

FROM CRAFTS TO DESIGN EDUCATION IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

A Norwegian context and historical perspective

Bjørn Magne Aakre

Bjorn.Aakre@hit.no

The value of traditional crafts versus modern design and aesthetics in education has been frequently discussed in recent years. In this paper I evaluate and discuss how design has developed from its roots in traditional crafts, arts and aesthetic education in Norwegian secondary schools. The article is based on a national study using theory of didactics and a historical perspective as the main position of analysis. Government policy documents and national curriculum, supported by interviews and observations in schools, were the main sources of information for this study. In a wider context there was made some connections to contemporary trends in society, and some references to similar education in Germany and Japan. The analysis was supported by using ideology and power as underlying critical themes.

Introduction

The value of traditional crafts versus modern design and aesthetic in education has been discussed from many different positions in recent years. The topic has also become theme of a discussion related to education in Norway. National and economical motives seems to play one important role behind this trend. Former Norwegian Minister of Trade, Boerge Brende, gave the following arguments when he announced that the Norwegian government had claimed 2005 as an official “Year of design”: “If a nation having as high costs as Norway, we need to build more knowledge and design into our products and services”, (NH, 2004). Corresponding arguments seem to be motives behind the demand for more emphasis on design and aesthetics in both elementary and secondary education, (UFD, 2004). However, what is design? Most people seem to associate design, form and aesthetics with how we live and experience our environment of cities, buildings, cars and other objects. Design is also about being practical, to be pragmatic and to see possible solutions to complex situations and problems¹. How is it possible to see this theme as part of education in a wider context, not only as a question of economic survival and competitive strength?

In this paper I present and discuss arts and design education² based on a comprehensive study carried out between 2003 and 2004. The main frame of this study was secondary education in Norway, and similar education in Germany and Japan as a contextual reference. I chose to make a historical presentation of the topic focused on the time period between 1965 to 1997. However, prior to this period, the roots of arts and design education in Norway also was investigated, as well as some future trends and perspectives related to the proposed school reforms that will be implemented from August 2006.

¹ Horg, *Universitetsavisa* 21.10.04

² In this case it is important to be aware that since the 1960's the school subject “Forming” and “Formgivingsfag” covered both Art, Design and Crafts in Norwegian schools.

Theory and method

Theory of critical constructive didactics, explained as theory of “bildung³” and curriculum, was chosen as the main scientific position in this study, (Klafki, 1963, 2001). I chose to put a special focus on the practical and aesthetic aspects of arts and design education, based on a post modern discussion of aesthetics made by the German philosopher Wolfgang Iser, (Iser, 1997). In order to obtain some connections to concrete school programs, the German school of design, Bauhaus and its pedagogy, was chosen as a reference, (Wick, 2000).

The choice of theory also gave provisions for choosing historical- hermeneutic method as the main strategy of analysis, supported by some empirical data gathered through interviews and observations in schools. Finally a critical approach to social structures, power and ideologies were taken, (Klafki 2001). The main sources in this study were government educational documents and national curriculum covering the period from 1965-2000. I also used programs from the political parties and other written sources that could help understand and interpret possible interaction between contemporary trends and school programs.

To assure and adjust interpretation of written sources, I used verbal sources and studied relevant objects related to crafts and design education. These experiences were gathered through visits in schools, observations and talks with students, teachers and professionals in Norway, Germany and Japan. The verbal sources, especially from students, are mostly representative for how this type of education has been conducted since the 1990's. As a second means of correction, I applied critical theory to investigate the affects of social structures, power and ideology, and how these forces may have influenced the development of art, crafts and design education in Norwegian secondary schools.

Crafts, arts and design Education

The study concluded that both the Norwegian words “forming” and “formgiving”, and the English word “design”, relates to forms of educations that have many aspects in common. However, the meaning of the two concepts is not only a question of language.

