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Teaching Philosophy

IN EUROPE AND
NORTH AMERICA

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Teaching Philosophy
in Europe and
North America

Background

On 14, 15 and 16 February 2011, Italy hosted the High-Level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Europe and North America, co-organized by the Italian National Commission for UNESCO and the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO). The meeting was held at the Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione IULM, Milan.

The meeting was open by Professor Giovanni Puglisi, President of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO, and Dean of the Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione IULM. It brought together over seventy participants, including delegates from twelve countries in the region concerned: Albania, Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, France, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Spain and Turkey. Also present were a number of philosophers, inspectors and philosophy teachers at primary, secondary and higher education levels, as well as members of philosophy associations and students.

This publication, produced by the UNESCO Secretariat, is based on the study published in 2007, *Philosophy, a School of Freedom – Teaching Philosophy and Learning to Philosophize: Status and Prospects*. It reflects the debates and discussions evolving from the Milan meeting which made it possible to expand on the data and challenges originating from the 2007 study. Recommendations at regional level, drawn up and backed by the participants, were addressed to Member States, National Commissions for UNESCO and the European Commission – Directorate-General for Education and Culture, philosophy teachers and practitioners, and members of civil society, as well as UNESCO. The complete text of these Recommendations is reproduced on pages 76-83 of this publication.

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- the Italian National Commission for UNESCO and Milan's Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione IULM for its unwavering support and warm hospitality in the organization of this event;
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- delegates from participating countries for their very active and fruitful commitment;
- philosophers and representatives of philosophy associations and institutions for their substantial and constructive contributions to the debate;
- Association des Groupes de Soutien au Soutien (AGSAS), Collège International de Philosophie (CIPh), Department of Public Instruction of the Canton of Bern (Switzerland), Fribourg University (Switzerland), Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Federation, International Association for Philosophy Teachers (AIPPh), International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (ICPHS), International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC), International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP), Organizing Committee of the International Philosophy Olympiads 2009 (Helsinki), Philolab Association, Society (University of Quebec in Montreal, Canada), Southern Federal University (Rostov-on-Don, Russian Federation), State University of Moscow (Russian Federation), UNESCO Chair in Studies of Philosophic Foundations of Justice and Democratic as well as the authors of the boxes, for their contribution in drawing up this document;
- UNESCO Venice Bureau for its support.

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Foreword

The High-Level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Europe and North America that the Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione IULM hosted in Milan from 14 to 16 February 2011 has connections with two continuing themes. The last in a series of meetings organized by UNESCO following the publication of *Philosophy, a School of Freedom* in 2007, it followed regional meetings held in Tunis (Tunisia), Manila (Philippines), Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic), Bamako (Mali) and Port Louis (Mauritius). Thus, with a look at Western societies, it completes an exceptional series of exchanges between educators, academics and policy-makers aiming to promote the teaching of philosophy around the world. It also follows up the ideas of World Philosophy Day, organized at Palermo by the Italian National Commission for UNESCO in November 2008. On each occasion, UNESCO and the Italian authorities wanted to reaffirm the essential role that philosophical reflection plays in fulfilling the basic mission of the Organization. Reflection and philosophical education are seen as essential tools to recover the culture of dialogue and mediation at the heart of UNESCO's existential and civic vision of sustainable development, thus of a hard-won peace for which our world now, more than ever before, sees the need. These happy occasions for intellectual cooperation were made possible through an excellent working relationship with Mme Moufida Goucha, responsible for the Philosophy programme at UNESCO, and her entire team, whom I would like to congratulate.

Our societies today have a growing need for philosophical education. Increasing social, cultural and religious diversity brings about a profound transformation of everyday life. It involves learning to coexist with men and women versed in other traditions and customs, other beliefs, other languages. We have to know how to coexist with new neighbours who eat, speak and dress in different ways. Philosophy as *paideia* fulfils the crucial function of education in this new complexity. By that I mean the ability of philosophy to train citizens and more generally to educate people who can relate to a social reality and a cultural imagination marked by an increasing plurality.

This assumes at least two kinds of philosophical training. On the one hand, we must develop a better understanding of different traditions and cultural heritage, allowing future generations to feel immediately at home everywhere and in any social context: a 'mundialization of homeworld', to use a satisfying expression of the philosopher In-Suk Cha, which is central to integration into the social, cultural and economic factors that lie ahead in coming years. Without this ability to live in a global world, our children will be condemned to progressive marginalization and impoverishment, both cultural and economic. But we must also teach openness towards one another, as philosophy can, an inclusive attitude that does not consider the other, being different, as a *teras*, a monster that should be avoided and if possible driven from the social space, but rather as the bearer of values, professional and personal experiences that cannot fail to enrich our own experience in a dynamic of reciprocal integration. It is in this ability to think, recognize and accept otherness that the critical function of philosophy lies, in its ability to place us in an open ontological dimension, rather than in a closed, inward-looking system of values.

Faced with the fairly recent inward-looking tendencies increasingly evident within Western societies, philosophical education is a powerful antidote to all forms of exclusion, racism and xenophobia. It makes it possible to shape, at least in part, the attitudes of new citizens along with their ideas. And if philosophy has always aimed to educate, to be a *paideia* that invests and forms this complex unit of the person, as it has done throughout history, it must carry out this function at an early age. From childhood, philosophy can also introduce the practice of discussion, dialogue and interaction which, if it fails to eliminate conflicts, will teach our children to anticipate and overcome them using methods that are not authoritarian, prevaricating or violent.

It is precisely because of this educational and cultural power that we must also be careful not to attribute a saving grace to philosophy that it does not possess. Philosophy always has a social effect – it is, so to speak, always committed – but history teaches us that tyrannies have often used it. Freedom is not philosophy's destiny, but its mission and responsibility. This is also the issue raised by the UNESCO study that launched the series of meetings ending in Milan: knowing how to manage philosophical education, so training the trainers to avoid the risk of indoctrination, to which the beneficiaries of philosophical practices and teachings may be more vulnerable as they are younger and more receptive. This is a major responsibility for UNESCO and its partners, their specific contribution to the development of thought and philosophical education.

From this intellectual space that is unique to UNESCO, we should reaffirm the indispensable nature of philosophical education for the democratic evolution of our societies. Philosophy is not a niche culture, but an integral part of free, open and critical citizenship. As citizens even before we are philosophers, it is incumbent on us to assert the positive role that philosophical education plays in our increasingly global world.



Professor Giovanni Puglisi

President

Italian National Commission for UNESCO

Preface

When we address the question of philosophy at UNESCO, we cannot help but recall the famous sentence in the preamble to its Constitution, which states that ‘Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.’ Indeed, since 1945, this fundamental principle has set the tone by putting emphasis on the phrase ‘the minds of men (and women)’, thus inviting men and women to reflect and to question – in other words, to philosophize.

Philosophy, and in particular philosophy teaching, has never stopped generating debate, as no one is indifferent to this discipline. But one thing everyone agrees on is that philosophy is unique in terms of its methods and principles, the long-term result being its contribution to the fight against ignorance, dogmatism and fanaticism.

The only question is how to capture the attention of young people, who today are increasingly caught up in, even fascinated by, the new information and communication technologies. Some philosophy teachers and analysts even talk about the urgent need to reinvent the way the discipline is taught. What can we do to make philosophy appealing? What can we do to encourage young people to adopt the art of philosophizing which allows them to think, speak to others and link forms of knowledge philosophically?

Thinking philosophically first means learning to be daring and question one’s own opinions in order to unceasingly refine the criteria of knowledge.

Speaking philosophically means learning to build an intelligent, convincing argument during exchanges with others, whether in peacetime or not.

Linking forms of knowledge philosophically means providing real opportunities to introduce an interdisciplinary approach to teaching. ‘Our way of breaking down knowledge produces global ignorance,’ says the philosopher Edgar Morin.¹ Philosophy, in fact, can help to link together forms of knowledge in an encompassing and critical way.

¹ Edgar Morin, *La Voie. Pour l’avenir de l’humanité*, 2011, p.145.

For this reason, UNESCO has continued to promote philosophy teaching by holding a regional meeting, the sixth of its kind, for Europe and North America. A recurring question concerning the role of philosophy teaching has been addressed, especially in a context where democracies are often perceived as a mere formality, where intercultural issues sometimes raise questions of identity, or where economic and financial difficulties cause considerable disquiet.

Although not so long ago the thinking went that in such a context it was better to steer teaching towards more pragmatism and professionalization, now it is thought to be crucial to reassert the need to put Humanity back at the heart of our concerns. Indeed, no one questions that economic and financial crises are above all crises of society, identity and, in the end, politics ... and that learning about rational reflexivity through philosophy can no doubt help to decipher the complex issues that arise from them.

Throughout the Milan meeting, we noted the extent to which the European teaching profession is committed to defending philosophy, and in particular the transmission of philosophizing skills, especially to children. In our shared desire to promote and defend philosophical thought, we hope that the regional recommendations set out in this publication will be well received by decision-makers and that philosophy teaching will be reinforced in Europe and North America. As we unite our efforts in such work, let us recall the words of eminent anthropologist Margaret Mead: 'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.'



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Introduction

The High-Level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy devoted to the Europe and North America region brings to a close the series of meetings launched by UNESCO in 2009 to promote the teaching of philosophy throughout the world. The purpose of these meetings is twofold: (1) to take stock of the current state of philosophy teaching in the different countries involved and to consider the challenges this teaching faces at the present time; (2) to draw up recommendations for the benefit of the participants, notably the public bodies responsible for school and university education, with the aim of either introducing philosophy into the curriculum or improving teaching where this discipline is already on offer.

With this purpose in mind, the meeting on the Europe and North America region aims to address several distinct sets of questions. It takes into account as much data and as many earlier studies as possible, consider contemporary problems in the light of whatever knowledge is already available, and identify the many pedagogical innovations in the field of philosophy in Europe and North America, at the same time giving them more exposure. The present document aims to raise some questions that are central to an examination of the teaching of philosophy in these two regions. Nevertheless, it is important to mention that based on the current state of philosophy teaching accessible to UNESCO, more data are available on Europe than on North America.

Questions relating to the history of philosophy in Europe

As far as philosophy teaching is concerned, the situation varies greatly in both Europe and North America. How do the different conceptions of the role of philosophy, which through their very diversity have left their mark on the continent of Europe through the ages, stand in relation to one another today?

As Jürgen Hengelbrock has argued in a study commissioned by UNESCO in 1993 on the status of philosophy in Europe², historically speaking, ‘despite its common roots in medieval schools, philosophy is not taught in the same way throughout Europe ... We observe two clearly identifiable groups of countries, and within each group there are some fairly strong similarities. There are, on the one hand, countries where philosophy teaching is firmly embedded in the system as a well-established tradition, as in Spain, France, Italy and Portugal; and, on the other, countries like Germany, Austria, the Benelux countries, Denmark and Great Britain, where the teaching of philosophy has a hard time getting itself onto the timetable in secondary schools or staying there, or where it is not represented at all.’³ Whether philosophy is taught or not at secondary level seems largely to have depended on the history of religious strife in the various countries. The intellectual and religious upheavals that were the result of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries played a major part in this history.⁴

2 Raymond Klibansky and David Pears (eds), *La philosophie en Europe*, Gallimard/UNESCO, 1993. French only.

3 Jürgen Hengelbrock, ‘L’enseignement de la philosophie: périmé ou indispensable?’ [The Teaching of Philosophy: an anachronism or a necessity?], in Klibansky and Pears (eds), *ibid.*, pp. 683–84 (unofficial translation from French).

