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## 20 Designing, implementing, sustaining, and evaluating idiocultures for learning and development: The case study of the Fifth Dimension

Michael Cole

Of the multitude of contributions that Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı has made to our understanding of culture and human psychological development, I focus here on her achievements in the creation of development-promoting early childhood education. The work that I present does not approach in scale that which Professor Kağıtçıbaşı has accomplished in her native land of Turkey. However, I hope that the model underlying the project I describe will provide ways to think about two important issues facing developmentalists today. First, how to design development-enhancing environments for culturally diverse populations of children living in a wide variety of socio-ecological conditions. Second, how to create modes of higher education that will produce young practitioners who are capable of implementing and developing such environments.

### Designing education after school

The first peculiarity of the approach adopted in the project described here is that it is designed to take place in the *after*-school hours. Consequently, it presupposes the existence of a society where schooling is pervasive, if not universal, and cultural circumstances where children's after-school hours are not highly institutionalized; rather, they are characterized by a great variety of arrangements, including participation in unsupervised play, attendance at various kinds of youth clubs, formal or informal sports activities, and various cultural enrichment activities such as music, dance, art, and the like.

It also presupposes that the society in question has a variety of institutions of post-secondary education, designed to train experts in a variety of knowledge required for participation in advanced industrialized societies with their expectations of high levels of literacy and numeracy, and specialized technical knowledge. Such social conditions ordinarily co-occur and, to one degree or another, currently exist in many