The Norwegian concept “formgiving” (design) has its origin from the school subjects “forming” and “formingsfag” that were established in the Norwegian schools during the 1960's- and 70's. They were broad practical based school subjects inspired by the idea of art as a basis for general education, or “bildung”. The English philosopher Herbert Read seems to have been the main supplier of terms and ideas for those who promoted the establishment of “forming” as a practical school subject for both girls and boys, (Read, 1931 and 1958). In the background we also can sense John Ruskin (1864), the Art and Education movement and the German philosopher Friedrich Schiller who had already argued in favour of education, “bildung”, through cultivation of sensibility and beauty, (Habermas, 1985). Schiller also gave his idea a political dimension when he claimed that freedom is not obtained through enlightenment alone, but through education (bildung) through art.

³ Bildung is a German word meaning “picture” or “vision” of some ideal, originally God. Bildung became a basic concept in German Education and Didactics during the Enlightenment period. In Norway and Denmark the concept “dannelse” is used. In Sweden the more similar words “bildning” and “utbildning” are used.

Forming rooted in the idea of art, pedagogy, and partly also liberating therapeutic activity, may have brought the practice of forming and formgiving away from both traditional crafts and their quality standards, as well as new neoliberal trends based on profit and commercial motivations alone. In other words: the students learning process, and the “inner formation” in the individual, became more important in forming thanks to the external activity of making things for use.

Design seems to have its origin from architecture as an expression of visual experiences, feelings and perceptions related to architecture, buildings and later also on objects in general, (Hill, 1999). However, the meaning of design may also be drawing, sketch or plan.

Therefore, as a consequence of the industrial revolution, the meaning of design also became associated with rational planning of form and function, combined with strict division of design and production in a specialized industrial production system, (Read, 1956). However, counter movements were also established like the Arts and Crafts Movement and the Home Craft Movement, “husfliden”, in the Nordic countries. The Bauhaus school of Design, founded in Weimar Germany in 1919, represents a third and powerful alternative. The idea of Bauhaus pedagogy was to bring together the quality of traditional craftsmanship and the modern trend by using modern materials and modern technology. Bauhaus also had a radical new vision of

design as part of a social and political program. In this way Bauhaus became a powerful ideal for design and design education in the 20th century, (Wick, 2000). However, influenced by neoliberalism the ideas of design in recent years often seem to be motivated by commercial and profit motives.

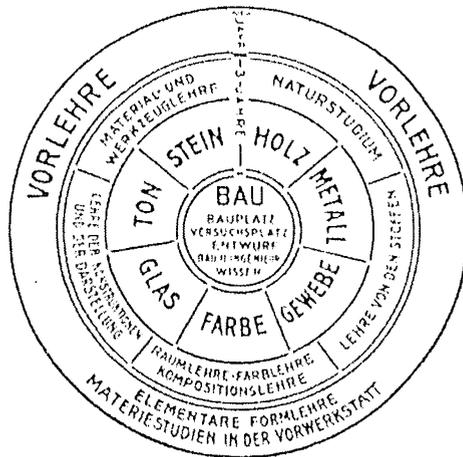


Figure 1 The Bauhaus model

From a perspective of power and control the two positions, “formgiving” versus “design”, may be interpreted differently. The study found that the emphases on design in recent years, often seem to be motivated by the idea that products and services more easily can be sold and bring higher profit when

visual and other aesthetic values are added through better design. However, as a counterpart, the basic idea of forming and formgiving is different. Their focus used to be on the child and its playful activity

as a supreme value in itself, not as part of a commercial or utilitarian purpose. These free playful activities were supposed to foster democracy and solidarity through free, independent, mature and responsible humans.

If we look at society and culture today, the idea of design seems ambiguous. For instance: quite often design is used purposefully in marketing products for children as pure customers possessing money and the potential to buy things that can bring profit, not addressing children as creator of culture. If we are not critical and aware of this ambiguity we may do childhood, youth and humanity more harm than good. On the other hand: the study also concludes that education in forming in Norway since the 1960’s, had its main focus on leisure time activities, and may be too little focused on how to help the younger generation to prepare for a job or to create a job career. This fact may explain that design got a rather weak position in Norway compared to other Nordic countries, and also Germany and Japan.