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 684–85

It is essential to remember that, as for defining the purpose and the aim of teaching philosophy, positions have always differed – and still do – according to the different education systems in place. This is especially true of countries where no philosophy has been taught, but where secondary pupils attend classes in moral education – religious or otherwise. Can courses in philosophy be regarded as identical to courses in moral education, and should they? Do these two types of course really have the same goal? The same questions also arise with regard to the relationship between courses in philosophy and in civic education. The study *Philosophy, A School of Freedom*⁵, published by UNESCO in 2007, examines this question by drawing on several case studies, notably those of Belgium and Germany.⁶ Underlying the debate is the following question: what specific kind of knowledge and methodology does the teaching of philosophy provide for citizens that is really useful, both practically and intellectually, in helping them to live their lives? In the final analysis, therefore, the challenge facing the teaching of philosophy is a highly political one: ‘The fact that the teaching of philosophy fares so differently is basically the result of the differences of opinion that divide Europe on the nature of democracy. Instruction in philosophy will hardly be given the same treatment in a consensus democracy Anglo-Saxon style as in a country with a secular, republican tradition’⁷, Jacques Muglioni concluded in the 1993 UNESCO-commissioned study.

Social questions: the role and the place of the human sciences in the education of young people today

The place of philosophy in education and the role it should play have been, and still are, open to debate, a debate that extends well beyond the educational field. Ultimately, the choice of whether to teach philosophy or not, particularly in secondary schools, involves a certain vision and conception of a school’s mission regarding education and training. For a number of years now, European countries have shown a growing tendency to make their education more technically relevant and a marked tendency to give a more practical dimension to secondary education generally. This change of emphasis is visible not only in the proliferation of technical subjects in secondary schools; not even the so-called humanities have resisted the trend of placing a premium on the more practical subjects. In the later stages of secondary school – when the teaching of philosophy has historically taken place – the training of the mind is sometimes delegated to disciplines that focus on action, on contemporary society or politics even. There is nothing wrong with this tendency as such. It does seem, however, to be based on the illusion (found also at university level) that a better training of the mind can be achieved by focusing on substantive content rather than on developing students’ critical abilities. It is as though, somewhere along the line, a mechanism with the function of convincing, based on the nurturing of logical faculties, independent judgement and critical thinking, had been replaced by a concept of teaching as cultivating the power to persuade.⁸

In such a context, the teaching of philosophy can be called into question or at least given less class time. The question then becomes: ‘Is it really useful to know about and write essays on traditional

5 *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 2007.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001541/154173e.pdf>

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 53–55.

7 Hengelbrock, *op. cit.*, p. 769 (unofficial translation from French).

8 *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

areas of philosophy in European societies where, to some extent, we are seeing the rational exercise of thought called into question in favour of types of discourse belonging, increasingly, to interpretive systems that are rooted in cultural preoccupations?’ Back in 1993, some experts consulted by UNESCO observed that ‘education has also been affected by the crisis of reason that is visible to a greater or lesser degree among the different nations of Europe: in this context, the teaching of philosophy is the first to suffer. Indeed, it is perfectly clear that mathematics, grammar and a foreign language should be taught and that provision should be made for physical education. It is far from evident, on the other hand, that philosophy should be taught. It all depends on the role that is attributed to reason and on how effective we think it is in improving the human condition and in serving as common ground between individuals and between peoples.’⁹

However, many people are now speaking out to emphasize the fact that, in the sociocultural context of present-day Europe, the population generally and that of schoolchildren in particular is extremely diverse, which means that teaching and educational approaches must be adapted accordingly. Given its dialectical and argumentative nature, which is dependent on the use of concepts that are logically comprehensible to everyone, philosophy seems to offer real advantages for the creation of conditions conducive to dialogue. It also contributes to the all too rare experience of peaceful coexistence in which disagreement and socio-cognitive conflicts about ideas do not degenerate into emotional arguments, and where willingness to listen and respect for difference are highly valued.¹⁰ Ultimately, a course in philosophy, ‘as a reflection on principles, is sufficiently abstract – and therefore discreet – to enable cultures to meet while avoiding the shock of a violent clash in which the impossibility of dialogue stems from the absence of a common language or conceptual framework of reference.’¹¹ Seen in these terms, a course in philosophy would not only play a part in intellectually shaping the mind but would also help substantially to build and strengthen social cohesion in multicultural societies.

Geopolitical questions: from division to union

There are two questions to consider here: (1) How has the teaching of philosophy changed since the end of the Cold War? and (2) To what extent is European integration influencing education policy in general, and conceptions of teaching philosophy, moral values, ethics and religion in particular?

The first question relates to a relatively recent geopolitical context which for a long time informed not just political positions, but also intellectual and cultural habits in the countries of Europe and North America. How, then, was the transition from one model to another engineered, that is to say the transition from a situation in which there was compulsory instruction in civics and university departments of philosophy within a socio-political framework that was homogeneous and clearly defined, to philosophy courses that dealt with a plurality of systems of thought, using a critical approach? The 1993 UNESCO survey on the state of philosophy in Europe looked at the relevance of introducing the teaching of philosophy, but also stressed the various methods of training philosophy teachers and the conditions that would allow the creation of philosophy departments and the appointment of staff whose task would be to put together suitable courses. These were the sort of

9 Hengelbrock, op. cit., pp. 674–75 (unofficial translation from French).

10 *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, op. cit., p. 15.

11 Hengelbrock, op. cit., p. 760 (unofficial translation from French).

fundamental issues that would, for some time, determine the development of philosophy teaching in several countries in Eastern Europe: 'In a world which is dismantling its barriers and which consumerism and the profit motive are making more uniform, emphasis should be placed on individualizing the socialization of people. ... How should we articulate "being" and "having", the global and the local?'¹² This is one line of questioning that the 2011 meeting on the teaching of philosophy in Europe aims to revisit.

The second question – regional integration within the European Union – arises out of a recent development that is likely to increasingly influence the order of priorities in certain key areas, including education. In 2007, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) published *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning – A European Reference Framework*,¹³ the aim of which is to establish a framework for future community action on educational matters. Philosophy teaching is not mentioned in this document and many questions can be raised as to how such teaching could or should be integrated into this general framework.

First of all, the competence-based approach raises many controversies, in particular with regard to philosophy teaching. However, if this pedagogical approach is to be considered, as is the case in the above-mentioned document, it is interesting to notice that among the eight key competences highlighted in the document are 'social and civic competences', which include the 'ability to communicate constructively in different environments, to show tolerance, express and understand different viewpoints', as well as 'critical and creative reflection.'¹⁴ In this context, can it be understood that philosophy teaching should contribute to develop such competences? Would this strategic orientation provided by the European Commission be the framework in which philosophy teaching could or should be integrated? If this is the case, how should this teaching be concretely articulated? And how should philosophy be concretely articulated within the 'knowledge triangle' model formulated by the European Council that gears growth and employment to education, research and innovation? According to this model, 'new ideas and innovations are born from the coming together of different kinds of knowledge and through the curiosity-driven search for new knowledge. This is why, in addition to science and technology, it is crucial to recognise that quality education and research in social sciences and humanities play an important role in innovation.'¹⁵

12 Attila Beckskehazi and Imre Marton, 'Hongrie – La philosophie confrontée à la recomposition du paysage politique' [Hungary – Philosophy faced with a reconfiguration of the political landscape], in Klibansky and Pears (eds), op. cit., p. 219 (unofficial translation from French).

13 *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning – A European Reference Framework*, Brussels, DG EAC, 2007, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ll-learning/keycomp_en.pdf (accessed 24 January 2011). See also *Key Competencies. A Developing Concept in General Compulsory Education*, Brussels, Eurydice, 2002. http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/compulsary-edu-oth-enl-t05.pdf (accessed 24 January 2011).

14 DG EAC, op. cit., pp. 9–10. More generally, civic competence is defined as being 'based on knowledge of the concepts of democracy, justice, equality, citizenship, and civil rights, including how they are expressed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and international declarations and how they are applied by various institutions at the local, regional, national, European and international levels. It includes knowledge of contemporary events, as well as the main events and trends in national, European and world history. In addition, an awareness of the aims, values and policies of social and political movements should be developed. Knowledge of European integration and of the EU's structures, main objectives and values is also essential, as well as an awareness of diversity and cultural identities in Europe' (p. 10).

15 Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 26 November 2009 on developing the role of education in a fully-functioning knowledge triangle (2009/C 302/03), p. 4. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:302:0003:0005:en:PDF> (accessed 24 January 2011).

It is clear that the global question is about the place of social and human sciences as a whole in the European strategic framework. As far as European Union countries are concerned, the role to be assigned to the teaching of the social and human sciences disciplines in general, and to philosophy in particular, cannot be decided without reference to the Lisbon Strategy, which was launched by the European Council in 2000. This strategy is aimed at making the European Union 'the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010 capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion and respect for the environment'¹⁶ In the light of such an aim, we might well ask to what extent the member countries of the European Union are encouraged to give importance to the teaching of philosophy, especially since 2005, when 'in order to provide a greater sense of prioritisation, the relaunched Strategy was focused on growth and jobs'¹⁷. The question still needs answering, therefore, as to how, on the one hand, concern for economic growth can be reconciled in a fruitful and balanced way with the humanist and critical values promoted by philosophy; and how, on the other, the practical application of the general framework for education and training at the European level will tie in with the various frameworks and priorities at national level.¹⁸

Questions relating to international cooperation on education

At the present time, it is probably the various higher education institutions in Europe and America that are the most actively involved in exchanges among students, researchers and teachers, at both regional and international levels. European and American universities do indeed attract large numbers of students and researchers from around the world. In fact, the European Community is seeking to further develop its policy of promoting mobility, which is contingent on the creation of a system for harmonizing degrees and exchanging information¹⁹ and encourages periods of study abroad, both in Europe itself and in other parts of the world.

Hence, the Community action programme for education and lifelong learning consists of several sectoral programmes which will facilitate the circulation of students and teachers of different levels of education both in Europe and in other regions, such as the Mediterranean area, North America, Latin America and Asia.

Beyond question, the teaching of philosophy can only benefit, and significantly so, from this framework of academic cooperation at international level. It strengthens both intellectual solidarity among students and the exchange of good practices and innovatory teaching practices between teachers and academics. In the area of philosophy, teacher training is an uphill struggle for many countries. The exchange programmes, set up by European and American universities, can therefore be a useful way of developing North-North and North-South cooperation.

16 Lisbon Strategy evaluation document – Commission staff working document, Brussels, 02.02.2010, SEC(2010) 114 final, p. 2. http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/pdf/lisbon_strategy_evaluation_fr.pdf (accessed 24 January 2011).

17 Ibid.

18 The 2010 joint progress report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Education and Training 2010 work programme (18 January 2010) states that: 'Policy cooperation at European level in the areas of education and training has, since 2002, provided valuable support to countries' educational reforms and has contributed to learner and practitioner mobility across Europe. Building on this approach, and fully respecting Member States' responsibility for their education systems, the Council endorsed a Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (ET 2020) in May 2009' (p. 3). <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/fr/10/st05/st05394.fr10.pdf> (accessed 24 January 2011).

19 See Bologna Process, in *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, op. cit., p. 132.

Pedagogical questions: innovation in the learning process

In the 2007 UNESCO study, two types of innovation in the area of the teaching and popularization of philosophy are given special prominence. On the one hand, the new philosophical practices involving children in primary schools are the subject of research and experiments in a growing number of countries throughout the world. Europe and North America have not been found wanting in this respect. On the other hand, the various philosophical practices outside the classroom are becoming increasingly popular, whether in the form of ‘philosophy cafés’, or as philosophy in the workplace, in prisons or even in psychiatric hospitals, etc.

Within the context of the meeting on the teaching of philosophy in Europe and North America, the emphasis is more on the first kind of innovation, philosophy in primary-school teaching. Unquestionably, this appears paramount for the development and renewal of the subject itself and of the way it is taught. It would be difficult not to agree that a critical mind and a culture of questioning are of most benefit to individuals if they are stimulated and sustained from an early age. This is precisely the basic premise for the development of philosophy for or with children from primary age onwards: to encourage young people to engage with one another in rational discussion, to teach them to develop a viewpoint as a group, from discussions in which meaning is generated by exchanges between group members. In this way, we shall be contributing to their balanced development, anchored in a peaceful and stimulating form of interaction between the individual and society; and in the process, we shall be laying the foundations for the considered and creative contributions they will have to make in respect of the challenges confronting the society in which they will live. This is the sense in which learning to philosophize can give a practical slant to the European Community’s objective of fostering the ‘social and civic competences’ referred to earlier.

