

Philosophy with children: accomplishments and projections

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**Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski, Faculty of Philosophy, Campus East, building 4, hall 500;
online: <https://join.skype.com/AFItIpekMH5>**

Friday, 14.10.

9.30 Registration

9.45 Opening

Welcome speech from **prof. Aneta Karageorgieva, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"**

Philosophising with children and contemporary education - I

**10.00 Assoc. prof. Alexander Stoychev, Medical university of Varna "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"
Throughout the history of Philosophy for Children in Bulgaria**

**10.30 prof. Aneta Karageorgieva, Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“
Teaching philosophy with children to philosophy students**

Based on my 30-years' experience in training teachers of philosophy, I outline four problems in my work with philosophy professionals. Those problems usually do not arise when teaching philosophy for children to primary school teachers or to non-philosophers. The first issue is with appeals to philosophical authority as a (misunderstood) way of argumentation, breaching the standard procedures for facilitating a discussion and using exercises, whether consciously or not, incorrect development of one's own discussion plans or exercises, and domination of discussion by long and diffuse speeches. I suggest some ways to overcome such problems with the idea to help my fellow teacher trainers and the students themselves.

**11.00 prof. Vesselin Dafov, Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“
The sessional being of Philosophy**

Having the great achievement of philosophy of the 20th century, that found its expression in the motto "To philosophize! / Philosophize!" ("To do philosophy") today we know, can and care about much more than just "philosophizing" and "doing philosophy", but also about the different levels and standards according to which "doing philosophy / philosophizing" can be realized. The transition from talking "about philosophy" to "philosophizing" itself is remarkable (as it is for any other academic discipline - mathematics, physics, philology, etc.) and once made presents us with a number of challenges.

However, all of them stem from the subjective nature and personal development of the philosophical college (community) that has already become-into-being. And this doing of philosophy in question can be distinguished in its various levels - of doing, of making, of performing, of executing, of discovering, of inventing, of creating, of creating, of designing, of projectizing.

This also determines the transition from not just a researching community (collegium) /"community of inquiry"/, but to a community of creating and even more to a designing, projecting community (collegium). The session, the sessional, is the leading phenomenon through which the subjective being of the project, thought of as a collegium of creators, is actualized. Thus, the session becomes the very actuality of projective philosophizing. And the participants turn into sessioners.

11.30-12.00 – discussion

12.00-13.00 – lunch break

Philosophising with children and contemporary education - II

13.00 Dr. Claire Cassidy, University of Strathclyde – Living with uncertainty through Philosophy with Children

On the news and in other media, or even when meeting people in the street, we are told repeatedly that we live in uncertain times. Perhaps this is a result of the pandemic, or the behaviour of rogue politicians, or the threat of war, or the catastrophe that is climate change. Uncertainty means that things are less than predictable, particularly in an age when so many have so much information at their fingertips, and this unsettles some people. Of course, these things are likely to lead to unpredictability and they are unpleasant, to say the least. Uncertainty is seen as particularly undesirable or problematic for children. However, uncertainty need not be a negative element in one's life, including the lives of children. This presentation will propose that practicing Philosophy with Children (PwC) may support children and their teachers to embrace uncertainty more positively.

**13.30 assoc. prof. Silvia Kristeva, South-West University "Neofit Rilski"
Philosophising as a natural ability**

13.50 Dr. Tanya Zhelyazkova-Teya. 30 Years of the First Author's Program "Me in This World - Philosophy for Kindergarten"

**14.10 Stefan Tonchev PhD, Faculty of Education, Trakia University - Stara Zagora
The applicability of the Philosophy for Children (P4C) methodology in the informal education of preservice teachers**

The aim of this paper is to present an example (and good practices) of using the "Philosophy for Children" (P4C) methodology in the formal and informal education of preservice teachers from the Faculty of Pedagogy of Trakia University in Stara Zagora in the academic discipline "Intercultural Education". The training was conducted through classroom (face to face) and extracurricular work with learning materials provided by a European project entitled "Developing capacities together: European

CSO-university networks for global learning on migration, security and sustainable development in an interdependent world” (InterCap). The good results reported from this training argue for the applicability in formal and non-formal pedagogical education and practice of the following innovative training methods: (1) Philosophy for Children (P4C); (2) Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry (OSDE); (3) Theatre for Living (T4L).

