

Call for Papers

The Plato Society of Zagreb and the Institute of Philosophy, Zagreb

invite submissions for the International Symposium:

Bildung und Paideia: Philosophical Models of Education

Hvar, Croatia October 12-17, 2013

The roots of philosophy, like the roots of education as we know it, lie with the Greeks. Western culture is in this regard "Hellenocentric" (Jaeger). Yet education and philosophy come to be in response to a universal human need – and the ideals toward which they aim are correspondingly universal. Since the appearance of Socrates on the stage of human history, the task of philosophy has been inseparably bound to the task of education, for which it provides the foundation: the quest for knowledge and understanding of ourselves and of nature, the formation of our physical, emotional and intellectual powers, the development and communication of skills required for the production of things useful and pleasing, the transmission of cultural norms and heritage, the cultivation of the excellence proper to our humanity, the civilisation and advancement of the human species. The Greek concept of *paideia* expresses the sum of these constituent elements and the complex whole of their interrelationships .

The concept of *paideia* is closely related to the German concept of *Bildung*. The term *Bildung* is more comprehensive and more complex than the English term "education", referring both to the process by which the human individual is formed and to the "outcome" of her education or *formation*. Knowledge and information alone do not produce *Bildung*, although the attempt to transfer and to internalise information comprises the most substantial portion of education today. Introduced into the German language by the philosopher and mystic Meister Eckhart, the idea of *Bildung* traces its roots to the Judaeo-Christian belief that human beings are created in God's image, as *Bild* or *Abbild* of the divine *Urbild* or archetype. The same idea is prefigured in the concept of "becoming like God", *homoiosis theoi*, as it appears in Plato, an idea transmitted to later periods by the tradition of Platonism and Neoplatonism.

The tension between type and archetype, like the tension between nature and the perfection of nature, and between the human being as part of the common order of nature and the human being as part of the intellectual order, is a determining factor in the history of education and culture. Throughout that history, biblical and mythical stories of the Fall of Man and its consequences for human nature and nature as a whole, especially Christian doctrine on original sin, are interwoven with rational attempts to overcome the opposition of nature and virtue in the realisation of God's image, adding to the complexity of education's historical and theoretical development.

The meaning and intention of the concept *Bildung* adapts and changes as understanding of what it means to be human adapts and changes, from Renaissance ideals of individuality and humanism, through the Enlightenment vision of practical, moral and social education of the free individual and his personality, from Idealist and Romantic ideals of the formation of the mind and heart of the self-conscious subject, to modern ideals of secular and civic formation.

In a period of economic crisis, when technological and scientific advances alone have proven incapable of resolving the most pressing issues confronting humankind, the topic of education and culture is emerging as one of central importance. Contemporary attempts to reduce educational outcomes to measurable competencies for the purpose of increased economic competitiveness and improvement of economically exploitable skills ("human capital") appear to oppose the ideals of *Bildung* and *paideia*. The tendency of government policy the world over to concentrate funding in the natural sciences, medicine and technology while reducing funding for the humanities – and whilst attempting, under the catch-all term of the "social sciences", to

mould study and research the humanities into something more like natural sciences, has created a dangerous imbalance in the area of education and training, skewing and undermining the original character of the humanities, as well as the naturally comprehensive aim and character of education itself. The present emphasis of educational policy on marketability of skills derails indispensable aspects of education like the cultivation of aesthetic and artistic ability and imagination, of metaphorical, symbolic and analogical thinking, the study of cultural heritage, and so undermines its own goal of promoting innovativeness and creativity. The symposium, like the International Symposium *Platonism and Forms of Intelligence*, Hvar 2006, thus addresses a question of fundamental importance to modern civilisation.

What is education and what is the task of education? How is education possible? What is its aim and purpose? Why do humans need to be educated and to educate, and how do they differ from other living beings in this respect? What role does philosophy play in education, and what role education in philosophy?

The international conference: *Bildung und Paideia: Philosophical Models of Education* invites submissions on these and related questions, including topics relevant, but not limited to, the following thematic clusters:

- philosophical models of education from Ancient times to the present
- education and perfection of human nature
- education, culture & civilization
- physical, emotional, and intellectual aspects of education
- types of judgment and formation of judgment
- knowledge, skill, morality, taste: the ends and means of education
- education and the arts
- motivation and freedom in the learning process
- competition and survival: evolution, education and human development
- formation of character, habits, conventions and their role in education
- education and human values
- individual and social aspects of education
- economic, political, and ideological aspects of education
- transmission and interpretation of knowledge, laws, mores, customs
- teaching and learning, their essence, possibility, reality
- the ideals of *Paideia* and *Bildung* vs. the aims of contemporary educational policy, theory and practice
- philosophy and education; philosophy in education; educational philosophy; philosophical education; philosophy as principle and method of education

Topics aimed at stimulating philosophical reflection through cross- and interdisciplinary exchange of ideas with the arts, sciences, humanities, empirical research, or educational theory and practice, are also welcome and encouraged.

Abstracts should be no more than 500 words. Presentations should be 30-35 minutes in length. 10-15 minutes will be allotted for discussion.

Doctoral students and young researchers may also submit a proposal for a poster session to be organized within the framework of the symposium.

The official conference languages are Croatian, English, French, German, and Italian. For the sake of our international guests we kindly ask that contributors wishing to present their papers in Croatian prepare a translation of their paper into one of the other conference languages to be provided to participants in advance of the symposium, or otherwise arrange for interpretation of their paper during their presentation.

All speakers are kindly asked to observe the same time constraints regardless of their language of presentation.

Deadline for submission of abstracts is March 15, 2013.

The symposium will be held in the historically and culturally rich surroundings of the City of Hvar on the island of Hvar.

Abstracts may be submitted by e-mail or regular post to:

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