Theories about philosophy for children first emerged in the United States, largely through the work of Matthew Lipman during the 1970s. Today, numerous initiatives in the form of practical research and the production of teaching materials and textbooks are in evidence in several European and North American countries, either as the individual projects of interested teachers, as the ventures of national or international associations, or as official, state-sponsored projects. They are all innovations that improve the quality of education, which makes it appropriate to stress that the ‘knowledge triangle’ concept promoted by the various texts of the European Council must not neglect the fact that the components of this triangle – education, research and innovation – ‘should mutually support and feed into each other’.²⁰ In the light of the experiments and research into the practices involving philosophy with children, the approach can be seen today as a real ‘innovation’ that is likely to contribute to the improvement of ‘education’ and to the shaping of able and responsible individuals. As the 2007 UNESCO study puts it, ‘The impact of philosophy on children may not be immediately appreciated, but its impact on the adults of tomorrow could be so considerable that it would certainly make us wonder why philosophy has until now been marginalized or refused to children.’²¹

20 Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, of 26 November 2009 on developing the role of education in a fully-functioning knowledge triangle, p. 5.

21 *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, op. cit., p. 4.

Teaching Philosophy at

pre-school and primary levels

A good basic education does not perceive schools as places for the mere transmission and assimilation of knowledge, but rather for questioning and as ‘the best time to learn to learn.’²² The 1996 Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, chaired by Jacques Delors, stated that ‘it is at the stage of basic education (which particularly includes pre-school and primary-school teaching) that attitudes towards learning are forged that last all throughout one’s life’.²³

For several years now, Philosophy for Children (P4C),²⁴ or more broadly the idea of introducing philosophy as a school subject and of developing philosophical enquiry, has inspired growing curiosity and enthusiasm throughout the world, as it fills a major gap in education today. Indeed, the importance of stimulating reflection and questioning from a very early age, and doing so within the framework of a quality basic education, is increasingly acknowledged. The idea of learning to philosophize in schools is based on the premise that children only realize their full potential in school when they are encouraged to take active and deliberate steps to search for answers to the questions they ask about existence from very early on. Children are actually perceived as being ‘natural philosophers’ by virtue of their extensive and radical questioning about existence. The idea of learning to philosophize at school has given rise to very diverse experiments throughout the world, in an effort to take this philosophical uniqueness of children into account.

UNESCO makes a resolute commitment to encourage ‘learning to philosophize’ in schools

The teaching of philosophy to children and their learning to philosophize had already been the subject of a UNESCO study in 1998,²⁵ which had stressed that it was possible, and even necessary, to present philosophical principles in simple language that would be accessible to young children. Reflection on this matter was taken still further in UNESCO’s 2007 publication,²⁶ which reported on current discussions on the subject of learning to philosophize at school. Airing the most urgent questions raised by this particular debate opens up avenues of thought that are very illuminating in terms of the kind of education we want for our children. The basic issue raised by P4C concerns the very meaning we wish to give to tomorrow’s schools: they will need to be places that foster independent thought, thoughtful citizenship and the full development of each child. If it is the task of education in general to provide children with ‘the maps of a complex world in a perpetual state of agitation’, philosophy can probably be the ‘compass enabling one to navigate’²⁷ in that world.

In Europe and North America, much new work is being undertaken in this direction, either by individual teachers or by institutions, or else by the relevant education institutions or authorities. In addition, numerous research projects are under way, sponsored by universities and specialist institutes.

22 *Learning: The Treasure Within*, Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century, Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 1996, p. 131.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 125.

24 This term was coined by Matthew Lipman. See in this publication ‘Approaches and practices regarding philosophy for children’, p. 20.

25 *Philosophy for Children*, Meeting of Experts, Report. Paris, UNESCO, 26–27 March 1998.

26 *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 2007

27 *Learning: The Treasure Within*, op. cit., p. 91.

Box 1 - Advantages and challenges of philosophy for children

1) Thinking for oneself

As it concerns existential, ethical and aesthetic questions, thinking for oneself presupposes a thought process that formulates problems, concepts and rational arguments. Beginning this learning process as early as possible will encourage children to think meaningfully and profitably about the human condition.

2) Educating for reflective citizenship

Learning to think for oneself develops freedom of judgement in future citizens, protecting them from ideological indoctrination and persuasive advertising. Learning to philosophize through the discussion of ideas encourages rational confrontations with others in the quest for truth, an ethical and intellectual prerequisite for genuine democratic debate.

3) Helping the child's development

Learning how to think reflectively is crucial to the construction of a child's or an adolescent's personality. It is an opportunity for them to experience that they are thinking beings; and this boosts their self-esteem and helps them to grow as human beings by experiencing disagreement in discussion in an atmosphere of peaceful coexistence, which raises their threshold of tolerance with respect to others and averts violence.

4) Facilitating the mastery of language and speech

Verbalizing in order to think develops cognitive and sociolinguistic capabilities. By working on the development of their thought, children are working on the need for precision in language.

5) Conceptualizing the philosophizing

The practice of getting children to think reflectively calls for a redefinition of philosophizing and a conceptualization of how it is induced, what it consists of and its conditions.

6) Developing a theory of teaching philosophy to children and adolescents

Theories about teaching philosophy also become an issue. Children cannot be taught philosophy in big lecture theatres, through major works or essay writing. But teaching methods can be devised that enable them to think reflectively about their relationship to the world, to others and to themselves, providing these methods are adapted to their age group.

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The following sections are intended to give an overview of the various initiatives being pursued in these two regions, and to examine the present challenges facing the establishment and development of the 'learning to philosophize' programme at pre-school and primary levels.

Overview

Approaches and practices in philosophy with children

Several methods and approaches already exist for the teaching of philosophy to children at pre-school and primary levels:

Matthew Lipman method.²⁸ This method is recognized as having had the greatest influence on the development of P4C, on a global scale. Rejecting the conception of children put forward by Descartes that they are uncritical and prone to error, Lipman argues that children can learn to think for themselves if they are given the right conditions. He thus opened up a new way of teaching children. Admittedly, the ground had to some extent been prepared by Epicurus, Montaigne and Jaspers, but the idea had not really been exploited prior to Lipman's work. Thanks to Lipman's method, it would from that point onwards be explored throughout the world. Lipman developed his method gradually, basing it pedagogically on the concept of active learning (Dewey), psychologically on theories of child development (Piaget) and philosophically on methods of reasoning derived from the Western philosophical tradition (Aristotelian logic, the Cartesian cogito, etc.). The method is complemented by appropriate teaching materials, tried out in the classroom and continually revised; these have proved useful to teachers with no previous training in philosophy – the prevailing situation in the United States. It also includes seven children's novels,²⁹ which broach the basic philosophical questions while taking the children's ages into account. These novels cover the entire age range, from nursery school through to the end of secondary education. Each novel is accompanied by a substantial teacher's manual, which consolidates what is learned in each session and includes lesson plans and student exercises, providing flexible suggestions for teachers, but leaving them perfectly free to introduce their own ideas. There are three key aspects to the method. First, it develops a classroom culture of asking questions, focusing on the questions of the children themselves. Second, it uses textbooks that have a marked anthropological content and are based on a story, which makes it easy for children to identify with the characters and situations. Third, it turns the classroom into an organized space where the children can discuss human problems, with each of them having, democratically, their turn to speak, but on the understanding that with the right to express their opinion comes the duty to argue rationally.

'Democratic-philosophical' method.³⁰ This method is based on the work of Prof. Michel Tozzi. The objectives pursued are similar to Lipman's, but Tozzi recommends setting up a democratic structure that assigns a specific function to each pupil and makes intellectual demands on them in order that they develop their philosophical skills (asking the right questions, conceptualizing and arguing rationally). This innovation in classroom practice is backed up by training and research.

28 See the website of the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC), <http://cehs.montclair.edu/academic/iapc/> (accessed 24 January 2011).

29 *Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery*, Montclair, N.J., IAPC, 1st ed. 1974, 2nd ed. 1980; *Lisa*, IAPC, 1976; *Suki*, IAPC, 1978; *Mark*, IAPC, 1980; *Pixie*, Montclair, N.J., The First Mountain Foundation, 1981; *Kio and Gus*, The First Mountain Foundation, 2nd ed. 1986; *Kio and Joao*, IAPC, 1996

30 Description of the 'French democratic-philosophical method' by Prof. Michel Tozzi, <http://www.philotozzi.com/> (accessed 24 January 2011).

Socratic method of Oscar Brenifier.³¹ The approach adopted by Brenifier, the founder of the Institut de Pratiques Philosophiques, is that of Socratic maieutics. Pupils are schooled to think logically and pertinently through closely monitored group discussions, in which they ask questions, rephrase ideas and raise objections. Brenifier has produced a large body of teaching materials, both in France and abroad, including PhiloZenfants, published by Nathan, and the adventures of Ninon, published by Autrement Jeunesse. It is the teacher who guides the class, setting high intellectual standards.

Method of Jacques Lévine.³² Lévine is a developmental psychologist and psychoanalyst, who, back in 1996, devised a teaching and research method for children from the middle years of nursery school (3–4 years) through secondary school (15–16 years). It consists of the teacher introducing, in a fairly formal manner, a topic or question that concerns both adults and children ('growing up', for example) and telling the class that the teacher would be very interested in hearing what the children think. They are given ten minutes or so to discuss the subject, with the teacher remaining silent. A baton is passed round to give each child the chance to speak. The session is recorded, and the tape is then played back to the children, who can interrupt at any point to add to the discussion. This psychological strand focuses on the experience of the cogito – Lévine explicitly refers to Descartes – through which the child joins humanity in a group of cogitans, or 'young thinkers'.

Participants at the Milan Regional Meeting consider it equally important at this stage of development in the approach to philosophy with children to point out the advantages that these approaches offer for working with children with disabilities or learning difficulties. Several experiments have been carried out in this field, specific pedagogical methods exist, and projects are underway that include disabled children, notably in Austria.

Learning to philosophize: an expanding field

The UNESCO study of 2007 brought to light several new projects promoting philosophy for children, not only in terms of placing it on a more formal footing but also in terms of theoretical research, practical experiments and the development of teaching materials. The following survey is not intended to be exhaustive, but is based on the data collected when the UNESCO study was being written.

In **Austria**, over the past twenty years, over 4,000 Austrian teachers and 10,000 Austrian children have been introduced to P4C. The teaching of P4C developed in the following way: P4C began in Austria in 1981, as an educational project. In 1982, the Council of Philosophy Teachers became involved and made the national education authorities aware of the possibilities of introducing P4C programmes in schools. The first lessons were given in 1983 and, at the same time, were used as teacher-training workshops (four classes with a total of 120 children were involved). In 1984, the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture authorized a pilot P4C programme in schools (twenty classes and 600 children). The Austrian Centre of Philosophy with Children (ACPC)³³ was

31 <http://www.brenifier.com/> (accessed 24 January 2011).

32 See the two articles by G. Chambard and M. Sillam, 'Le temps de penser la condition humaine' and 'Ateliers de philo AGSAS questions-réponses', on the website of the Association des Groupes de Soutien au Soutien (AGSAS) which promotes Lévine's method, <http://agsas.free.fr/spip/spip.php?rubrique7> (accessed 24 January 2011).