14.30 Karolina Nikolova, BA in Philosophy, Sofia University

Digitalization and popularization of PWC

(*PFE –Philosophy for everyone)

Philosophy with children is now more needed than it has ever been, especially in Bulgaria where the importance of philosophical matters is highly underestimated by the majority of people. The mentality of Bulgarians must be encouraged and stimulated in a way that the people themselves put their need to be educated properly above everything else. Having this in mind I am eager to find adherents for this journey and I am pleased to present ideas that could be helpful for the improvement and popularization of the major purpose of PWC’s activities. A good advertisement is only the beginning of a project that includes persuading Bulgarians of all ages of the meaningfulness of the philosophical activities such as those provided by PWC. Not only is the program successful, but its purpose has to be spread and broadened and, most importantly, it should be taken as if it’s every teacher’s own mission. Is there a better aim than one’s own improvement? We are in dire need of a direction that leads us towards each one of our own superpowers. The real revolution is the one that happens in our minds. That’s why it is of a great importance to realize and spread the necessity of engaging with PWC as we organize live events, concerts and free lessons in which the youngsters and their parents can be part of. Being involved in the new ways of thinking, students are going to form different points of view about philosophical and any kind of topics that they are interested in. As the development of technology increases we must use it to our advantage so that we promote the techniques that have been developed and implement them in real life projects. This would help build a brighter future. I will present to your attention ideas for a common site, which may help us with the integration of PWC and make it more profitable and intriguing.

14.50-15.20 **Discussion**

15.20-15.40 **Coffee break**

Experience and practice sharing

15.40 **Dr. Daniela G. Camhy, The Austrian Center of Philosophy with Children and Youth**

16.00 **Dr. Evelina Ivanova-Vardzhiyska, Sofia University**

Personal experience and philosophising

According to the "logic of scientific inquiry" in pragmatism, the process of scientific inquiry begins with a problematic situation in human experience. In philosophizing with children and young people as well, personal experience can be a motivating beginning for collaborative inquiry. Approaches to actualizing personal experience of philosophy with children and neosocratic dialogue such as narrating/sharing an experience, questions, texts and artworks as initial impulses for philosophizing in community will be

systematized and analyzed. Ideas will also be offered on how personal experience can also be integrated into the teaching of philosophy through particular teaching techniques or models for structuring the lesson....

16.20 Dr. Iliana Dimova, Cypress Kindergarten, Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

Good practice of using the “Philosophy for children” method in the process of religious education in preschool

Abstract: The practice is based on many years of experience in using the Socratic dialogue in order to critically perceive and make sense of biblical narratives in preschool age. Through a system and structure used in English primary schools to build a community of inquiry (Alison Shorer and Katie Quinn, P4C facilitators, SAPERE trained), we created a working model that helps children in kindergarten develop their critical and creative thinking, make sense of the characters’ actions, talk and seek answers by building on the dialogue in the children’s research community by following the progress of their collaborative thinking.

16.35 Dr. Nikoleta Nikolova, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

“Poetry, Puzzles and “Philosophy with Children”

In the time allotted for my presentation, I will present a practice that I have used for years with children and students in class - discussing philosophical questions and answers using poems, puzzles and philosophical problems. During the activities with children and students I use some examples from Andrew Day and Peter Worley’s books, which is actually where the idea of a similar lesson structure came from.

16.50 Tsvetelina Kalacheva, MA in Philosophy, Philosophy with Children facilitator.

Into the maze of children’s philosophy

17.10-18.00 – **discussion**

Saturday, 15.10.

Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski, Faculty of Philosophy, Campus East, building 4, hall 500;

Childhood and Philosophy

9.30 Assoc. Prof. Petya Bankova, PhD, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum – BAS.

Tell me what you celebrate so I can tell you who you are!

The report aims to present the author's research in the field of anthropology of childhood, placing a certain emphasis on the entry of children into a specific ethno-confessional environment through their direct or indirect participation in a certain element of festive culture. Based on ethnology-specific methods such as observation and case study, the mechanisms by which the individual from earliest childhood is drawn into the realm of „invented tradition“ will be presented.

The author will try to debate the question to what extent this model is effective when it is deprived of the freedom of philosophizing with children, and accordingly the right to choose.

9.50 Assist. Prof. Ilinida Markova, Doctor of Philosophy; Medical university of Varna “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov”

Philosophizing and Education or Why Reason Does Not Delegate Freedom

What is unfreedom? How to achieve freedom through awareness of unfreedom? The grounds of justice in the understanding of impossible freedom. The ideal of unfreedom.

Those features of human community are considered which presuppose and predispose to the understanding that the individual in a private or public context must accept its unfreedom rather than rebel against imposed regulations. Freedom can and should only be thought of as impossibility, as the opposite of man's being. The reason lies in the reasoning over the centuries and the choice of mankind - to sacrifice the individual for the sake of the survival of the community. Such “sacrifice”, like any other ritual in the natural world of animal species, requires rules, strict control and sanctioning of the offenders. Based on this social imperative, the conclusion is that the educational process of the adolescent can be diverse as an act or process, rich in all sorts of methods and means, containing a variety of techniques and play patterns, but it must lead to one common goal: the object of education to become aware of its dependence on its peers, to accept the rules they have created and, combining this discourse with his own uniqueness, to be able to offer society its personality just as it demands.

10.10 Dr. Trajche Stojanov, assistant professor, University „Goce Delcev“ – Stip

Wittgenstein's word vs. children`s world

The usual understanding of Wittgenstein's philosophy is the firm division on early Wittgenstein from the Tractatus and later Wittgenstein from the Philosophical Investigations. The "early Wittgenstein" was concerned with the logical relationship between propositions and the world, and he believed that by providing an account of the logic underlying this relationship, he had solved all philosophical problems. The "later Wittgenstein", however, supposedly rejected many of the assumptions of the Tractatus, arguing that the meaning of words is best understood as their use within a given language game. But there are no

„two Wittgensteins“, as there is no any sane individual divided in two completely different subjects. There is only one Wittgenstein, always concerned with the relation between language and the world. When in Tractatus he left one big part of the world outside language, all of his future efforts were directed to integrate that gap, to understand that world of silence. „Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent“ (7) - he says at the end of Tractatus. But this silence didn't stopped bothering him. Not even „the early Wittgenstein“. Because just before uttering that final judgment on the destiny of the world, Wittgenstein nevertheless knew „the sense of the world must lie outside the world“ (6.41). The world has sense, just it doesn't fit in the words. So, in this paper we will examine the child words and child worlds through Wittgenstein`s philosophy of language. What about children language and their structure of world, especially their sense of the world? Does children`s senselessness language means senselessness world? We have all heard children how construct meaningless sentences. Very often, for example many children frequently are using the phrase „yesterday, when I was adult“, which from merely linguistic perspective is not just incorrect, but also meaningless. But, in the endless children world it has perfect sense. Thus, doesn't learning the rules of language means learning regimes of truth in a Foucauldian sense? If Foucault was wright that power relationships in society are expressed through language and practices, than how we should up bring children through language in order not to narrow down their world, and to subside them to the regimes of truth embedded in the language norms of grown ups? Because children worlds are far more wider than Wittgenstein words.

