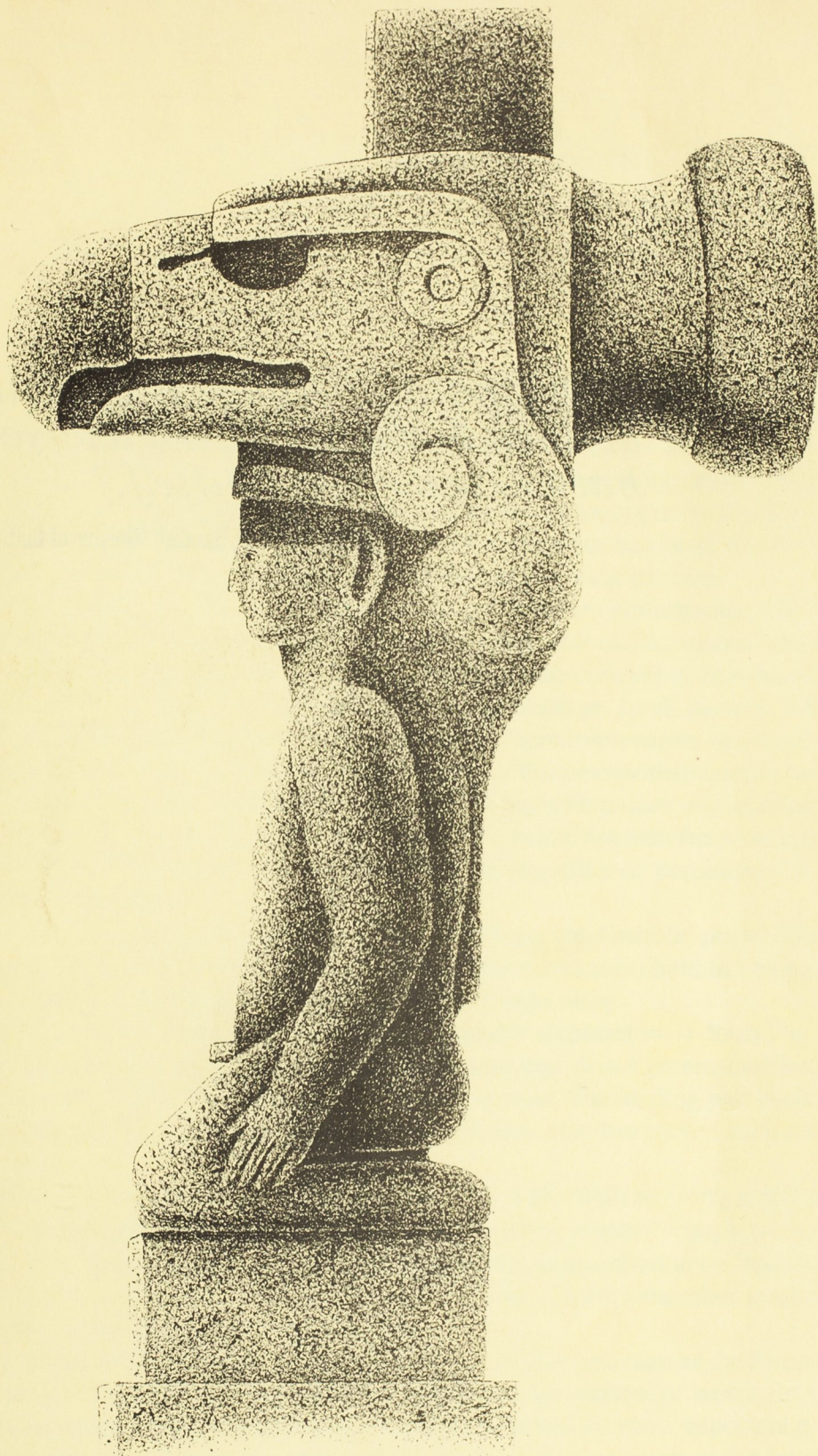


MCH96-50-3-1



NICARAGUA
— a look at the Cultural Sector

Irene Svensson

"The cultural heritage is the only heritage that is not inheritable, you have to achieve it yourself."

Bengt Göransson, Swedish Minister of Culture.