33 <http://www.kinderphilosophie.at/> (accessed on 28 June 2011).

founded in 1985, to promote philosophical enquiry as a part of the primary and secondary curriculum by organizing international conferences, teacher-training seminars and workshops. The ACPC is in the process of creating a resource centre for P4C studies. It also publishes *Info-Kinderphilosophie*, a quarterly review, and offers innovative educational projects in the framework of the European Commission's educational programme known as Socrates. It is also a founding member of the SOPHIA network of European teachers, philosophers, teacher educators and parents interested in doing philosophy with children.

In **Belgium**, various groups are involved in P4C: (1) PhARE (Analysis, Research and Education in Philosophy for Children), a non-profit association founded in 1992; (2) the associations Philomène and Il fera beau demain (It will be sunny tomorrow), also non-profit-making, which organize training courses for teachers. *Il fera beau demain* draws on the work of Lipman and Michel Tozzi, preferring the terms 'learning to think', 'learning to reflect' or 'learning abstract thought' to 'philosophy for children' – so as to distinguish these new methods from the teaching of philosophy as an academic discipline; and (3) the Charter of Philosophie-Enfances, which resulted in the organization of philosophical workshops for 5- to 8-year-olds in five schools in the Watermael-Boitsfort district, states that the community of enquiry is its own justification and does not require any further outcome.

In **Canada**, the most commonly encountered approach is that developed by Matthew Lipman and colleagues. Work on philosophy is being undertaken in three Canadian provinces: British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. In British Columbia, Dr Susan T. Gardner is the founding director of the Vancouver Institute of Philosophy for Children, whose central task is to adapt and translate philosophical material for students at secondary and university levels. The Canadian Alliance of Philosophy for Children Practitioners, a group of teachers using the Lipman approach, has been set up and discussions are taking place with the network of state-run and private or independent schools in the Vancouver area, in the hope of establishing P4C in primary and secondary schools.

In Ontario, the official education curriculum (pre-school, primary and secondary) emphasizes the importance of the development of critical thought at school, from pre-school level (i.e. from the age of 5). Moreover, teacher education in Ontario includes a compulsory component in teaching the prevention of violence. Since 2004, a growing number of state-run and independent French-language schools, particularly in Toronto, have introduced the P4C approach into the classroom, thanks largely to the work of Marie-France Daniel, who teaches at the University of Montreal (Quebec). Classes are based on her book *Les contes d'Audrey-Anne*,³⁴ used in conjunction with the teacher-companion book, *Dialoguer sur le corps et la violence: un pas vers la prévention* (Discussing the Body and Violence: A Step Closer to Prevention).

In Quebec, the P4C approach has been publicized primarily through the research of Anita Caron, an emeritus professor at the University of Quebec in Montreal, who has studied Lipman's methods since 1982. As a result of a long tradition of dividing the school into two subsystems, one Roman Catholic and the other Protestant, state schools in Quebec have included religious education as part of the

34 Marie-France Daniel, *Les contes d'Audrey-Anne: contes philosophiques* [The Tales of Audrey-Anne: Philosophical Tales], illustrated by Marc Mongeau, Quebec, Le Loup de Gouttière, 2002.

formal curriculum, with a course on moral education offered as an alternative to pupils seeking exemption. As for work on and with the P4C approach, there are two main facets in Quebec: theoretical and empirical research, and hands-on teacher training. The former is centred at the University of Montreal, while the latter consists almost entirely of courses offered by Laval University. There are other smaller associations involved in P4C, which are not formally affiliated with the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children: these include the Canadian Philosophical Association's Philosophy in Schools project, the work of the InstitutPhilos and the Prevention of Violence and Philosophy for Children project of the association La Traversée.

In the **Czech Republic**, at the University of South Bohemia, the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies in the Theology Faculty and the Department of Pedagogy and Psychology in the Education Faculty have been working closely together on a P4C project. It has the official support of the university management, although those involved have other duties and responsibilities at the university. The objectives of the project are: (1) to train student teachers, supply teachers and full-time teachers to foster democracy in schools through dialogue, as well as to encourage pupils to think critically, creatively and vigilantly by 'converting classrooms into communities of philosophical enquiry'; (2) to research the possible benefits of incorporating philosophy in primary and secondary curricula; and (3) to examine the possibility of using philosophical enquiry and discussion in conjunction with educational games designed for children. In 2006, the same university began to teach P4C in the Theology Faculty as part of a complex module consisting of optional subjects. The module has been formally approved by the Education Faculty and has resulted in a specialization certificate for future primary teachers. The university has also built up a network of in-service teachers who use P4C with their pupils. Plans for the immediate future include creating official links with education institutions where teachers are interested in adopting P4C, carrying out further research on the role of philosophy in the primary curriculum, extending cooperation with Czech Scouting and raising the profile of P4C in universities and among the general public.

In **France**, P4C has been developed at primary level since 1996, with the process speeding up considerably from 2000 onwards, despite the fact that the teaching of philosophy has never been and is still not a formal part of the primary curriculum in France, in contrast to secondary level, where there is a long tradition of teaching philosophy in the final year. Furthermore, the introduction of these activities at primary level has been sharply criticized by both the schools inspectorate for philosophy (Inspection Générale de Philosophie) and the Association of Professors of Philosophy in State Schools (Association des Professeurs de Philosophie de l'Enseignement Public, APPEP).

Initially introduced by a small number of innovative educators, their implementation is now the focus of attention in education institutions generally. The gradual introduction of P4C practices in France is manifested in several ways: many P4C classes offered for teachers, both as part of initial training and continuing professional development, at teacher training institutes (Instituts Universitaires de Formation des Maîtres, IUFM) and centres of continuous education (Centres de Formation Permanente, CFP), as well as in schools themselves; an annual national and international conference, introduced in 2001, that brings together practitioners, educators and researchers; a variety of publications for both students and teachers, with some publishers bringing out entire collections devoted to the subject; the

integration of existential and social topics into books published for children; P4C workshops in the new 'open universities' (Universités Populaires) in Arras, Caen, Narbonne and elsewhere; and newspaper articles and television reports on P4C. It is symptomatic that university research centres, too, are becoming interested in these new teaching practices. Note also that a wide variety of practices and different schools of thought are emerging in France, often with support from Department of Education supervisors and advisers on primary education.

In **Germany**, the interest in P4C clusters around the work of two researchers: Prof. Ekkehard Martens at the University of Hamburg and Prof. Karlfriedrich Herb at the University of Regensburg. The work of Prof. Martens has helped to identify the different dimensions that must be included in the practice of philosophy with children in order to maximize their acquisition of knowledge and thinking skills when faced with the day-to-day problems of contemporary life. For Martens,³⁵ there are four pathways in P4C: (1) the dialogue/action route – thinking for oneself, thinking together and developing one's personality; (2) the analysis of concepts; (3) a capacity for wonder; (4) the philosophy of the Enlightenment for children, which takes up Kant's maxim 'dare to know' (*sapere aude*). In 2003, Prof. Herb, with Roswitha Wiesheu, founded the Children Philosophize project, with the aim of establishing philosophy as a part of the contemporary educational environment of children. It is working alongside pre-primary and primary schools to develop practical, goal-oriented teaching methods that encourage children to participate in political life. Through this initiative, study programmes and teacher-training programmes have been developed at the University of Philosophy in Munich.³⁶

In **Italy**, there are at present a number of distinguished teachers and scholars who back P4C. Two major centres carry out teacher training and research activities: the Research Centre for Philosophy Teaching (Centro di Ricerca per l'Insegnamento Filosofico, CRIF) in Rome and the Interdisciplinary Centre for Educational Research on Thought (Centro Interdisciplinare per la Ricerca Educativa sul Pensiero, CIREP) in Rovigo. Together they are responsible for experimental P4C classes in around fifty schools scattered throughout Italy, although it is difficult to estimate the actual number of classes involved. Research has focused on evaluating these experiments and examining the epistemic and methodological dimensions of P4C. Like similar experiments conducted elsewhere, these activities have highlighted the close connection between P4C and the debate about using philosophy in the classroom and the civic role of philosophizing (a debate which featured prominently on the agendas of an international conference held at the University of Padua in 2002 and of the 2005 Montesca conference). A sizeable body of literature now exists in Italian on P4C, with the *Impariamo* collection published by Liguori in Naples providing a useful point of reference. The collection includes teaching materials, such as philosophical stories with accompanying teacher manuals, and a volume of particular interest called *Filosofia e formazione* (Philosophy and Training). Numerous articles and studies have also been published in various specialist journals. The most significant finding is that training teachers in P4C techniques, if carried out appropriately, has an impact on the entire teaching profession and has implications in every area of child development, from cognitive and epistemic to psychological

35 Ekkehard Martens, *Philosophieren mit Kindern, eine Einführung in die Philosophie*. Stuttgart, Ph. Reclam Publishing, No. 9778, June 1999.

36 Prof. Barbara Weber, from the University of Regensburg, is the author of this initiative, as well as of a special issue of the journal *Thinking on P4C in Germany*.

and interpersonal. This places P4C at the centre of educational change in Italy today, especially in the wake of reforms concerning the principle of autonomy. The Milan meeting did however emphasize the difficulty of increasing schools' and teachers' awareness of the approach to philosophy with children as in recent years the national education budget has been reduced.

In **Norway**, the government decided to introduce P4C on an experimental basis in 2005. The scheme involves fifteen schools and forty-three teachers, at both primary (from the age of 6) and secondary (up to the age of 16) Levels. Several goals are being pursued: the development of ethical skills, the ability to think critically and the capacity to discuss democratically in a group. The development of teaching materials with teachers is ongoing and they are allowed two days of training per term, with a visit to schools and observation both by their peers and by outsiders. Each month, they write a report based on a checklist of specific questions. The operation has its price as, like any new subject, it creates timetabling problems. Also it has met with resistance: the ability to think critically is not considered to be as basic a skill as spontaneous speech; philosophy is seen as too difficult by pupils themselves, and so on. The experiment is, then, very novel.

This government initiative has been taken up by a private organization, the Children and Youth Philosophers (CYP) centre, a member of both the International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC) and SOPHIA. Its aims are to raise the profile of philosophy in general and P4C in particular, as well as to persuade children and adolescents to engage in philosophical activities. CYP is trying to achieve these goals by arranging lectures and seminars, and offering consultation services for those involved in using philosophy with children and young adults, by facilitating philosophical discussions with children and other young people, and by writing articles and disseminating information over the internet. Since 1997, CYP has initiated several further education programmes in kindergartens. In 2002, CYP started developing a website for teachers and pupils in primary and secondary schools. The site offers teaching materials in the six main school subjects (Norwegian, English, civic education, religion, mathematics and natural science) accompanied by questions and exercises for use in philosophical discussions in the classroom.

In **Spain**, the Centro de Filosofía para Niños (Centre of Philosophy for Children) was founded in 1987 as a part of the Spanish Society of Philosophy Professors (SEPM). The centre is engaged in a number of activities: it has published Spanish translations of all seven of Matthew Lipman's books, along with the corresponding teacher manuals; it offers teacher training through a yearly, six-day course and a national programme; it also publishes journals, such as *Aprender a Pensar* (Learn to Think) and a yearly P4C journal, which is distributed in pdf format.

In Switzerland (Romandy), philosophy for children initiatives started in 2006 in the framework of public instruction, mainly with initial and in-service teacher training for primary teachers in the canton of Fribourg. Before that, only some private schools, such as La Découverte in Geneva, took the initiative to introduce P4C in their curricula. The non-profit association Pro-Philo also promotes individual training and conducts limited projects at pre-school level. In September 2011 the Haute Ecole Pédagogique de Fribourg (HEP-FR) will deliver a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Philosophy for Children and Teenagers to primary and secondary teachers and will put related pedagogical resources online. Given that in Switzerland, public instruction is under the authority of the cantons – not the Confederation –

the promotion of philosophical practices in formal education is evident in the dynamics of inter-cantonal coordination of school programmes, notably the Plan d'Études Romand. In this perspective, the HEP-FR teaching and research group (including three professors: Samuel Heinzen, Jean Ducotterd and Anne-Claude Hess) mainly aims at developing and introducing P4C as a tool in disciplines relating to languages and citizenship classes.

