
Editorial: 220 High School Messages to the Adults

Samuel Abrahám

This issue of *Kritika & Kontext* is unique, for it is not “an archeology of critical thinking” in accordance with the aim we envisaged at the outset of the journal in 1996. This issue is rather about the future of critical thinking. It is also about our ability as adults to listen to the critical remarks and testimonies of a generation that is no longer naïvely childish, yet rejects the cynical perception of the world that we adult sometimes consciously or unwittingly accept.

The *Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts* (BISLA) held a high school competition on the topic: “What is Your Message to the Adults?” We expected a few dozen entries. However, when the deadline came, we had 220 essays! That was the first shock. The second one arrived when we realized that the majority of the essays were interesting and perceptive, but, more than that, they offered a sincere testimony of young people who know that they have a message for adults yet feel that their voice is ignored or accepted only formally.

The great atmosphere of the selection committee was gradually supplemented by an eerie feeling that we would have to choose the winners. We were aware that the last selection would be rather arbitrary, and we hesitated and kept postponing the final list. A member of the committee, the movie director Dušan Hanák, who has long experience in this matter from festivals and competitions, issued a friendly warning that at some point we had to become resolute. So, in addition to the first three prizes, we granted five special prizes...

In this issue, we present the eight winning essays as well as numerous short excerpts from other essays that we found valuable. In addition, we offer a few texts written by students of BISLA, selected from the great number of essays these students must write as part of their Bachelor study at the liberal arts college.