Cover:

The statue of a male figure, supporting the head of a great vulture, "Rey de Zopilotes", was found on the island of Zapatera by Carl Bovallius in 1882-83. His book, "Nicaraguan Antiquities", was published by the Swedish Society of Anthropology and Geography, Stockholm 1886.

IF IT IS TRUE that the knowledge of one's past is a guide for the future, how is one to perceive the future if past cultural heritages have been lost? In Nicaragua, earthquakes, fires, thefts and wars have been the fate of most historical documents before the nineteen-hundreds. Throughout their violent history the written memories of their past have been lost. The director of the National Library and Archive, professor Fidel Coloma making this comment, but seeing my reaction to the nonexistent written cultural heritage, wisely said "you can not undo what has been done, but it is never too late to change history. The development of a nation is a long process".

Fortunately there are still historical links to the past left to guide future generations. You find the colonial buildings in the centers of the cities of Leon and Granada, colonial remnants like Leon Viejo or the church in the mountainous village of Ciudad Antigua. The convent of San Francisco in Granada, founded in the 16th century, is another architectural heritage. In all these buildings the history of the Spanish conquest of America is written down. From even earlier times are the stone sculptures from around the 9th century which were used at the ceremonial centers on the island of Zapatera. In these sculptures the unity of the human being with nature, represented by jaguars, crocodile, coyotes and eagles, is evident. For these sculptures, Spanish friars created in the Convent of San Francisco a "Garden of the Idolatry", as examples of paganism for the Nicaraguans converted to Christy.

Festivals and religious ceremonies play an important role among the Catholic population of Nicaragua. One of the most impressive cultural expression is the celebration held in December dedicated to the patron saint of Nicaragua, the Mother of the Virgin Mary.

A cultural heritage of another kind and with clearly popular expression is found in the performing arts, especially the spoken word. The popular theatre and dance picaresque known as "El Güegüense", with roots in the 16th century, is such an example. The leading part is played by a personality with ironic lack of respect for the foreign domination, that has played such a large part in Nicaraguan history.

The queen of the streets, "La Gigantona", announces public festivals. With her long stripy hair, she walks on stilts accompanied by drummers and a jester improvising "coplas", couplets making fun of public persons. The people today might not look upon her as an inheritance from times past, but nevertheless she is an important cultural patrimony. If you don't remember your own traditions and keep them alive, they soon cease to exist.

Of all the arts, I would not hesitate to place the expressive use of the language as the foremost. Not only El Güegüense and the jester accompanying La Gigantona are masters of words. In later times, another Nicaraguan master of words, Ruben Dario, became one of the most important poets in the Spanish language. His fame throughout the world at the turn of the century as the founder of the modern poetry in the Spanish language has made an impact on the writers in today's Nicaragua. The skillful storytelling peasants are other masters of words. Here in the countryside the experiences of Nicaragua's history are told and retold by these creative artists of the spoken word. This brings their history to life. But how could this treasure ever reach the National Archive?

Culture as a Creative drive for Development during the Years of the Sandinista Government

THE DAY AFTER the Sandinistas' Revolutionary Government took over power on the 19th of July 1979, a Ministry of Culture was created. Ernesto Cardenal, an internationally renowned poet, headed the new ministry. The government took an interest in promoting various art forms like music, theatre, poetry, film and literature. With much enthusiasm but scarce resources, the government promoted cultural expression. Efforts were also made to promote popular art and in order to reach the peasant population in the mountains, art brigades went on tour. These cultural expressions became especially important during the years of the fevent war that Nicaragua lived through with many young soldiers in arms.

The cultural support was clearly a priority during the Sandinista Government. Writers were promoted and poetry workshops were held. Publishing houses were created where books written by national writers were printed. It should be noted that the country was exposed to a permanent war of aggression at this time. Nevertheless theatre groups and dance groups flourished, often creating collective performances. "La nueva cancion" had its followers, cassettes with the popular songs were heard in streets, meetings and on radio and television. The influences from the Caribbean side of Nicaragua was felt with reggie and other forms of popular music.

It might be held that popular arts were promoted at the cost of the fine arts, and that national art became more important than international, although artists from other countries were frequently invited to cultural events. The Sandinistas use of culture to promote political popular support was always in debate. The experiences from these years now show that popular enthusiasm is not always the best way of developing professional cultural creativity.

The arts flourished for some eight years. But the war had its costs and due to lack of finances, the Ministry of Culture had to be cut back and almost disappeared in 1988.