In the **United Kingdom**, no primary school had offered philosophy as part of their curriculum prior to 1990. There was, however, a small group of educators, which included Robert Fisher, then director of the Thinking Skills Centre at Brunel University, who were experimenting with P4C. The group received a considerable boost in 1990, when the BBC produced an hour-long documentary about P4C, called *Socrates for Six Year Olds*, which attracted a wide audience. The documentary aroused a great deal of public interest, which led to the foundation of the Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education (SAPERE), based at Oxford Brookes University, with the aim of promoting the practice. At about the same time, a Centre for Philosophical Enquiry was established in Glasgow, where Dr Catherine McCall had begun working with Scottish children and parents, a project that was bearing fruit.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) – the national schools inspectorate – has unfailingly commended teachers and schools for incorporating P4C into their curricula, although it is still not officially required. It is estimated that 2,000 to 3,000 schools in England, Scotland and Wales have P4C in their curriculum, and there is every reason to suppose that this number will continue to grow significantly as the various national curricula move further in the direction of competence-based learning and teaching.

In the **United States**, a number of P4C techniques have been applied at primary level. Of particular interest are the undergraduate and postgraduate classes on P4C and a Philosophy at School course, all given by Dr Beth A. Dixon in the Department of Philosophy at the State University of New York (SUNY), in Plattsburgh, New York. At the Center for the Advancement of Philosophy in the Schools (CAPS), created in 2000 at the University of California, Long Beach, Debbie Whitaker is in charge of a course for postgraduate students in philosophy, called Philosophy and Education. Games, pop videos, short stories and poems also form part of the course and give a real boost to exercises in thinking critically. John Roemischer's experiment at the Department of Literacy Education at SUNY University, is also worthy of note. Roemischer has developed a course in teaching and literacy for graduate students, called Philosophy and Children's Literature. Several articles about the course have appeared in the periodicals published by Montclair State University. Thomas Wartenberg, of the Department of Philosophy at Mount Holyoke College (Massachusetts) has created and developed a website for teachers, parents, children and others interested in philosophy and children's literature. He bases teaching activities on a book the children will have been required to read. Prof. Wartenberg's site also presents a selection of children's books with a philosophical content, also giving summaries of them.

Challenges

What are the challenges facing the generalization and institutionalization of philosophy with children?

Unlike innovation, experimentation involves a political decision to introduce a new practice into a national education system on a limited scale. Trial programmes benefit from special funding and teaching resources, are usually carried out according to precise procedures, and involve practitioners who are supported by training and research. The new practices will be evaluated with an eye to determining whether they might be generalized. Given the growing interest in these new practices involving the use of philosophy in primary schools, this is the right time to be making such trial projects official, so that the success of these practices can be evaluated in relation to the broad educational objectives of different countries.

Participants at the Milan meeting stressed the extreme richness of experimentations in this field in different countries. The practice of philosophy with children is an educational innovation which has mobilized many interested teachers for several years, and the majority of new approaches are developed within individual initiatives. In other words, initiatives in this field come from the bottom up, from the teachers and educators themselves, and it is vital that the generalization and institutionalization of philosophy for children should draw on this bank of acquired knowledge

Promoting, identifying, encouraging and recognizing the value of innovative P4C practices at primary level can be a first step in this process. Organizing official trials within a national education system is a further step, and one that expresses a stronger political commitment. Institutionalizing certain P4C practices is more ambitious still, as soon as it is accepted that every child should have the chance at school to develop an ability to think reflectively and to be assisted in learning to think independently. There are several possible avenues to explore: practices aimed at teaching children to think philosophically could be introduced as an option in certain primary schools, certain regions, or as part of certain curricula; instructors trained in P4C could give special classes; or these new teaching methods could be formally incorporated into the education system for all students in a given region, or even nationally.

Whichever method is chosen, philosophy could be introduced as either a general methodological reform that cuts across all subjects, or as part of specific subject areas, on an interdisciplinary basis. For example, philosophical reflection of an aesthetic type could be introduced into drawing classes, visual arts, music or drama classes; a reflection on ethics into classes in moral education or religion; political reflection could be incorporated into civic education; or philosophical thinking of an epistemological nature could be included in science or language classes, and so on. P4C classes could also be given a weekly slot in the form of philosophy workshops, their duration depending on children's ages.

In terms of institutionalizing such changes, thought must be given to how they can be incorporated into the curricula across all year levels. A coherent and progressive approach is required to foster, through

regular practice, children's capacities to think for themselves, to reason logically and to exercise intellectual rigour. It is regrettable to see students participate in communities of enquiry at primary school and then cease to practise this type of reflective activity, or not be exposed to philosophy again until the final years of secondary school or at university. In such cases the children are not being provided with the intermediate links needed to consolidate their philosophical approach of questioning, conceptualizing and arguing a case rationally.

Incorporating P4C across the children's entire school career requires very clearly defined objectives, methods, classroom activities, books and other learning materials. It must take account of the age of the pupils, their cognitive potential, the types of experiences they have had, examples that could be meaningful for them, and a consideration of their particular sensibilities and imaginations – all of these are important elements in their personal development and central to instilling in them a capacity for critical thinking that permeates the whole person. In this respect, a number of forms of scientific knowledge must be mobilized: cognitive, developmental and social psychology; education theory and knowledge gained through teaching practice; and knowledge of philosophical teaching methods.

At different ages the same questions might be taken up and explored differently, because our capacity for reflective thought increases as we are exposed to new experiences, our language becomes more precise and we are able to read more difficult texts, etc. Issues that are specific to the cultural perspectives of each country can be freely broached, if the state in question so wishes. Based on education traditions and in the context of improving education systems, this gradual progression must be taken into account when developing a curriculum that focuses on children's abilities to think critically: the content must continually become deeper and more profound, and demand more complex writing and reading skills, especially as regards substantial literature and specifically philosophical authors.

Box 2 - Essential questions for more effectively shaping and coordinating generalization at regional level

The policy of generalizing philosophically oriented practices implies two things: (1) identifying from the start the questions that are raised by such a policy for the actors concerned; (2) identifying the answers to these questions and/or the means of delivering them. The main questions, which can be answered at regional or even at international level, are the following.

The question of definition:

How should philosophical practices involving children be defined and identified? Do all the practices labelled 'philosophical' meet philosophical standards of logic and rational argument, in terms of their aims, their ethical and theoretical referents, their translation into practice and their impact?

The question of the public to be targeted:

To what public should these practices be extended (young children, older children, adolescents)?

The question of progressivity:

Should we consider the possibility of a graded approach in introducing these practices into the primary programme? If so, it would then have to be decided how best such an approach could be progressively built into generalization.

The question of the degree of generalization:

Does generalization mean appointing someone in the school with special responsibility for these philosophical practices? Someone who would be involved in the actual teaching? Only for certain age groups? Or at all levels?

The question of training:

How should those working in the field be trained in the practices in question?

The question of developing educational resources:

How can research be disseminated and translated into practical teaching aids that can be used in class by those delivering the teaching?

The question of best practice:

Is it feasible and desirable to keep a record of practices currently being tested, in order to check, at regional level, whether, from the school's and the pupils' point of view, they are an appropriate response to the goal of generalization?

The question of cultural specificity:

Do all philosophically oriented practices correspond to the particular situation of a given culture, state, school system, etc.?

The question of collecting and updating information:

What is the best way, nationally and internationally, with the two levels being coordinated, to develop the analysis, interpretation, evaluation, as well as managing changes in and the possible renewal of existing practices (particularly when seeking, accepting and developing 'local' initiatives)?

The question of raising awareness:

How should we raise the awareness of the different kinds of audiences – ethnic groups, parents, those involved in education systems, including teachers – of the necessity of these new practices?

The question of organization:

What structures should be enlisted, nationally and internationally, with the two levels being coordinated, to develop the implementation of the goal of generalization and all that it implies?

The question of the stages of generalization:

What successive stages should be proposed to those involved, in terms of priorities and timing, to achieve the goal of generalization?

The question of evaluating these stages:

What methods should be used (structures, aids, criteria for analysis) to assess the impact, at each stage, of the policy being pursued?

Jean-Charles Pettier, based on the paper:

'Towards the generalization of philosophically oriented practices in schools:
the need for a development project'

Meeting on the New Philosophical Practices, World Philosophy Day 2009, UNESCO, November 2009

What role and what kind of training should the teacher have?

How much guidance should the teacher give? How much input should the teacher provide? Should the teacher have an academic training in philosophy? Didactic training in the skills of philosophy? Pedagogical training in debate? These are some of the questions that need to be raised when the role of the teacher is considered in the teaching of philosophy at pre-school and primary levels.

Participants at the Milan meeting insisted that teacher training is essential so that philosophical practices with children do not become a vehicle for intellectual relativism. In fact philosophizing with children is sometimes just a simple exercise where pupils, as well as a number of inexperienced teachers, take their turn to speak and express their opinions based on empirical feelings. Thus philosophy sessions with children could be organized and moderated by all teachers, without exception, as they would not need specific intellectual or pedagogical training. This concept is very damaging for philosophy in general and particularly dangerous for children, in that it conveys the erroneous idea that all ideas are equally valid and that thinking is the same thing as expressing simple opinions. In the long term, such a perception would give rise to anti-intellectualism in the school. In other words, it is vital to offer teachers specific training in order to give them the intellectual and pedagogical tools needed to develop a critical spirit and a questioning culture, thus avoiding the intellectual relativism which is exactly what philosophy challenges.

Whether in relation to discussion or otherwise, although discussion is the key factor, the role of the teacher is a much-debated issue among teacher-trainers, researchers and P4C practitioners. There are several different schools of thought: some draw from maieutics, in which the teacher maintains complete control over dialogues, asking the children to respond to him or her (and to each other) and talking about discussion (Oscar Brenifier); others feel that teachers should actively direct discussions, interaction being less important than establishing habits of rational debate (Anne Lalanne); others still prefer a model where the children talk among themselves with the teacher remaining silent (Jacques Lévine); and there are those who argue for a process in which children interact progressively more with each other, via the gradual withdrawal of the discussion leader, the objective being to generate peer dialogue (Jean-François Chazerans); then again there is Lipman's method of a 'community of enquiry', or that of Michel Tozzi, in which pupils are assigned precise roles and the discussion takes place within a controlled classroom environment. The differences between these approaches are not just differences of detail, they are conceptual.

In the traditional model of philosophical instruction, teaching and the transmission of knowledge are paramount: the course material – that is, its philosophical content – is of prime concern. Teachers may focus on certain philosophical doctrines or schools of thought, or present the history of philosophy; they may also develop a philosophical line of thought as an example of the process of philosophical thinking; or explain the texts of certain selected authors, as models of great thinkers. In this model, instructors also outline particular philosophical problems and explain why this or that philosopher offered this or that solution, so as to provide students with points of reference from where they can begin – perhaps – to think for themselves.

The training of teachers in this area is dependent on the level of generalization of P4C in the various education systems.

In **France**, where there is a strong tradition of philosophy teaching at the end of secondary education, the opportunities for teaching philosophy in primary school are few and far between and only a handful of teacher-training courses offer training in this area. It happens in a small number of Instituts Universitaires de Formation des Maîtres (IUFM) and Centres de Formation Permanente (CFP), where students are introduced to the practice of using philosophy with children.

Generally speaking, training teachers in this approach is only rarely undertaken, in certain national institutions.

In **Spain**, for example, by the GrupIREF (Grup d'Innovació i Recerca per a l'Ensenyament de la Filosofia) (Group for Innovation and Research for the Teaching of Philosophy) a non-profit organization involved in teacher education and in the creation and promotion of new teaching materials.

In **Belgium**, too, it is the non-profit organizations Philomène and Il fera beau demain that organize training for teachers on 'learning to philosophize'.

