court is essential, that in fifty years there will not be a single school, not a single institution without one.")
- * The child has the right to be defended in the juvenile-justice court system. ("The delinquent child is still a child . . . Unfortunately, suffering bred of poverty spreads like lice: sadism, crime, uncouthness, and brutality are nurtured on it.")
- * The child has the right to respect for his grief. ("Even though it be for the loss of a pebble.")
- * The child has the right to commune with God.
- * The child has the right to die prematurely. ("The mother's profound love for her child must give him the right to premature death, to ending his life cycle in only one or two springs . . . Not every bush grows into a tree.")

28. Lifton, Betty Jean, *The King of Children, A Biography of Janusz Korczak*, New York, 1988, Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
29. Kurzweil, Zvi, Erich, 'Korczak's Educational Writings and the Image of the Child', in *Jewish Education*, Vol. 38, No. 1, January 1968, pp. 19-28.
30. Woloszyn, Stefan, *Korczak*, Warsaw, 1978.
31. *Senat Szalencow*, Warsaw, 1931.
32. I thank Betty Jean Lifton for sharing the transcript of her interview with Professor Woloszyn with me.
33. Szalazakowa, Alicja, *Janusz Korczak*, Warsaw, 1978, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i pedagogiczne, p. 30.
34. The *Flying University* was an underground College offering lectures on Polish Culture. Since the Czar considered this to be a danger, the location had to be changed for each lecture.
35. See: Kulawiec, Edwin, P., 'Janusz Korczak Physician -Humanitarian', in: *JAMA, Journal*

- of the American Medical Association, May 10, 1979, Vol.241, No. 20, pp. 2165–2166, and: Ströder, I., 'Der Arzt als Erzieher des Kindes': zur Verleihung des Korczak – Preises an Professor Halikowski', in *Pädagogische Rundschau*, 34, 1980, No. 7, July, pp. 437–443.
36. Bellerate, Bruno, 'Janusz Korczak e Jean Jacques Rousseau: Punti di Convergenza e Motivi di un Rifiuto', in: Università degli studi di Roma 'La Sapienza', *Annali del Dipartimento di Scienze dell' Educazione*, 5, 1983, pp. 259–271. I thank Professor Bellerate for our interesting discussion in Rome at the Salesiano University in June 1984.
 37. Cornaz-Besson, Jacqueline, 'Les Affinités entre Korczak et Pestalozzi', in: Actes du Colloque de Geneva, *Janusz Korczak l'homme, le médecin, l'éducateur, le poète*, Geneva, 1982, A la Bacconière, pp. 65–76.
 38. Veerman, Philip, E. 'Het Weeshuis van Korczak, een oase in Warsaw, in *Sjow-Tijdschrift voor Jeugdbescherming en Jeugdwelzijn*, 1983, No. 1/2, Vol. 11, pp. 38–42. Pestalozzi wrote this in the letter from Stanz. Published in: *Pestalozzi über seine Anstalt in Stanz*, Weinheim/Berlin/Basel, 1971. Verlag Julius Beltz, mit einer Interpretation von Wolfgang Klafki.