In early 1990 the Sandinista Revolutionary Government lost the elections and turned over the government to the opposition. Following the tradition in most Latin American countries, the change of government changed the cabinet and people in top positions. But in Nicaragua it also affected almost all state employees seen as Sandinista supporters. This turnover of personnel together with the weak economy had an additional unfavourable affect on the cultural sector.

Promoting Cultural Cooperation in War Times

DURING THE LAST YEARS of Sandinista government there was an extreme lack of money to finance even the minor working equipment needed. The costs of the ongoing war had to be shared by the whole country including the cultural sector.

The Swedish cooperation with Nicaragua has to be seen in the light of this economic crisis. It is therefore quite remarkable that the Nicaraguan government decided to allocate part of the bilateral aid to four cultural institutions; The National Library, The National Institution of Cultural Heitage, The National Museum and The Theatre Ruben Dario, whilst in this vulnerable situation. But as Bo Kärre, then heading the SIDA's Unit for Cultural Support, remarks "when the existence of a people as a sovereign nation is threatened, questions concerning the national individuality and the cultural identity tend to come forward and play a central role in the struggle for survival".

Swedish volunteers had for longer periods worked at the National Museum and the National Library. The daily experience of these professionals had taught them the difficulties of making small ends meet. Until now they had raised funds through international solidarity from librarians and museum workers and submitted minor projects to SIDA for economic support. But as the financial support to the museum and library increased, the administrative work load for SIDA's local program officers equally increased. They proposed that the two institutions should elaborate proposals for long-term projects to be submitted to SIDA for economic support.

A number of factors influenced the inclusion of the cultural sector into the bilateral agreement. Among the intellectuals in Nicaragua, there was a keen interest for support to the cultural sector. But maybe a more significant factor was the visit of the Swedish Minister of Culture, Bengt Göransson, to Nicaragua in 1986 and the impact that Nicaraguan culture obviously had on him. He seems to have been especially impressed by the extent of popular participation and expression in the field of culture.

After the visit he expressed his view on the role of culture in Nicaragua. "There are those who regard culture as being an instrument for the revolution and this leads to a narrow perception of culture, limiting the perspective. Also there are those who see culture as a source of inspiration giving a wider cultural concept."

During his visit four projects were presented by Nicaragua to the Swedish Minister to be considered for support. These were The National Institution of Cultural Heritage together with The National Museum, The National Library and a support to Cultural Centers. Although, this last project was not included in the bilateral cooperation, ABF (the Swedish Workers' Educational Association), some years later supported Cultural Centers in Nicaragua.

An agreement regarding Swedish support to the cultural sector was signed between the Governments of Nicaragua and Sweden in late 1987. It was the first time cultural assistance had been included in Swedish bilateral aid anywhere. Although the amount of money was only about 1% of the total bilateral support to Nicaragua, it was still a considerable amount of money for the cultural institutions.

The Impact of the Cooperation Projects in Nicaragua

WHAT DID THE COOPERATION projects mean for the development of the institutions in Nicaragua? To answer this question we have to look more closely at each project.

First it has to be mentioned that the projects were designed by professionals of The Swedish Royal Library and Museum of National Antiquities in close collaboration with their sister institutions in Nicaragua, The National Museum and The National Library. They were designed as inter-institutional collaboration and exchange of experience. There was also a strong emphasis on competence development in all projects

The National Library

THE NATIONAL LIBRARY was granted support for the acquisition of books and equipment. A proposal for a new library building was never implemented but was later changed to the construction of an annexe, a new ceiling and repair of the air conditioning for the library.

The director of the National Library, professor Fidel Coloma, expressed the view that the importance of the cooperation had been the moral support and the respect shown for the library. He thinks that inter-institutional collaboration is an excellent form for cooperation. "Other countries tend to look upon us as "minors", he continued, "there are some organisations supporting us, where we have to turn to the international center even for small things such as pens and paper. This makes us feel inferior. Also the Swedish cooperation permitted me to make plans for the first time. Earlier we did not have economic resources to plan with, now we can buy books for the National Library and for the 39 small public libraries in the country."

"Thanks to the Swedish cooperation it has also been possible to give some of the librarians further training. The development of the acquisition department with new computers are advances that have been possible with the Swedish support. A major part of the support is directed to compile and print a national bibliography for the period 1979 to 1990. These efforts are important for the future development of this institution."