In the **United Kingdom**, OFSTED welcomes and supports teachers and schools that incorporate P4C into their curricula, even though it is still not officially required. The Society for Advancing Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education (SAPERE), based at Oxford Brookes University, has established a three-level training structure for teachers modelled on the Lipman method that promotes philosophy for children and provides training for teachers. During its twelve-year existence, over 10,000 teachers have benefited from this training. Courses have been created for primary teachers and a new resource for 'personal and social education' in secondary schools is being widely distributed. SAPERE is not at the moment pressing for philosophical enquiry to be mandatory within the primary curriculum, but it does hope to increase its support for teachers both during their initial and in-service training.

In other countries, P4C is gaining some recognition from education ministries, which is allowing it to become more institutionalized.

In **Austria**, the Austrian Centre of Philosophy with Children (ACPC) was created twenty-five years ago with the aim of promoting philosophy for children and of organizing short training courses for teachers. Today, some 40,000 teachers have been training through the ACPC, and educational resources developed and translated into several languages.

At the University of South Bohemia in the **Czech Republic**, the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies and the Department of Education and Psychology have been working in close cooperation on a P4C project. The objectives of the project are to train student teachers and educators, but also teachers already in post, in the practice of P4C as a way of promoting democratic thinking in schools.

In **Italy**, there are a number of centres of research and training for teachers interested in P4C, among them the Centro di Ricerca per l'Insegnamento Filosofico (CRIF) in Rome and the Centro Interdisciplinare di Ricerca Educativa sul Pensiero (CIREP) in Rovigo. Their work promotes the development and trialling of the benefits of philosophy for children. They offer three principal teacher-training options: (1) an annual residential teacher development course (Acuto Summer School), which

includes sixty hours of practical and theoretical classes at a basic level, aimed at providing teachers with sufficient knowledge and skills to introduce P4C techniques into their classrooms. A second level is designed to increase the teachers' expertise and enable them, in turn, to train other teachers; (2) local courses, which are organized in conjunction with schools or associations, or regional education research institutes. These comprise fifty hours of training, inside and outside the classroom; and (3) advanced courses, offered by the University of Padua.

Within the framework of UNESCO's annual celebration of World Philosophy Day, the conference on New Philosophical Practices in Schools set up in 2009 a working group on the training of teachers for philosophically directed discussion (PDD, or discussion à visée philosophique, DVP). This working group provides a forum for the exchange of ideas with a view to understanding the problems involved in organizing training, examining the problems in identifying and cultivating skills, and dealing with and incorporating into training programmes feedback from teachers using philosophically directed discussion.

Box 3 - Training on new philosophical practices at school: setting up a working and research group

Since the emergence of debates on philosophically directed discussions (PDD, or discussion à visée philosophique, DVP), training sessions on the modalities of moderating such discussions have been organized. They were set up further to the success of this approach and as a response to the growing demand. This type of training has existed for several years now. Two years ago a workshop entitled Philoformation was launched. It includes teachers, trainers and researchers interested in producing a reflection on every kind of training for moderators. This discussion group aims at highlighting the originality and the diversity of the main methods of the New Philosophical Practices (NPP). The workshop also focuses on the evolution of these training sessions in order to understand how they strive to better respond to the expectations of the trainees.

The study group gives the possibility to get information and to help each other, but also to discover what these trainers have elaborated to fulfil more suitably the needs of the moderators along their training. It allows the sharing of knowledge and experience. It gives the chance to know what and how should the training be composed of. In fact, to moderate PDD requires training to new competences, as moderating, listening and changing one's position are attitudes that are not necessarily required in every pedagogical situation.

At the beginning information provided during the training was simple. Then the information became more complex in view of a better understanding of the process through the appropriation of tools, the emergence of new attitudes and the development of clear judgements. Some means have been created for a better evaluation of the four aspects of this practice: discussions with children, moderation of discussions, training for moderating discussions, and the competences of the trainer. These means are essential for the evaluation of our training. We work on efficient means,

progressive and detailed tables, techniques in analysing recordings on moderation experiences, and tools for simple, crossed and grouped analysis of such recordings. The objectives are to identify criteria and means to acquire expertise; to explore the different forms of training and grasp how and why they are influenced by the major methods; to analyse what they have in common and what makes them different; to understand how they could offer new opportunities for the future of training. With the development of NPP in many countries, the training of moderators is a vital issue for the advance of discussions with children. In the process of the generalization of learning to philosophize in education systems, as recommended by UNESCO, the challenge is to face the increasingly growing national and international demand, knowing that trainers are very few. Our goal is, on the one hand, to share the knowledge and experience of existing training and, on the other, to elaborate together a practical handbook for the training of moderators.

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Box 4 - The Socratic method of maieutics: teachers' attitudes and skills

The Socratic method of maieutics recommends that we should look upon philosophical thought in terms of two sets of philosophical requirements: philosophical attitudes and philosophical skills

I / Philosophical attitudes

Philosophical attitudes are ways of being that can be regarded as one of the essential conditions of philosophizing: **the suspension of judgement**, which allows us to examine a problem with detachment and methodological scepticism; **astonishment** (the essential nature of philosophizing, according to Kierkegaard), which means to step outside conventional beliefs and to look afresh at what at first sight seems banal; **confrontation**, or *agon*, a term used by Nietzsche, as the indispensable condition for philosophizing: pitting oneself against others and against the world; **distantiation**: we step back from our thoughts and look at them, examine them, and we bid farewell to the consistency we hoped to find between what we want to be and what we say; **responsibility**: we are each responsible for ourselves, for what we say and for what we do; **acquired ignorance/humility**: this consists in asserting that ignorance is an acquired virtue, which enables us to think, all ideas needing to be permanently and critically examined as simple hypotheses; **rigour and severity**: to philosophize is also to put our discourse to the test. For Socrates, we must make ourselves accountable for the slightest term or expression; **authenticity**, which is to be distinguished from sincerity. It is the affirmation of our individuality; **availability**, which, in contrast to authenticity, lies in our relationship to otherness. This is simply a matter of being in and present to the world, of momentarily adhering to what is other, of opening ourselves up to the other, of accompanying the other on their journey.

II / Philosophical skills

1) *Deepening one's understanding*

This means going beyond the surface of what is said, as Descartes recommends 'let us learn to isolate an idea and take it for what it is, for what it yields, without concerning ourselves with the multiplicity of its potential and actual connections'. This ability consists of the following steps: explaining: this means to develop an idea, to clearly expound its content, to rephrase it, to explicate a statement that is felt to be ambiguous or unclear, or to consider the consequences of what has been said; arguing: this consists in producing one or more propositions, facts or ideas, in order to justify, support or prove an original assertion; analysing: this comes down to breaking up a statement into its various components to better grasp its meaning. Analysis also includes a critical operation, in which a proposition is tested against itself and against logic, as well as against other prejudgements; synthesizing: is to reduce a series of statements to a single proposition in order to summarize or clarify the substance or intention of what is said; exemplifying: consists in referring to something or describing a concrete situation in order to flesh out an abstract idea; interpreting: involves reformulating a statement entirely and even subjectively, in order to clarify its meaning; identifying presuppositions: to uncover the assumptions behind a statement, its basis

2) *Problematizing*

For Kant, the 'problematic' is one of the three basic modalities of discourse, and refers to what is only possible, the other two being the assertoric (what is simply asserted) and the apodictic (what is proven or scientific). Problematizing consists in considering every statement as a simple hypothesis that is possible or probable, then providing objections (arguments opposed to what is asserted) or questions which enable us to demonstrate the limits of the original propositions, in order to rule them out, modify them or enrich them.

3) *Conceptualizing*

Identifying, producing, using or defining certain terms that are considered important, in order to clarify a statement, to produce new propositions and to solve a problem. 'Concept' is a term which characterizes the content of what is said. Conceptualizing, therefore, consists in grasping what is essential in an utterance by distinguishing, invoking or applying the terms which underpin the meaning of what is said.

If teachers take the time to work on these skills on a regular basis, pupils will acquire certain intellectual reflexes that will make them more mentally alert, better listeners – either in relation to their friends or to their teachers – and will help them to remember more of what is covered in lessons.

Adapted from Oscar Brenifier and Isabelle Millon
'Training: the practice of philosophical debate'
Diotime, No. 44, April 2010, p. 8

What teaching materials should be developed?

Whether introducing or encouraging new ideas, launching or assisting an experimental project, or institutionalizing P4C as part of the curriculum, learning to philosophize in primary school can be greatly facilitated by using appropriate teaching materials – these may already exist, or they can be created specifically for this purpose. These include textbooks written specially for children, information for teachers, as well as teaching material aimed at both (for example, textbooks for pupils often have companion teacher manuals). While some books for teachers simply present P4C practices, to inform teachers about them and to try to stimulate their interest, others offer detailed examples and instructions for in-class activities.

There are a number of ways to develop appropriate teaching materials:

- 1) The first solution, which has been adopted in a number of countries, consists of translating Lipman's purpose-written stories and their associated teacher manuals into the local language. The advantage here is to have immediately available a complete method, already tried and tested and so not likely to change, including practical support material for children (stories written for them) containing, implicitly or explicitly, many classic questions from Western philosophy. There is also practical advice for teachers on forming a community of enquiry, along with a wide variety of exercises that they can choose for their students out of workbooks that are quite substantial.
- 2) In some countries, Lipman's stories have also been adapted to the local culture; that is, certain episodes have been modified to make them more meaningful in terms of the culture, the traditions and the context of a particular country.
- 3) In some countries, new books have been written for children 'in the style of Lipman', with the same objectives and the same techniques in mind, but referring more specifically to the culture of the country concerned.
- 4) New or improvised materials can be written narratives, as with Lipman, or they can take the form of picture books, comic books, even films. New technologies (especially audiovisual) that were not widely available when Lipman developed his method, may be very useful for children who live in a multimedia world.
- 5) Another possibility for those who find Lipman's stories not very 'literary' or too 'didactic' for children is to base P4C classes on other books, specifically written for children, as starting points for philosophical thinking. The texts selected must have something to say, in the sense of possessing a certain existential depth – their meaning should not be too obvious but require an intellectual effort from the pupil. Beyond their narrative content, they should introduce concepts and ideas that will stimulate the children's critical thinking. The children can then work together to unravel or examine the possible meanings of the text, over and above any simple understanding of the storyline: through the text, they can identify questions it broaches and use them as the basis for a group discussion.
- 6) A similar process of engaging and developing critical thinking can be activated by the folk tales, legends and fables that form part of the children's cultural heritage and/or our common human heritage. These constitute an inexhaustible reservoir of thought-provoking ideas and wisdom. Myths, above all perhaps, dealing with the question of origins, remind us of the universality of the human condition and its mysteries. More specifically, Platonic myths, when presented in a form accessible to children, can lead them to think about concepts such as truth and falsehood (*The Allegory of the*

Cave), the relationship between power and good (*The Ring of Gyges*), love (*The Myth of the Androgyne*), etc. Using such literary or mythical stories can foster children's critical thinking by engaging their sensibility and their imagination: by identifying with the hero, they live vicariously through his or her adventures, and fundamental questions take on material form in each child's consciousness. The stories and characters, part of humanity's great collective archetypes, become shared references for the class or group and open them up to greater intersubjectivity in their philosophical discussions.

In terms of teaching guides, the working group led by Nathalie Frieden on training teachers in philosophically directed discussion (PDD) has suggested pooling recorded material on PDD that would be useful in training teachers. Watching such recordings would definitely help teachers to anticipate the difficulties they might encounter in the classroom and thus train them to observe and evaluate the body language, attitudes and skills needed for this kind of teaching.

How can tried and true practices in philosophy with children be shared?

The pre-school and primary levels of education are decisive, because these are the years in which habits of creative and critical thinking are instilled in children. Encouraged by the body of research relating to this area, especially in the fields of developmental, cognitive and social psychology, and in the language and education sciences, the analysis of philosophy for children presented here is based on the assumption that it is possible to learn to philosophize from a very young age, and that this is, in fact, highly desirable for philosophical, political, ethical and educational reasons.