The study found that “formgiving” or “design” were not used as names of schools or studies in Norway before 1965. However, “forming” became a course in some secondary schools for home crafts in the 1960’s. On the other hand: the study concluded that the roots of what we call education related to “formgiving” and design, can be found in three different and parallel school traditions:

- Crafts rooted in German and Norwegian guilds from about 1400 AC⁴.
- Forming and arts rooted in schools for work and home crafts from about 1860 AC⁵.
- Academic and theoretical schools rooted in Church schools from about 1153 AC⁶.

Crafts education based on the apprentice system was established in main cities in Norway, especially Bergen, by German Hanseates from Lübeck, between 1350 and 1400 AC. The Hanseatic Guilds were given privileges by King Haakon VI as a favour of their financial support of the Kings struggle for the Swedish crown. It is also reported that he loved their shoes very much, which might also have been one argument.

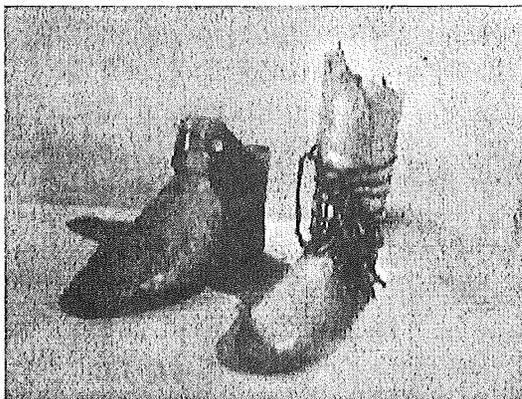


Figure 2 Shoes made in Lübeck ca 1400 AC

Besides these three traditions, we may also talk about *industrial* or *technical* education, which came to be integrated with crafts education, and *arts* education which gradually gave strong influence to the later school subject “forming”. From home crafts also developed a unique Saami arts and crafts education, in the Saami language called “duoddji”. The first school for these home crafts was established in Kautokeino in 1952.



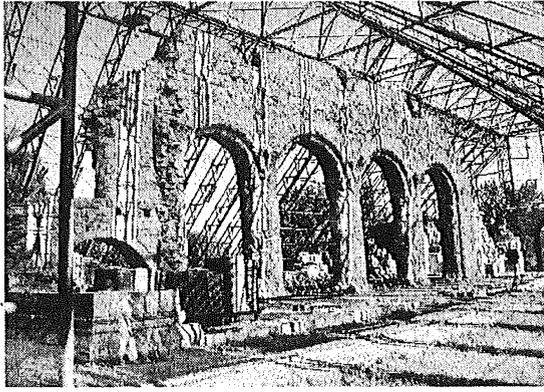
Figure 3 Old tapestry from Lom, Norway

Schools for home crafts were originally founded on national and local folk traditions influenced by the German Sturm und Drang movement. On the other hand, the study concluded that education in crafts, industry and home crafts had many didactical aspects in common like: operating close to practice, tacit knowledge based on experience and a close relation between an apprentice and her master in the specific field.

⁴ Dated to King Haakon VI who gave special rights to German shoemakers and guilds about 1370 AC. However, crafts as professions can be traced far back in history, for instance mentioned in the Bible, (2. Gen. 31.3).

⁵ Dated to Holmoy arbeidsskule established 1858 AC and Christiania Kvindelige Industriskole established 1875 AC.

⁶ Dated from a memory plate at the location where Hamar katedralskole used to be located in Hamar, Norway.



Figur 4 Hamar Cathedral school, 1153 AC

Finally, a third tradition, the academic schools based on a classical European tradition, became more related to the use of written text and knowledge formalized in books. These schools brought European upper class culture and values to Norway, and they became associated with classicism in architecture, art, design and lifestyle. They were later renamed Gymnasium in 1869, based on scientific subjects adopted from a university tradition. These schools were operating in Norway until 1976, when a new law of comprehensive secondary education was passed.