 39. In the Korczak Archives of Kibbutz Lohamei Haghetaot in Israel. I thank Mr. Reuven Jatziv for helping me with the translation from the Polish.
 40. His *Children of the Street* (Warsaw, 1901) and the *Child of the Drawing Room* (Warsaw, 1906) was already a success.
 41. Veerman, Philip, E. 'In the Shadow of Janusz Korczak; The Story of Stefania Wilczynska', in *The Melton Journal*, No. 23, Spring 1990, pp. 8–9.
 42. Letter to the author of Claire-Lise L'homme, of the *Université de Geneva*, February 4, 1986. I thank Mrs. L'homme and the rector of the University for their help.
 43. Merzan, Ida, *Pan Doktor i Pani Stefa*, Warsaw, 1979. I thank Mrs. Alla Raviv in Jerusalem for translating most of this book from the Polish for me.
 44. Letter of Stefania Wilczynska to Feiga Lipshitz (in Archives of Kibbutz Lohamei Haghetaot). Feiga Lipshitz worked at the time in a Children's Home in Bialystok under very difficult circumstances.
 45. Watt, Richard, M., *Bitter Glory. Poland and Its Fate 1918 to 1939*, New York 1979, Simon and Schuster, pp. 60–61.
 46. During a typhus epidemic in 1920 Korczak works in an isolation hospital on Kamiona Street. There he contracts the disease. His mother takes care of him. She also contracts the disease and dies. Korczak becomes very depressed.
 47. Szlazakowa, Alicja, *Janusz Korczak*, Op. cit., p. 46.
 48. Korczak, Janusz. How to Love a Child, in: *Selected Works of Janusz Korczak*, Op. cit., p. 405.
 49. Newerly, Igor, *Zywe Wiczanie*, Warsaw, 1978.
 50. Frost, Shimon, 'Janusz Korczak: Friend of Children', in: *Moral Education Forum*, Vol. 8, No. 1, Spring 1983, p. 14.
 51. The policy of *Dom Sierot* was to admit half-orphans if, for instance their mother had five other children at home, or if the mother was sick and could not take care of her children. Korczak, however, hardly ever admitted children with severe behavioural disturbances.
 52. Letter (dated December 8, 1985) to the author by Mr. Ignacy Cukierman in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. I thank the Canadian Jewish Congress for contacting Mr. Cukierman for me.
 53. Dodiuk, Jacques, 'Les Années Heureuses dans la Maison de l'Orphelin' in: *Informations UNESCO*, No. 734/735, Paris, 1978 (in English published in: *UNESCO Features*, 1978, No. 734/735). I thank Mr. Dodiuk for the interview in Paris on October 24, 1982.
 54. Interview with Simone Kowal in Paris, held for the author by Salomé Cahen-Burckhardt on August 15, 1987.
 55. Interview by the author with Arie Sadè in Beersheva, Israel, 1985.
 56. Interview by the author with Israel (Srulék) Szwarzberg in Rechovot, Israel, September 2, 1985.
 57. Morkowicz-Olczakowa, Hanna, *Janusz Korczak. Artz und Pädagoge*, Weimar, 1961, Mun-