"Before some of the books were kept on the floor," he says, "but now we have put them

on shelves, some donated by international solidarity groups in Sweden. People might think that donation of a new ceiling is insignificant", profesor Coloma says, "but the look of the library is indeed important.

You could say that through the Swedish support the National Library became a dynamic institution. Professor Coloma used a quite amusing metaphor, considering that we were in the tropics, saying that the support is like a snow ball. When it starts to role it draws attention to other donors and becomes bigger and bigger." For example the number of the books increased from 4000 to 8000 in three years, because after seeing the progress gained through the Swedish donation, Spain and Mexico also granted support.

The library also gets support from UNESCO. The Swedish UNESCO council initiated the project and later it was included in SIDA's cultural funds. A computerized department for the acquisition of books and for the national bibliography is being set up. Professor Coloma is following a historal tradition which aims towards a unified Central American community, when he expresses his dream for the future: "To have a computer link and a database for Central America's 13 miljon habitants." "With this," he says, " we could search for books all over the region and also buy our books at a lesser cost. And would this not be a beautiful way to create a Central American community?"

"The public libraries have an important role to play in children's education. In Nicaragua about 75% of the teachers have no formal training. The students are only taught to copy texts. The libraries could serve as centers to orientate the students to investigate, to read critically and to learn how to use reference books. There is a shocking lack of libraries in Nicaragua. In Managua, the capital, with its 1,2 miljon inhabitants there are only four public libraries. To reach the amount of libraries considered normal in neighbouring countries, there should be 24 libraries, one for every 50.000 inhabitants.

"The cooperation with the Royal Library in Sweden has made us quite independent, says Coloma." They respect that we have to make our own mistakes. Because after all, we have to assume all responsibility for our own development."

The National Museum

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM was supported in the reconstruction of the conservation building. They were also granted support for a car to be used for a didactic program outside the capital, for an exhibition and for competence development of the staff.

It is surprising that the National Museum has survived considering the scarce resources available. If it had not been for the cooperation with Sweden, the government would probably have closed the museum. At least this is what the museum staff believes. Now the Government pays for salaries, the maintenance of the buildings and telephones.

The Museum though seems to receive little support form the Nicaraguan government for ethnographic studies in the country. With small means the museum did a survey and an exhibition of the historical background to a number of handicrafts. With Swedish funds two didactic programs, "Know your patrimony" and "The children's cultural corner", for students outside the Managua region were initiated. From the beginning there was a collaboration with the Ministry of Education, but after the change of government this ceased.

The two directors heading the museum, Leonor de Rocha and Mireya Martinez, maintain that the primary aim of the museum is didactic: To educate young people about the values of one's own country and to care for these values. They belive that the museum has great possibilities to teach about the past, the present and to create a vision of the future. That is what they feel museums are for and this is also the aim of the Nicaraguan National Museum.

The National Institution of Cultural Heritage

A MAJOR PART OF THE COOPERATION in the conservation sector is directed towards one single project, the preservation of the ex-convent of San Francisco, one of the most important cultural heritages in the country, founded in the city of Granada in the 16th century. The National Institution of Cultural Heritage, as the responsible institution for all national monuments, was granted support for a preservation program. The program also included competence development in the field of traditional building techniques. This was seen as fundamental for further preservation of ancient buildings.

A young architect, Mario Molina is responsible for the National Institution of Cultural Heritage. He is the fourth director since the beginning of the cooperation with Sweden. The change of directors means that there has been no continuity in the project. Only in 1989 did full-scale work start on the conservation of the San Francisco Convent.

Mario Molina has the impression that the new government's claims that there is a lack of progress is due to the fact that up to now the work has not been easily visible. For example, subterranean drainage, basic for the building not to collapse and the fortification of the walls. This is not seen for as soon as the work is done it is covered. "But we are not going to put up untreated beams just to have the work done fast". "For me", says Mario Molina, "it is a question of quality".

"We are now planning for a new phase, which has implications for the preservation of the convent, but also of the whole Historical Center of the city of Granada", says Mario Molina. As preservation work of these dimensions needs specialized artisan workers, a project is being designed involving the education of artisan apprentices. They will learn artisan work as well as study at primary school level. The new phase has a social aspect, attracting younger workers to learn artisan work and at the same time assuring the specialized group necessary for the conservation of the Historical Center of Granada.