The academic schools were originally founded to recruit professionals to serve in church and government. Sociological research carried out in the 1970's concluded that these schools also more or less helped maintain these professionals as a permanent social class because most of them were recruited from the same social group, (NOU 1982: 3, s45). However, the Gymnasiums gradually got a broader academic range recruiting also candidates for higher education in professions like engineering, architecture and art history. Some gymnasiums started to give music as an elective course in the 1950's, and forming (art), later also media, became popular elective courses in the "reform" gymnasium from about 1970. These aesthetic related courses were kept more or less unchanged in general course from 1976, via the reforms in 1994 and until today. However, music was separated from home craft in 1994 and transferred to a new course for music, dance and drama. Home craft was continued as "formgiving", or arts and design. From this year 2006 "formgiving" will be an elective course more related to arts than to crafts. The main subjects will be visual art, design and architecture and art history. A remaining question is weather this course will be less practical than before, or more academic related to art history and architecture like it is in universities.

Crafts and industrial education originate from education within the guild system that developed in the cities, first in Europe and later also in Norway⁷. However, this was not only skilled training, but integrated in a social and economical structure, both locally and trans national. Their power was indirectly related to the products and services they were able to find customers to pay for. Firstly, the purpose of training and education was to assure quality, sales and to stay in business, (Ishikawa, 1985 and Deming, 1986). Secondly the purpose was to control the economy by controlling the recruiting of new candidates to the different crafts and trades. Finally it was also part of a social system controlling the norms and values the young apprentices had to be socialised into. When the guild system was abolished in Norway in 1866, the guild system was continued as voluntary unions related to crafts and industry professions, regulated by a special law. These unions continued the apprentice system on a voluntary, but collective base. This system still exists and control the vocational education, which since 1994 consists of 2 years in school and 2 years in business training⁸.

⁷ There seems to be a parallel development in Japan, may be due to the contact between Japan and Holland via Nagasaki, (Aakre, 2003).

⁸ In November 2005 there was a publicity from the crafts union who had sent a letter of concern to the new minister of education Øystein Djupedal, who himself is a printer: "The guilds leader Ossur Solheim is upset about the fact that training in practice still is given less value in our educational system"⁸. This statement was probably not only about relevant training, but also about power and control over the apprentice system and its priority in education.

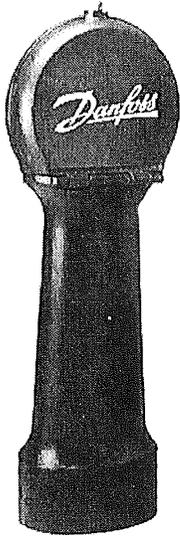


Figure 5 Design of the century

⁹A question sometimes asked, has been why and how the guild and apprentice system became integrated with education and training in schools? The study came to the conclusion that there are several factors. The industrial society became more specialized than the agrarian society, resulting in growing demand for general education and “bildung”. Modernisation followed by efficiency requirements and security standards also made it difficult to support all kinds of training in regular workshops. Therefore special workshops prepared for basic training were implemented. Gradually these workshops were transferred to a central school building. Some crafts were too small to support apprentices alone, and the local home crafts (husfliden) did not have any formal organisation at all. Therefore, this kind of training were located in schools from the beginning. In times of recession or depression, many companies could not afford to keep apprentices, and the government solved the problem by starting vocational schools as a strategy to create new jobs. New economical theories supported this strategy, and the human capital theory became an influential guideline, (Galbraith, 1970). Based on this theory there was, in some countries like Norway, made quite heavy national investment in education, especially vocational and technical

education, (Fizsimons, 1994). The political power also shifted in favour of a majority for social democracy who supported this strategy. A corporative system was established, integrating both political power, economic power and union power. This resulted in a national law of vocational and technical education in Norway in 1940, put into practice in 1945, (KUD, 1940). This law consisted of a comprehensive technical education from basic training in workshops, via technical college to technical university as a parallel to the academic schools. This system was systematically developed in broad scale and tempo until 1974, when a new law of comprehensive secondary education was passed and put into practice from 1976.