- ich and Salzburg, 1967, Anton Pustet Verlag, p. 127; in English: *Mister Doctor, The Life of Janusz Korczak*, London, 1965, p. 112.
58. Korczak, Janusz, 'The Child's Right to Respect' in: *Selected Works of Janusz Korczak*, Op. cit., p. 458.
 59. Interview with Izak Skalka, in Tel Aviv on September 23, 1985. Mr. Skalka showed me a photograph of ten children. It was glued to a piece of cardboard. On the back were stamped the words "Samorząd Domu Sierot", Self-government of Dom Sierot. It was a momentum of his participation in the self-government in 1934 and 1935.
 60. Interview by the author with G. Mandelblatt on July 18, 1988, in Brighton Beach (New York City).
 61. Mortkowicz-Olczakowa, Hanna, *Mister Doctor*, Op. cit. Alicja Szlajakowa (*Janusz Korczak*, Warsaw, 1978, p. 74) gives as the *civic categories* in *Our Home* comrade, inhabitant, indifferent inhabitant and difficult newcomer.
 62. Interview with Ada Hagari-Poznanska in 1985 in Kibbutz Giv'at Haim.
 63. Interview with Jochevet Cuk on August 26, 1985, in Rehovot, Israel.
 64. There are several such notebooks in the Archives of Kibbutz Lohamei Haghetaot.
 65. Sachs, Shimon and Plotkin, Ronit, Stefa, *The Woman behind Korczak*, (in Hebrew), Tel Aviv, 1988, Papyrus.
 66. Letter to Feiga Lipshitz (in the Archives of Lohamei Haghetaot).
 67. Interview with Shlomo Nadel on July 29, 1982, in Ramle, Israel.
 68. Hellinckx, W. and Pauwels, I., *Orthopedagogische Ontwikkelingen in de Kinderbescherming; Leven en Werk van Dr. D.Q.R. Mulock Houwer*, Louvain/Amersfoort, 1984, Acco. Interview of Dr. Mulock Houwer by the author on October 30, 1982, and second interview on June 20, 1984. Dr. Mulock Houwer was from 1957-1967 Secretary General of the World Union for Child Welfare in Geneva. In the 1920s Mulock Houwer also experimented with self-government and court systems. He gives a nice example (in *Het Tijdschrift voor Ervaringsoopvoedkunde*, 1928, Vol. 7, pp. 329-330 in his article 'rechtspraak door kinderen'). "A judge between 9 and 12 years of age who addresses a furiously stampeding accused with: "In this place you are expected to behave. Go outside and calm yourself," shows an amazingly relaxed and assertive behaviour which may make many an adult envious.
 69. Dyck, Van, David and Cyck, Van, Roxa, 'George Junior Republic; A Fresh Start for Troubled Teens', in *A Journal of the New York State School Boards Association, Inc.*, November 1983, pp. 16-17. Also: Engelen, Clara, (Jonkvrouw), 'An American Children's Republic', in: *Tijdschrift voor Armenzorg en Kinderbescherming*, 1908, pp. 170-172 and pp. 174-176. Also Know, William, E., *Notes on Social Life in the George Junior Republic*, 1967, found in the William R. George and George Junior Republic Papers, Department of Manuscripts and University Archives, Cornell University Libraries, Ithaca, New York).
 70. Letter to the author from Luba Gilinsky (former co-worker of the Medem Sanatorium), now living in Los Angeles, CA. Also interview with Mr. Luden, former pupil of the Medem Sanatorium, made in Tel Aviv on September 26, 1985.
 71. Schäfer, Walter, *Paul Geheeb, Aus den Deutschen Landerziehungsheimen*, Stuttgart, sine anno, Ernst Klett Verlag. Also Popta, Van, W.M., *De Landerziehungsheime (New Schools), Geschiedenis, Ontwikkeling en Betekenis*, Amsterdam, 1929, H.I. Paris. Interview with Dr. Erich Steinitz on June 10, 1987, in Jerusalem. Dr. Steinitz worked as a chemistry teacher in the Odenwaldschule from 1926 till 1929. He tells about the beautiful surroundings and the ski hikes. A regular topic was whether or not the beautiful surroundings would spoil the children. See also: Kurzweil, Zvi Erich, *Vorläufer Progressiver Erziehung*, Ratingen/Kastellaun/ Dusseldorf, 1974, A. Henn Verlag. Chapter 6 describes the Odenwaldschule and Chapter 8 the work of Korczak.
 72. Bruno Bettelheim was right when he pointed out in the introduction to the English translation of *King Matt the First*, that the pediatrician Goldszmit (Korczak) was convinced that children must have the right to govern themselves, and that he was an ardent pleader for children's rights. But he was wrong when he added that 'liberation' (in the modern sense of John Holt and Richard Farson) was one of Korczak's goals. Also René Görtzen (*Weg*

met de Opvoeding, Meppel/Amsterdam, 1984, Boom) only distils those elements out of Korczak's work which create the impression that he was a *Kiddie Libber*. This was definitely not the case.

73. Dietz, Gerhard, 'Kinder und Erwachsene als Partner; Eine Darstellung des besonderen erzieherischen Verhältnisses bei Janusz Korczak', in: *Vierteljahrsschrift für Wiss. Pädagogik*, No. 61, 1985, pp. 242–263.
74. In the Archives of Kibbutz Lohamei Haghetot.
75. In the underground archives of the Warsaw Ghetto (Emmanuel Ringelblum, *Ksowim fun getto*) in the Archives of Yad Vashem (The Holocaust Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem).
76. Interview by the author with Regina Itkin (born Arzylewicz), sister of Rozka, in Akko, Israel, on September 2, 1985. Rozka worked in Dom Sierot.
77. Testimony sent to me by Mrs. Chava Kempinski (born Hurowitz). This letter is now in the archives of Yad Vashem.