According to Mario Molina, in the near future, he would like to make an exhibition in situ of the restoration of the ex-convent of San Francisco, including the investigations made along with the photos of the process. In short, to make known to the public of what a conservation project consists. Later on he would like to turn the whole building into a living museum. "In the convent, continues Molina, "you will find that the entire history of Nicaragua has passed through the walls. In the 16th century it was used as a monastery, three hundred years later it was used as military stronghold and partly burnt during the war instigated by an American adventurer, well known in Nicaragua's history, named William Walker."

The Ruben Dario Theatre Project

AT THE TIME OF planning these projects, a third project was included, consisting of equipment for air conditioning, water treatment and light and sound for Nicaragua's main theatre building, Teatro Popular Ruben Dario. The project was on a purely technical level. Among SIDA's local program officers there were worries about the project's strong technical bias and the lack of a wider cultural vision. As it was a project being suggested by the Nicaraguan Government, SIDA agreed to include it in the bilateral program.

But the theatre project had an earlier history. A Swedish independent theatre group, Tältprojektet, had raised funds and already made an application to SIDA for additional project support. As the total amount of money was too high for one project, SIDA agreed to include part of the financing into the bilateral programme. The reminder, which was the major part, was financed through SIDA's funds for Non Governmental Organization support. As counterpart to the Ruben Dario theatre, Tältprojektet executed the whole installation. It was agreed that the support be terminated after three years.

The new director of the Ruben Dario Theatre, Rosa Bernheim, claims that they have run into

problems with the modern installation backed through Swedish cooperation. The Nicaraguan government pays for the maintenance of the theatre, but is not able to support production due to the economic situation in the country. "Now, with the brand new modern equipment, there is no money for production". Rosa Bernheim feels that they are "poorer" than before.

When asked about the future prospects for the theatre, the director said that first priorities are to promote Nicaraguan artists and to get more visitors interested in the theatre. As the theatre was created by the former Somoza dictatorial government for an elite public it is now important to get rid of this stamp in order to get students and people in general to come to the theatre.

The policy of the new government favours the theatre. The reason why the government is supporting the theatre, according to Rosa Bernheim, is because it has made itself visible and has shown results. Examples are the dance festival last year and a three week theatre festival with national writers.

But the theatre is only one small part of the national culture. Rosa Bernheim believes in the promotion of the whole cultural sector. She expresses the point that there has not been any efforts by the government to promote national culture. "It has not been made visible for the public". She makes a comparison with other countries where booklets and handouts are printed for the tourists. "Here we have visitors and they don't even know even where the Theatre is."

In the agreement between the Governments of Sweden and Nicaragua an amount of money was set aside for cultural exchange between the two countries in order to increase the awareness of Nicaraguan culture in Sweden and Swedish culture in Nicaragua.

For a new project concerning a cultural manifestation in Nicaragua, Tältprojektet proposed to SIDA to finance a group of 100 Swedish cultural celebrities, including prominent writers, musicians and a whole theatre group to participate in the re-opening of the Theatre Ruben Dario in 1988.

The project objective was strongly questioned by groups of Swedish artists, mainly with regard to the cost of this exclusive cultural manifestation. It is estimated that the total cost amounted to about one million Swedish crowns. The money was contributed by SIDA's unit for cultural support, the Swedish Institute for Cultural Exchange, and a smaller part from The Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The critique of the form of support to the theatre also came ablaze at the same time. "Why should the money for cultural projects go into an elite scene like Theatre Ruben Dario", some Swedish artists objected. "Why not support smaller independent theatre groups, like the collectively formed "Justo Rufino Garay" in Managua and theatre groups working directly with peasants?"

There were two reasons to support the Ruben Dario Theatre. The most important was that the Nicaraguan government had requested support for this theatre. The other reason, necessary for the management of the project cooperation, was that Tältprojektet was willing to execute the project.

Do the Projects have any Impact on Nicaragua?

IT IS DIFFICULT TO describe the impact of the Swedish cultural support on Nicaragua, because all foreign aid has a double edge. On the one hand the support made it possible for the National Library to plan ahead. But on the other hand the support to the Theatre meant just the opposite. The installation of ultra modern equipment only gave possibilities for productions at some time in the future as the maintenance of this installation is almost too costly for the country.