The idea of general education (bildung) integrated in vocational education, like arts and design in secondary schools, became an issue about 1960. It was both a political issue as well as a demand from the labour union. They claimed that vocational education should not just be instrumental training for doing a certain job, but also foster for a broader general education and cultural values in the true sense of “bildung”, (KUD, 1960)¹⁰. Therefore, the idea of general education meaning “bildung”, including aesthetic education as well, became an imperative mandate when a new commission for reforming secondary education was established in 1965. The result became combined courses integrating both general subjects and vocational subjects in one and the same course, (Østvold, 1987, s165). The later course formgivingsfag (arts and design) since 1994, is a typical successor of this program.

The ideological idea behind this program was to offer same opportunity for all social classes and to create a more equal society. However, many claimed this kind of integration between theoretical, practical and aesthetic subjects would not create a more equal society. This ideological conflict has been present for a long time. Some claimed that vocational education should be able to develop further, free from academic competition and snobby attitudes. As an

⁹ This design by Esco Kongsberg from 1937, was awarded a design price of the 20th century in 2003. It is typical for the technical (industrial) school era: Excellent design combined with industrial production.

¹⁰ Leif Skau, who later became head of the Norwegian Union of Metal Workers (NJMF) was one who argued in favour of this demand. Partly we have to understand this demand in the light of the fact that this generation did not have equal rights to choose the education they wanted, in spite of this many of them were highly skilled and had the intellectual capacity for almost any kind of studies.

alternative some wanted to make vocational education into a liberating project based on the Marxist idea of work and education. They wanted to continue education based on working class values and foster for true solidarity, cooperation and a collective society, (Bull, 1933)¹¹. The Conservative party, Hoeyre, argued for the same separation between academic education and vocational education, but of course from an opposite point of view. Jo Benkow from the Conservative party, who himself was a professional photographer and later became the president of the Parliament, Stortinget, argued that “the best for all parts would be to sort out students according to academic and practical interests”, (Benkow, 1985). Professor Gudmund Hernes, who later became a profiled Minister of Education in the 1990’s, did comprehensive research on power at that time. He came to a third conclusion: social classes are reproduced by the school system even if the students get the same education. He claimed that students from lower class families need special support, both from their own families as well as from the school system in order to cope with mates from upper class families, (Hernes, 1975).

The schools for home craft (husflid) used to be strictly separated between schools for boys and schools for girls. However, they were never regulated by a separate law. Therefore, by the end of the 1960’s, the schools for boys had been integrated with technical vocational high schools. Only the schools for girls were left as independent schools. In this period the schools for girls became more influenced by art, and moved away from an instrumental and technical tradition. The schools for girls from now on gradually emphasized art and aesthetic values, more than traditional work and production. In the 1970’s they wanted to be continued as independent schools, more like the folk high schools, but they were forced to integrate with the comprehensive high school system put into practice from 1976. They were succeeded as a special course for home crafts (husflid) and aesthetic subjects, also including music. But forming (general arts) now became the basic course based on topics like drawing, form, colour and art history. Based on these initial subjects, the students could choose to specialize in artistic textile, wood, metal and some few other activities.

To what extent did it become a real integration between theoretical, practical and aesthetic courses in this new form of comprehensive secondary school since 1976? Not very much. First of all, there were no integration between forming and music based on aesthetics, and not with industrial and craft courses either. For instance: almost similar textile courses like sewing were offered in two different courses without any interconnection. One course aimed at industrial jobs and the other branch aimed at general education related to textile arts.