10.30-10.45 **discussion**

10.45-11.00 **coffee break**

11.00 Radina Ilieva, PhD student at Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

“First encounters with philosophy and religion in children’s summer camp”

The report will present the author’s research on the so-called religious children’s camps organized and conducted in Bulgaria before 1944. In these camps takes place a very complex and at the same time poorly studied form of extra-familial group socialization of the children who visited them. The ethnological reading of the source base collected by the author from different types of sources shows the mechanisms by which children were introduced to the world of and philosophy. The author evaluates the experience of the past as an interesting premise for restoring and updating this “lost in time” dialogue between children and adults as a positive and will try to present his arguments in this direction.

11.20 Nayden Yotov, Philosophy teacher, “Prof. Nikolay Raynov” Waldorf School
Rituals in everyday life. Philosophy for teenagers.

Whether it is about group significance, repairing a social breach, or rebuilding society, values make up much of the meaning and purpose of rituals. Geertz presents this concept as "ethos" and "worldview," that is, how rituals give form and meaning to emotional and social life. Through the transmission of values, ritual provides a mechanism for sharing the group's worldview. However, the ritual serves as more than a mediator. Ritual also becomes a place where ideologies are conceived and developed. "Rituals do more than simply inscribe or display symbolic meanings or states of affairs, but instrumentally create states of affairs". Rituals serve as both the medium for the message and the place where the message is created. Although rituals exist in the realm of the everyday, they are extraordinary experiences. They constitute the element of socialization, can be transformative actions and be factors in the construction and communication of values.

This, as Steiner himself points out, is due to the three faculties in the ternary organism (teachers, parents, children), namely "thought", "feeling" and "statement of will" being brought into action and harmonious development. This is achieved with a well-balanced learning environment, and their development, in turn, creates conditions for such. Rituals are an inalienable part of such an ecosystem, in which the practice of anything with thought, feeling and conscious will lead to its living inclusion in the world order, and from there, there is only freedom. In summary, an active form of participant-observation in Waldorf Kindergartens and in events held in the Waldorf school community is facilitated by adopting Husserl's „natural attitude," which consists first in openness to direct experience; and secondly in actively recovering those experiences. The use of „phenomenological reduction“ situates the meaning of ritual symbols within the events of the educational environment. Phenomenological reduction enables grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss). That is, a theory that is derived from actual events and through the study of living subjects, not simply through literary themes or historical events.

11.40-11.50 – discussion

11.50-12.30 – lunch break

Философия с деца: трансформации и проекции

12.30 Martin Popovski, PhD, Philosophical Society of Macedonia - Philosophy with Children: The Macedonian Experience

The idea of PwC in Macedonia is relatively new. The first PwC lecture took place in 2013, and the first workshop with children in 2018. Although it started recently and thus specific methodological approach cannot be precisely defined, PwC in Macedonia is characterized by certain specifics that emerged from the circumstances and opportunities that were taken for its development. The most notable characteristic is using film as a stimulus for doing “Filmosophy with Children” as a part of the annual Philosophical Film Festival in Skopje, as well as some methodological solutions created for realizing online philosophical courses, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of this presentation is to offer insight into the beginnings, the progress, the methodological approach, and the challenges faced while introducing and implementing PwC in Macedonia in order to initiate exchange of experiences and ideas for its further development.

**12.50 Daniel Alexandrov, Phd student, Sofia University
Consultative Situations in Philosophy with Children**

**13.10 assist. Prof, Tsena Stoeva, Sofia University
30 years of Philosophy with children in Bulgaria**

In my presentation I consider some main points from the history and development of PwC in Bulgaria. I mention the early days of practicing, when our colleagues started to facilitate P4C sessions, 30 years ago. Then I consider the transformation from “for” into “with children” which embodies an idea of philosophizing as kind of a joint venture. Finally, I keep some attention to the transformations and projections that philosophizing with children itself incites: practices like philosophical counseling; individual work with pre-school and school students wherein, through PwC style of facilitation, they are being supported and encouraged with a view to educational achievements of their own.

13.30-14.30 Заключителна дискусия