Support for development is often based on projection of the supporters' own expectations rather than on an analysis of the real situation. The Swedish support to the Theatre is an example of such a projection. Does it help Nicaragua develop its own future? The Swedish counterpart, Tältprojektet, in their optimism did not foresee the deeper effects of their support. Today, they say "the most interesting is not what we did, but what happens now. What we did gave the

possibilities for further progress”.

But what is progress? We all agree that Nicaragua has the right to have a national stage. Just as they have the right to have modern hospitals, factories and a right to live a decent life. The question is rather, was it fair to include the modernisation of the theatre into the bilateral program and then just let it drop there?

Let us take another example. Although on a minor scale, the example no less shows evidence of how Swedish planning projection and knowledge influences the bilateral support. The Museum of National Antiquities of Sweden and the National Museum of Nicaragua were to make an inventory of colonial buildings. An archaeologist and a photographer from Sweden were to do the work together with their counterparts in Nicaragua. The texts were to be written in Nicaragua, but the exhibits were to be mounted in Sweden.

When the project was designed the director of the National Museum envisaged the photos as useful archive material. Now, a few years later, she thinks an exhibition of the photos would be an excellent idea as it would make the museum more visible. "We could never afford the luxury to do such an exhibition ourselves", said Leonor de Rocha. However, the results of the inventory have so far not been made into an exhibition. The local resources and personal turnover in Nicaragua as well as in Sweden have impeded the continuity of the work.

The fact that there are few professional archaeologists working at the museum is strongly felt. Steps are taken to send young people abroad for formal education, but the museum has to continue its daily work for some time yet without much change. The aim of the Swedish project is to increase the capacity of the museum staff. As for the exhibition, it is still viable, but it will take a while for the counterparts to meet and develop ideas on a basis of equality.

Problems in the Development of the Cooperation

DURING THE DIFFERENT stages of the development of the Swedish cooperation, almost all projects changed their directors several times. This, along with several reorganisations in the Ministry of Culture's directives, naturally affected the continuity of the projects.

One of the major problem during the four years of cooperation has been the rapid and frequent turnover of the personnel. Being a common problem in developing countries, it always affects and obstruct the continuity of project development. In Nicaragua, when a director of an institute leave there is too often a reorientation and restruction of all plans by the new director. A heavy turnover of other staff leaving for various reasons has also affected the continuity of the projects.

Another problem has been the centralized control of the money for the projects. Up till now the four institutions have had to ask for money from the Ministry of Culture to pay even minor bills, resulting in many delays. Now this problem has fortunately been solved and each institute has their own bank account to draw cash from when needed.

One Year of the New Government

THERE WAS A SUDDEN shift in the support of cultural activities with the installation of the new Government from early 1990. The budget for the financial year of 1991 is 1.4 miljon dollars to cover all cultural sectors. The Director of the Cultural Institute, Gladis Ramirez, is trying her best to carry out her work. In public she has said that the institute promotes the public libraries and the area of cultural heritage. But the promotion of culture by the new government is not yet visible. No extra money apart from foreign donations has been given for cultural promotion. But Parliament granted The National Library an amount of money in recognition of their work.

According to the view of the new Director of Culture the state should be a mediator of culture, while the vice director maintains that culture has its base in the people. The government's job is to create the necessary conditions. The cultural directors hold the opinion that there is more

to culture than the fine arts. But to me, support for popular expression among artisan and peasant groups seems to be nonexistent. They are not included in the plans for cultural promotion. Are these cultural expressions not considered as art?

The new Director of Culture makes sure that the Ruben Dario Theatre is being promoted. She is very proud of how this theatre is working. "The theatre made itself visible with a theatre festival and a dance festival", she says.

At the same time as the Ruben Dario Theatre got its own budget, it was recreated as a commercial enterprise. It is now hired out to musicians, theatre and dance groups. The theatre also is let out to embassies and private companies, who want to give their guests an evening to remember. In order to survive, the theatre had to become commercial. When asking the director of Ruben Dario Theatre about this contradiction to the aims of a cultural institution, she said that she doesn't want this to influence the policy made for the theatre as an art institution.