However, for the first time a national general curriculum was implemented, valid for all courses aiming at general education (“bildung”) for all students. This curriculum emphasized culture and cultivation of the mind in general terms, and aesthetic values and activities were implemented to foster individual and personal development, (KUD, 1976a, p8-10). But the former schools and traditions were more or less continued within the new system without any real integration, socially or culturally. Arts, and especially design, became elements in many different and parallel courses. On the other hand: the integrated courses became an important factor. These courses offered both theoretical, practical and aesthetic subjects in a combined 2-year course that could be continued by a third year into college or university studies.

¹¹ Evard Bull d.e (1914-1986) was professor of history and foreign minister in the first Labour government led by Christoffer Hornsrud in 1927. Bull represented a more Marxist and class oriented position than the later historian, and also foreign minister, Halvdan Koht who formulated the strategy that gained majority support after ww2: “A common culture through social integration” .

Some claim the integration process was slowed down in the 1980's due to displacement of management and administrative power away from ministry of education to local committees, and especially the province administrations that were implemented as a third administrative level in the mid 1970's. The curriculum development were decentralized to more or less independent committees. The ministry of education gradually became an administrative agency with no real power, (NOU, 1982: 3). One consequence seems to have been a rapid growth in small specialized local courses with no national coordination. The students got a lot of choices, but in most cases they could not be continued into a certificate of completed apprenticeship, or a full high school diploma allowing the students to study at a college or university. Especially for the home craft courses (husflid), this became a big problem because they were never integrated with the apprentice system. And the "modern" students did not attend these courses to prepare for their future role as housewives any longer. Therefore the demand for a complete comprehensive general education for this group became stronger.

In 1982, a committee that had been doing a national study of power, presented their report, (NOU 1982: 3, s73). The leader was professor Gudmund Hernes, who later became minister of education in the 1990's. He claimed that power had to be centralized and transferred back to the ministries in order to improve the educational system. And so he did when he was elected in office. The independent committees were laid down and the ministry of education took over the control of the curriculum development. Supported by the parliament Stortinget, principles from management by objectives were implemented, both as a management system and as basic principle for how new curriculum should be designed, (KUF, 1991 and 1992a). This principles are quite similar to the curriculum theory once announced by Ralph Taylor, (Taylor, 1949) . Both the reform process and the curriculum process were controlled by the ministry of education, who also nominated the candidates to develop and write the new curriculum. These candidates were selected according to a corporative principle involving teacher union, government agencies, business organisations and workers unions. Business organisations and worker unions improved their power through this system during these years.

Formgivingsfag was set by the ministry of education to become a new course of study from 1994, consisting of two main groups of subjects: formgivingsfag (general arts) and crafts. Their history and traditions were quite different and to make a common basic curriculum for all of them turned out to be a quite difficult task. As mentioned before, the main structure of the curriculum was already set. The ministry also gave details by providing a list of words and concepts that was supposed to be implemented. The teachers in the committee probably had an advantage because they were already used to curriculum design through their education. The short time schedule probably also was one reason why the former plan composed of drawing form, colour and art history more or less was continued, in spite of the fact that many groups, especially among the crafts, were against this plan from the beginning.



*Figur 6
Design and
crafts.
Fashion
design, 2003*

The study found that another issue, university admission certification, also became a core issue separating the different groups that was supposed to be united in the new course *formgivingsfag*. Representatives from the crafts were worried that too many general subjects would weaken necessary skilled training in each of the crafts. Some crafts were already weakened because they were forced to integrate into broader and more general courses. Consequently they asked for an extra fourth year in the program instead of including general subjects. The strongest critique came from the graphic designers and gold smiths. Florists and hair dressers were also very critical, but more because they claimed there was too much time spent on drawing and abstract theory of form and colour that was not very relevant for their kind of training. They also feared that the apprentices would be less motivated for this kind of general studies, offering poor skills and less technical training. On the other hand, representatives from higher education, like art schools, teacher education, and art associations, were in favour of broader and a more general kind of education. Their motives were recruitment to higher education and the fact they wanted to give the specialized training in their own institutions. After a long and exhausting debate the ministry of education made a split decision: *Formgivingsfag*, as a “branch of art”, was continued as an integrated course in both second and third year towards a university admission certification. The crafts were split into special courses from second year in school and as a third year of training in business towards certificate of completed apprenticeship. This split system was unique, though it was also chosen as a possibility for agriculture and forestry course through a third year of environmental management, also named “green gymnasium”¹².