The state-of-the-art of P4C practices throughout the world shows the great progress that has been made in many countries with regard to introducing philosophical teaching practices for children from the ages of 3 to 12, and developing corresponding training programmes for teachers. Much valuable research continues to be carried out on the philosophical, pedagogical and didactic implications of these practices and their effects on children.

Much remains to be done, however, in order to develop these practices throughout the world. But this is not to propose for a moment that a universal, exportable model would be either possible or appropriate. This would be to ignore the diversity of situations, the plurality of cultural contexts, and the history of education systems and the policies that have shaped them. A plurality of practices and a diversity of pedagogical and didactic approaches throughout the world are highly desirable, because philosophy itself is hugely diverse. A great variety of strategies are advanced here, and the best of them are precisely those that embrace the richness that such differences offer.

It was the very awareness of the need to share good practices that led the leaders of PHILOLAB association (France) and the International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC) to launch an international appeal during the Milan meeting, for the creation of an International Network for Development and Support of Philosophy with Children Practices.³⁷ Such a network will aim to pool

³⁷ See the text of the appeal on p. XX.

resources and information through an international platform of data, debate and exchanges on research, pedagogical methods, practices and experiments with teaching materials, teacher guides, and advocacy tools freely available and accessible online. It will also aim to foster interconnections around the world between well-intentioned supporters (volunteers, donators, institutions, decision-makers, etc.) who want to act in favour of philosophy with children practices but do not know how, and those involved in the field (teachers, associations, networks, academics, etc.) who have projects and ideas but lack financial, material, moral, political and human support to fulfil all that seems necessary to develop philosophy with children on the ground. UNESCO's support was requested in order to assist civil society actors in establishing and fostering intercultural dialogue and exchanges in this domain.

Teaching Philosophy at

secondary level

Teaching at secondary level comes at a time of profound change in an individual's life – that of adolescence. The evolution–revolution experienced during this period has significant consequences that have to be taken into account in education. During adolescence, our relationship to the world, to others and to ourselves sets in motion a process of structuring and problematic restructuring, with its questioning, fears, joys and suffering. In addition, our perception of others changes as it becomes a determinant factor in the way we see ourselves and react. In adolescence, therefore, the time is ripe for philosophical questioning.

Teaching philosophy at secondary level should thus find a legitimate place in the education system.

For this to happen, philosophy needs to be put back on the educational map: in a world where teaching is becoming increasingly technically oriented, philosophy is often the first victim, compared with the arts and history, which as a rule are more firmly embedded in a country's cultural identity. The fact that secondary education tends to become more technical in the wider context of pursuing economic growth does not mean that we must close our eyes to all the ethical, cultural, social and human dimensions that are indispensable to a young person's education. The problem is all the more acute today, given the greater complexity of human societies, a complexity due, in particular, to our virtually unlimited access to the flow of information and knowledge, to an increased mix of cultural habitus, to the competition created by a global labour market, and so on. Because the aim of teaching philosophy is to develop critical judgement and the rational analysis of human experience, it can offer valid intellectual tools, additional to and complementing technical and scientific subjects.

Overview

In a number of European countries, as well as in Quebec (Canada), philosophy is taught at secondary level, often in the last year(s) prior to university. The 2007 UNESCO survey revealed that, in Europe, philosophy is taught at secondary level in the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey. In North America, it is taught in the United States, where the picture varies depending on the individual state. In Canada, apart from a philosophy course introduced in certain secondary schools in Ontario in 1996, philosophy is taught at the post-secondary and university levels, in what are known as Junior Colleges in the English-speaking regions, and in colleges of general and vocational education (Collège d'Enseignement Général et Professionnel, CEGEP) in French-speaking regions.³⁸

Note that a wide range of situations exists in the countries mentioned above. The teaching of philosophy is not uniform between countries, or even between states, if they have decentralized education systems; and ideas about the nature and function of philosophy itself differ according to

³⁸ See also the national reports on the teaching of philosophy, Juha Savolainen, Pekka Elo, Satu Honkala and Rebecca Cingi (eds), IPO Helsinki Finland, Helsinki, Finnish National Commission for UNESCO, 2010.

the administrative structure and religious and educational traditions in the various countries. The following are the main national characteristics that determine how philosophy teaching is organized at secondary level: the centralized or decentralized organization of the education system at national level, the strength of the historical links between philosophy courses and courses in religion and moral education, perceptions of the specific contribution made by philosophy to the general scientific education of young people (such perceptions determine whether philosophy is optional or compulsory in the different specialisms), ideas about pedagogy, and so on.

Today, philosophy teaching at secondary or pre-university level in Europe and North America is having to face up to a number of important issues, including being called into question. If, in certain cases, the very existence of philosophy teaching is threatened because the need for such teaching at secondary level is being called into question, the ensuing debates are testimony nevertheless to one significant fact: to question the teaching of philosophy is ultimately to cast doubt on the relevance of the free and rational exercise of judgement in our schools. While certain countries are thinking of extending philosophy classes to the earlier years of secondary schooling, others are planning to reduce the amount of time allocated, and yet others prefer to include an introduction to philosophy in other subjects regarded as more wide-ranging (morality, literature, the humanities, etc.). In addition, the pedagogical debates about the concept of 'competence-based approach', which began in the 1990s and continue today, raise a number of questions about the aims of philosophy teaching.

In what follows, the principal challenges currently facing the teaching of philosophy in Europe and North America are set out, and an attempt is made to suggest some answers that might contribute to future policies on the subject. The account is not intended to be exhaustive.

Challenges

What place is to be given to philosophy in adolescence?

One of the most complex debates in the science of education since the mid twentieth century has concerned the shift towards a more technical education and the concomitant neglect of subjects in the human sciences. Is secondary education today too biased, even exclusively biased, towards a technical education focused on performance, to the detriment of a rounded education for young people that includes studying subjects in the human sciences that are often seen as irrelevant to the labour market?

In this context, what specific contribution can the teaching of philosophy make – viewed as training in independent thinking, honed by a critical approach to knowledge?

There can be no cut-and-dried response to this question, given that situations vary widely from country to country; but there is no denying that the prevailing current trend is to cut back on the number of teaching hours in the human sciences generally, and philosophy classes, where they exist, are often the first to suffer. On top of this, such a trend is sometimes accompanied by an

attempt to harness philosophy classes to some more immediate, or at least more obvious, use. In this connection, recent reforms to philosophy teaching in Spain are a good illustration of how a reduction in the number of teaching hours can even lead to changing the title of the course. Philosophy is traditionally taught in the last two years of secondary school (Bachillerato), in two courses: one is called Philosophical Concepts (Filosofía I) and the other The History of Philosophy (Filosofía II), with each course being allocated three hours a week. In 2006,³⁹ the Organic Law of Education (Ley Orgánica de Educación, LOE) changed the title of Filosofía I to Philosophy and Citizenship, skewing it towards a course in civic education and severing its connections with the sister subject, History of Philosophy. Lastly, the Royal Decree of 2007⁴⁰ on core subjects in the Bachillerato now makes it possible to reduce the number of hours for each course to two a week. These reforms have given rise to protests in several regions. Some regions have actually reduced the number of hours already in line with the decree, sometimes with the intention of introducing a new science subject; others have decided to stick to the old timetable. The risk involved in reducing teaching hours for philosophy is a serious one: philosophy teachers will no longer have enough time to explain and contextualize the different theories and political positions and will have to fall back on static presentations, and so run the risk of appearing dogmatic and exposing themselves to charges of indoctrination.

In the eyes of some observers, the evolution of state education is being driven by the requirements of the labour market, which is increasingly dominated by new technologies in engineering, management and information. This does, however, raise the important question of coherence, which policy-makers need to take into account: technologies, and particularly new technologies, tend to have a short shelf-life, which means that an education focused on technology will produce graduates who are already obsolete. In the middle of a technological revolution, this means that what is taught now will be out of date in five or ten years' time – just like computers of the same age – which will only add to the frustration. In Thomas De Koninck's words, 'the problem is not that of creating skills in the context of a technology that changes overnight, but of teaching students to think and equipping them with the intellectual tools to react to the myriad changes, including technological ones, that they will face in the decades ahead'.⁴¹ This is why, in Estonia, with the exception of certain types of secondary school (gymnase) where philosophy is still part of the core curriculum, recent changes to the secondary curriculum – in effect from September 2013 – will force all secondary schools to offer pupils who want them two philosophy options: An Introduction to Philosophical Thought, and Contemporary Philosophical Problems.

39 Law 2/2006 BOE No. 106 of 4.5.2006.

40 Royal Decree 1467/2007, 2 November 2007.

41 T. De Koninck, 'La philosophie est plus que jamais nécessaire', *PHARES*, Laval University, Canada, Vol. 4, 2004, p. 2. <http://www.ulaval.ca/phares/vol4-ete04/texte02.html> (unofficial translation from French) (accessed 24 January 2011).

Box 5 - The drift towards utilitarian views

Since the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy, a new concept of training has emerged which is jeopardizing educational institutions and the teaching of philosophy. It involves building a knowledge-based society so that Europe can be economically competitive. Its seductively named principles lead to all kinds of reorganized teaching methods and curricula following practical criteria, break up training into certifiable skills, and turn teaching into coaching. Philippe Carré, the theorist behind this concept, maintains that the class as a teaching unit is obsolete and coins the neologism 'ecology of learning', to back the idea that skills leading to employability can be picked up outside educational institutions. In an education system where each user defines their own needs to make them employable, it is difficult to see what role philosophy could play.

The ideological nature of the OECD concept emerges when it gives rise to comparisons of the 'quality' of different school-leaving diplomas (baccalaureate, matura). In Switzerland, for example, it was concluded from the Evaluation der Maturitätsreform (EVAMAR II) project that the philosophical track is undesirable, while philosophy students examined in the three subjects of French, biochemistry and mathematics, scored second in French, after the Hellenists, but unsurprisingly did not achieve such good results as those specializing in biochemistry or mathematics. Students taking the economics and law course, also questioned on topics other than those they were studying, came last, but nobody implies that they were following the wrong course.

In addition, literary skills are reduced to the basic skills of effective communication: the capture and dissemination of information is prioritized rather than skills of interpretation, dialectic and the discovery of aporia. Even in the end-of-year philosophy examinations reduced to 2 or 3 hours, no time is devoted to essay writing.

A teaching method whose effectiveness relies on suppressing apparently negative moments of resistance, crisis, awareness and restructuring may well transmit content but not the ability to question or doubt, a prerequisite of any real cultural autonomy.

Philosophy risks being treated as Philippe Carré treats Kant: the chapter on future employees responsible for their own training so they can compete in the labour market begins with a quotation from Kant: 'The individual learns most thoroughly and best retains those things which he learns, as it were, for himself'.* But it goes without saying that, in Kant's perspective, the individual can only be true to oneself if he/she is not manipulated, whether for economic or security reasons.