But the problem for the Ruben Dario Theatre is that it is considered as a non-profitable, subsidized enterprise and is now expected to support itself. What that means for the future is yet to be seen.

How does one administer "Culture"?

HOW IS ONE TO "GOVERN" culture if a policy is not laid out? There are several ways, with economic support being the most important. All the institutions forming part of the bilateral support in Nicaragua talked about the importance of backing and support from the government. The theatre received support from the government for a theatre festival. This is of course merely an obligation of a government. But support is not always limited to economic means. It may be shown in many ways. The museum is not promoted at all by the new government. The museum wants to be taken into consideration in its capacity for the diffusion of the arts, and also as a focal point when there are official visitors to the country. The staff are proud of their work and of the archaeological treasures at the museum. They want the museum to be shown and promoted to even a larger public.

Economic support is of course an important means to govern cultural activity. Bilateral and multilateral foreign aid is an important source of backing for cultural projects. By directing cultural aid, the government can use the support for the projects they find interesting whilst letting other projects down. Even if a cultural policy has not yet been laid out, the culture is in fact governed. By promoting, direct support and seeking out sources for economic backing a government directs the cultural sector. By using different means of support a government may let some art forms flourish and others die out.

Can Cultural Creativity be Supported?

AS WE HAVE SEEN from this paper, the Swedish bilateral support to the cultural sector has been directed to national institutions. For this support SIDA had the sensitivity to agree to an inter-institutional form of collaboration that in my opinion has been very fruitful. The reason, I believe, is that the design of the forms of cooperation was from the beginning made by Swedish professionals in libraries and museums together with their Nicaraguan counterparts and not by representatives of either government. Their profound knowledge and interest in Nicaraguan culture has been an important input and necessary for the development of the projects. The support to the theatre was, as we have seen, of a purely technical kind and the design of the support was therefore also different.

Along with these long term programmes, there has also been short term collaborations within the cultural sector. Here the initiative was often taken by Swedish writers, actors or other artists wanting to express their solidarity with Nicaragua. This kind of collaboration has been very

difficult to employ as the level of language ability among the artists often have been quite poor. Neither is there sufficient time available to permit a profounder cultural understanding between the visiting artists and their Nicaraguan counterparts. The result of this kind of support, therefore, probably has other effects than intended. Rather than being an immediate support for Nicaraguan artists, it increases the Swedish artists' knowledge about the Nicaraguan culture. Still, the contacts are important to further cultural understanding.

An unusual form of support through a competition in writing children's books was promoted by an artist group in Sweden. The intention was primarily to create sensitivity in the Nicaraguan writers in writing for children, but support went also to the printing and distribution of the prize winning book. It is pleasing to report that the prize winning book, "Un güegüe me contó", is now to be seen in all public libraries.

The Swedish Worker's Educational Association, ABF have recently started their support to cultural centers outside Managua. The project cover reconstruction of the centers as well as support for cultural activities. The project's aim is to increase a sensitivity for the arts in the wider population.

These examples of support, totally different from the bilateral ones, leads me to reflect about the support to the cultural sector. As we have seen the bilateral support is directed to national institutions, all situated in the capital. It is also safely used for basic goals such as the reconstruction of buildings, acquisitions of books, cars or airconditioning. But there has been little money to increase cultural understanding and to further creativity in the projects.

Bearing in mind the long Swedish experience in popular education and the Nicaraguan tradition of popular culture, e.g. their "master's of words", part of the Swedish bilateral cultural support could very well be used to create a sensibility for the arts among the wider population. There is an urgent need for cultural support outside the larger cities, but there is more to cultural "development" than a mere distribution of culture. A commitment of extraordinary range is necessary to create a cultural environment in which the arts can grow. It is up to the artists, writers and dancers to create such a cultural environment in collaboration with peasants, market women or even child workers in the streets. Hopefully SIDA would promote the creation of such a project. Because the challenge for future cooperation in cultural development is to give support in which the results cannot easily be controlled or governed by either development agencies or governments.

Irene Svensson, an independent social anthropologist at the University of Stockholm, has performed this review on SIDA's cultural support to Nicaragua.

The review is to serve as an example of experiences, questions and problems common to many cultural cooperation programmes.

To be discussed at *A Seminar on Culture and Development Cooperation* held by SIDA in Stockholm, September 2–5, 1991.