The basic subjects of the first year *formgivingsfag* became drawing, form, colour and art history, (KUF, 1994, s61). However, for several reasons the conflict did not calm. The professional differences are already elaborated. There were also differences related to ideology and power. The crafts and their history from the Gild system has a strong identity and tradition. They always were well organized and possessing quite a lot of political power. For instance: the union of graphical design worker is the oldest workers union in Norway. Founded in 1875, it became the pioneer of workers organisation and its first leader became the founder of both the first socialist news papers, *Socialdemokraten*, and the Labour party. This type of organisations also got more power through the corporative system Gudmund Hernes as a minister of education brought into more formal power in the 1990’s. Consequently, the graphical designers succeeded to make a split and a new course for Media design, also including photo was established. In this way they succeeded in creating a new type of education based on the digital revolution, controlled by the graphics design union.

On the other hand, the general trend since the 1970’s had been broader and more general courses¹³. This trend was continued as a provision when the preparation of the next reform process was started in October 2001. The head of this committee became Astrid Søgne, who had been a secretary for Gudmund Hernes in the 1990’s. She continued on more or less the same basic ideas when the final report was delivered in June 2003, (NOU 2003: 16). In the mean time there had been several shifts in government. In 2003 Kristin Clemet from the

¹² Some times referred to as “Green Gymnasium”.

¹³ This trend was actually started in the early 1970’s by the Schönberg committee. (NOU 1976: 10 and 31).

Conservative part, Hoeyre, held the position as minister of education and research. She was influenced by a neoliberal trend, but in most cases now supported also by the Labour party. In the new report the new committee, Kvalitetsutvalget, recommended eight main programs in stead of the fifteen that had developed since 1994. Formgiving or design were elements in three of them: design and formgiving, media and communication design and finally crafts. During the hearing also topics like “aesthetic subjects” and “Samii subjects” had been proposed, but they were put away during the process.

The minister of education and research, Kristin Clemet from the Conservative party, made some few changes to the proposals before she sent her own proposal to the Parliament in March the year after, (UFD, 2004). She suggested a huge program for design, media and crafts. In this program she also included Media design mentioned earlier, as well as old crafts like furniture designers, plumbers and many others. Formgiving was now split from crafts and vocational training, and transferred to the new program for general studies where she wanted the students to take a second foreign language and more mathematics as compulsory subjects. These proposals had been made in order to obtain a higher academic level by students who were supposed to continue their studies in universities.

The majority in the Parliament supported the proposition from the minister, but also gave the minister a chance to adapt the structure through discussions with business and workers union, (UFD, 2004b). These final discussions gave one important change: Media Design regained once again its independent status as a vocational program, leaving the rest of the courses be in the new program design and crafts. This new program will start from 2006, bringing together traditional crafts with modern design and aesthetic values. Formgiving was maintained, but as an academic program, now also called art. The main topics in this subprogram seem to be visual art, design and architecture, and art history. These topics seem to be the same in the elementary school subject, art and craft. This means they will be continued in all 13 years of elementary and secondary education. This seems to be a trend that could be observed in the first reform process during the 1990's, when “forming” was renamed art and craft (kunst og handverk). The emphasis on art also seem to be part of an international trend where Norway become more equal with other countries, like “Kunst” in the German gymnasium¹⁴, and art in Japanese high school¹⁵, (Aakre, 2003). May be its also part of adapting to a European tradition and the Bologna declaration of 1999¹⁶?

A new element implemented through the new reform from 2006, are five basic skills that are supposed to be focused in all subjects and on all levels from grade one to grade thirteen. That

¹⁴ Germany was chosen as a contextual reference in this study and I visited among others Lohrens Gymnasium in Schleswig where Kunst (Art) has a long tradition as an independent school subject. During my visit they did some special project combining Art and Technology. The Art group where in charge of the visual aspects of the project, and the Technology group took care of the functional parts, computer programming and mechanical construction. I found the term design Design primarily in Fachhochschule (college) and in programs for Handwerk (crafts).

¹⁵ Japan was also chosen as a contextual refrence in this study. Most Japanese high schools have Art in their program. I observed that Hokkaido Tokai High School (General course) end Toyohachi Technical High School (Vocational course) both had art of almost the same content. The main activities seemed to be drawing, picture, some sculpture and Architecture. Design was found in special schools like Sapporo School of Art, a five year program like a combination of German Gymnasium and Fachhochschule.

¹⁶ The Bologna agreement was written and supported by European miniwte4rs of Education in Bologna on June 19. 1999. Among others they agreed ”to construct a "European Higher Education Area" based on fundamental principles of university independence and autonomy to ensure that higher education and research in Europe adapt to the changing needs of society and advances in scientific knowledge”

means basic education from 2006 will be defined as thirteen years, comprising upper secondary schools as well. The five basic skills are: oral and written communication, reading not only a language course, but texts related to each subject, calculation related to subjects and information technology literacy. There were proposals about aesthetic skills too, but this topic was skipped in the final process.

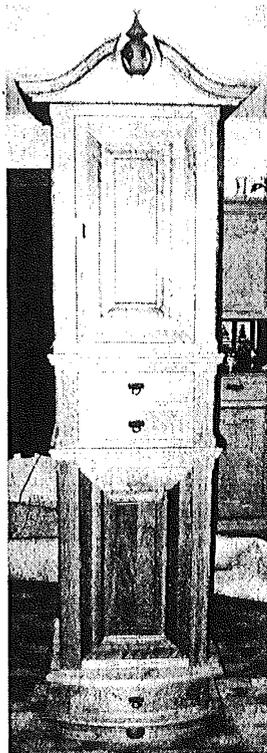


Figure 7 Design and crafts. Test piece by apprentice, 2004.

The majority in the parliament Stortinget, supported the proposals from the minister to add an extra module of mathematics and a second language as compulsory, not only English, as a requirement for entrance into university studies. These requirements may reduce the amount of time for elective courses like arts, and it will make it more difficult to transfer from vocational education, like design and crafts, into university studies. This issue has been central in all reforms since these possibility was implemented in 1965. At that time the arguments were to obtain better opportunity for all, equality between social groups and to change power relations in the society by recruiting from a broader population into higher education. The former minister of education, Gudmund Hernes, also argued that Norway as a nation need a higher percentage of the population to take higher education. From this point of view it is interesting to notice that the labour party, Arbeiderpartiet, supported the majority and the minister of education and research, Kristin Clemet from the Conservative party, (UFD, 2004b).

However, the socialist party SV and the central democratic party SP (former Farmers party), did not support these new limitations. These parties together with the Labour party (Ap) won the election in the fall of 2005. They decided to form the new government at Soria Moria. In the first declaration it was announced that completion of any course in secondary education would be allowed to enter university studies. However, it remains to see the reality of this decision. Norway already had differentiated criteria for entering university. Some studies like engineering and medical studies require extra modules of science. For instance, to study design at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, (NTNU), it is required to have extra modules of mathematics and physics. On the other hand, we also see an opposite trend: Some colleges, like Telemark University College, have successfully admitted students with vocational education and certificate of completed apprenticeship. This was in fact the basic idea of the first law of technical and vocational education of 1940, (KUD, 1940). However, it remains to see what will be the full effect of this new school reform from 2006.

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