* *Philippe Carré, L'apprenance, vers un nouveau rapport au savoir, Dunod, 2005. French only. Translation of the quotation after Heinrich Kanz, 'Immanuel Kant', in PROSPECTS: the quarterly review of comparative education, Paris, UNESCO: International Bureau of Education, vol. XXIII, no. 3/4, 1993, pp. 789–806.*

Mireille Lévy, Professor of philosophy
Gymnase français de Bienne (Switzerland)

It is also important to point out that this bias towards technical subjects in secondary education becomes a more complex and problematic issue when it occurs in the current sociocultural context of a number of countries in Europe and North America faced with the challenge of pluralism or interculturalism. In both these regions, especially in Europe, it is unquestionably the case that state schools today face the same major challenge as society in general: that of incorporating or adapting to difference, whether ethnic, cultural or religious. In today's world, we constantly witness, in many forms and to varying degrees, expressions of anger, rejection, incomprehension and frustration, which have their origin in a demand for identity and a refusal to make the intellectual effort to analyse and understand. How, then, should schools meet this challenge? When, in the classroom itself, pupils 'claim that they have a subjective "right" to speak in the name of their membership of such or such a community, and that the school or the teacher has a "duty" to hear them out',⁴² can purely technical and scientific subjects alone really help in mediating what is said and in taking some of the heat out of the debates? What role can philosophy play? As a discipline based on the exercise of rational and detached reflection that takes as its starting point universally comprehensible concepts, philosophy offers instruments that are conducive to the construction of dialogues argued rationally and calmly. 'It is philosophy that tries to elucidate the categorical layer that underpins all discourse and all culture. Its task is to seek out what is common to all people and to use this to circumscribe the bases of knowledge and action.'⁴³ As Michèle Coppens, an inspector of moral education in the French Community of Belgium, has observed, 'certain societal problems (related to violence, addiction and identity) have found their way into schools. Such problems tend to raise the question of the meaning of existence earlier in the minds of children and teenagers. This phenomenon adds weight to the view that it would be better to promote what the citizens of the future have in common rather than to exaggerate their differences, especially in a school context, since the purpose of education is to prepare all pupils for life as responsible citizens capable of contributing to the development of a democratic, supportive, pluralistic society that is open to other cultures'.⁴⁴

However, the above statements should not make us forget the fact that philosophizing is above all a fundamentally critical approach, which can thus contribute to fostering a democratic culture. Indeed, a democratic culture regards intellectual debates and confrontations not as a problem to be disregarded, but as a central component of citizens' life in the polis. In this perspective, the critical strength of philosophy can contribute to make this logics of confrontation as rational as possible.

42 Caëla Gillespie, 'La classe au cœur de la cité', *Actes du séminaire national 'Enseigner la philosophie, faire de la philosophie'*, 24 and 25 March 2009, Paris, June 2009, p. 167.

http://media.eduscol.education.fr/file/actes/45/6/actes_enseigner_philosophie_121456.pdf (accessed 24 January 2011).

43 Jürgen Hengelbrock, 'L'enseignement de la philosophie: périmé ou indispensable?' [The Teaching of Philosophy: an anachronism or a necessity?], in Raymond Klibansky and David Pears (eds), *La philosophie en Europe*, Gallimard/UNESCO, 1993, p. 677 French only (unofficial translation from French).

44 Information provided by Michèle Coppens in the context of UNESCO's updating of the data on the teaching of philosophy in Europe and North America, 23 March 2010 (unofficial translation from French).

Box 6 - Thinking pluralism in schools: the French Community of Belgium

The report on including more philosophy in education (*L'introduction de davantage de philosophie dans l'enseignement*),* delivered to the Parliament of the French Community of Belgium in November 2000 by Deputy Bernadette Wynants, confirms that 'there is an almost perfect consensus on the need to introduce more philosophy in education', with differences of opinion concerning only the means of achieving this and the relationship between philosophy courses and courses in religious ethics.

This follows a report by a 1992 ad hoc commission, the *Sojcher Report*, which gives a comprehensive account of the current debate in Belgium. It contains, notably, an accusation that schools are not adequately preparing young people to live in a pluralistic society, or sufficiently developing their critical thinking. Philosophy is posited as an answer to these deficiencies or gaps, as it teaches pupils skills in analysis and argument. The Wynants Report therefore argues for a cross-disciplinary approach that would examine the various concepts underlying each discipline taught, and support for the social sciences as a whole – these ideas amount to a transformation and decompartmentalization of philosophy courses so that they provide a true education in ethical pluralism.

The ideal of philosophy teaching is defined as training in philosophical questioning that crosses discipline boundaries. Such a project to transcend disciplinary divides is nonetheless likely to run into organizational problems, especially in relation to the educational background and professional habits of some teachers.

* www.aipph.eu/download/Wynants.pdf (accessed 24 January 2011).

Philosophy, a School of Freedom
Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 2007, pp. 54–55

Box 7 - Thinking in terms of pluralism in schools: the example of Quebec

In spring 2005 Quebec committed itself, through a ministerial decision, to an ambitious educational project, announcing its intention to set up a new, non-sectarian programme in Ethics and Religious Culture. This programme can be seen both as a response to the challenges to Quebec society posed by the pluralism of values, beliefs and convictions and as a challenge to education in Quebec.

As in many other Western societies, these forms of pluralism, which shape and transform our communities, are indeed a fact of life in Quebec: society no longer speaks with one voice; today, unanimity belongs unquestionably to the realm of myth. Faced with this process of transformation, we have a number of options. One of them is to retreat into our identity; another is to let things take care of themselves. ... But it is also possible to treat this growth in pluralism as a phenomenon

which, although irreversible, does not require the kind of reconstruction of communal life that would permanently erase the relations created by identity. Seen in this light, pluralism is not something to be resisted, but to be exploited to the full, to the best advantage of the society we wish to be a part of. This takes us onto a different plane, from the world of facts to the world of values: what do we want for this diversified society that Quebec society now is and will continue to be? And how do we intend to prepare our young people to live fulfilling lives within this pluralist, democratic society? That is the real challenge. ... In terms of our education system, the challenge posed by pluralism is that of preparing our young people – who are already exposed to it – to extract what is best, for them and their fellows, in the riches it offers. In short, it is a matter of turning them into ‘reasonable’ citizens, capable of opening themselves to others and of helping to make communal living a more rewarding experience. ...

This programme seeks to develop in pupils three equally important skills: competence in ethics (‘reflecting on ethical issues’), competence in religious culture (‘demonstrating an understanding of the phenomenon of religion’) and competence in dialogue (‘engaging in dialogue’). ... The aim behind competence in religious culture is to gradually acquire an understanding of the various aspects of religion. It cannot be stressed enough that the programme is not about offering support to young people in terms of their faith. The perspective adopted is an understanding of religion as a phenomenon and not as a faith to be nurtured or instilled. ... By ethical competence is meant the development of reasoning skills in pupils, an ability to make judgements and aptitudes that will enable them to think and act independently and responsibly in a given situation, taking into account both their own position and that of others, and being attentive to the effects of their actions. [If] competence in religious culture is aimed at knowing and understanding in order to adequately consider points of view that are different from one’s own, ... thus encouraging the acknowledgement of diversity, competence in ethics encourages the development of the kind of thinking that is capable of taking account of the difficulties arising – especially but not exclusively – from this diversity. ... Finally, it is our exchanges with these others, who judge, evaluate, reason and make choices, just like we do, that allow us to hope that we can transcend discord and incomprehension ...

That is why the third skill in the programme – engaging in dialogue – is so important. By encouraging young people to engage in discussion and reasoned exchanges, by encouraging discernment and openness of mind, we are not only teaching them cognitive skills but also teaching them to experience this constructive relationship to others. Seen as the indispensable complement of the other two skills, dialogue is something that should enable young people, once they have become responsible citizens, to construct a way of living together that is valid for the pluralistic society that we belong to.

Luc Bégin, ‘Ethics and religious culture:
a fitting response to the challenge of pluralism’
Éthique publique, Vol. 10, No. 1, June 2008, pp. 77–87 (unofficial translation)
<http://www.editionsliber.org/philosophie/livre.php?id=261>
(accessed 24 January 2011)

Philosophy vis-à-vis courses in confessional moral education and civic education

The relationship between philosophy and courses in confessional moral education and/or civic education is self-evident for some countries, whereas in others it is the subject of debate, of varying degrees of intensity, depending on the cultural and religious traditions of the country concerned. Essentially, the relationship between philosophy and confessional moral education and/or civic education is conceived in one of three ways. The first posits a relation of identity or assimilation; in other words, philosophy and confessional moral education and/or civic education are covered in the same course. In the second scenario, the philosophy course is offered as an alternative to religion or confessional moral education. And in the third case, philosophy is delivered via a course in non-confessional moral education.

The first scenario is underpinned by the fairly widespread idea that the function and aims of teaching philosophy at secondary level are the same as for courses in confessional moral education and civic education. In fact, according to this view, courses in philosophy, moral education and ethics, and even civic education, are intended to inform the judgement, behaviour and actions of young people through studying the moral principles drawn from the canonical religious texts or from the legal texts that exist in the country in question or in another country. In Ireland, during the last years of secondary education – sixth and seventh level – the State Religion Syllabus, which includes ethics, has a strong orientation towards the study of philosophy. In Luxembourg, moral education is taught by philosophy teachers, while in Lithuania, philosophy is taught within their ethics courses. In Estonia, philosophy appears under the title Ethical Systems throughout History. In Norway, philosophical and ethical subject matter are taught at primary and secondary levels, in a course entitled Christian Knowledge, Religious Education and Ethics. In the Czech Republic, there are no philosophy courses as such, but two courses with a philosophical function: one is Civic Education, the other is called The Foundations of the Social Sciences. We find then, in these countries, that there is no hard and fast distinction between philosophy, moral education, ethics and education in citizenship.

In the second scenario, philosophy is offered to those pupils who do not wish to take a course in religion. Philosophy is by no means compulsory, then, targeting instead a specific group of pupils. This is the situation in certain German Länder, such as Bavaria and Schleswig-Holstein.⁴⁵

In the third scenario, officially there is no course specifically called ‘philosophy’, but a course in ‘non-confessional moral education’, delivered in tandem with the course on religion, and aimed at introducing pupils to the study of moral problems without reference to a particular religion. Such teaching obviously deals with philosophical ideas and concepts, but the object is not to study the history of philosophy nor to analyse philosophical texts objectively, but to instil in the pupils the moral principles that are indispensable to their standard of behaviour. The most significant example here is Belgium where the official wording of the syllabus for the course in moral education, which comes straight from the Ministry for the French Community of Belgium, is ‘this is not a programme of study in which philosophy is an end in itself and which neglects all other approaches to moral education.

45 Silke M. Kledzik, ‘La didactique de la philosophie en Allemagne’, *Diotime. Revue internationale de didactique de la philosophie*. No. 1, March 1999. Ms Kledzik teaches philosophy at Koblenz *Gymnasium* (grammar school).

Rather, it should be seen as a structured set of proposals, the aim of which is to include in the course in moral education philosophical concepts of direct benefit to the course itself, which remains the overriding goal'.⁴⁶ One more example may be cited on the subject: the recent and current reforms in certain Spanish regions that tend to associate the philosophy course with education in citizenship.⁴⁷ People have spoken out about the wisdom of changing the name of the Ethics and Philosophy course to harness it to education in citizenship (Educación para la Ciudadanía, EpC): as the key philosophical concepts underpinning civic education already form part of the philosophy syllabus, there appears to be no need to give it a new title, which risks opening the door to the exploitation of philosophy for utilitarian ends.⁴⁸

This last pattern is an interesting case, because it has given rise in recent years to some pedagogical and philosophical discussions that shed much light on our understanding of the relationship between philosophy and morality. In fact, such a structure creates a problem that is inherent in the very nature of the discipline, in that it runs the risk of leaving out the logico-epistemological dimension of philosophy, as well as the historical reconstruction – usually a little schematic, perhaps, but at least systematic – of the most important philosophical ideas.⁴⁹ Indeed, the problem raises basic questions about the desirability, even the possibility, of combining philosophy and morality. Some philosophy teachers,⁵⁰ nevertheless, positively welcome the extra and quite considerable freedom given them to refer to the great authors and texts throughout the history of philosophy, so as 'to awaken in their pupils a spirit of philosophical questioning and to help them to actively embrace such a spirit, so that it comes from within the self, a self which, like their personal universe, is experienced as the locus of such questioning'.⁵¹

From a strictly pedagogical point of view, however, one particular difficulty will have to be taken into account. It concerns the training for those teachers who deliver the courses in non-confessional moral education: given the particular nature of these courses, which are often intended more to counterbalance the courses in religious ethics than to be freestanding subjects in their own right, a non-specialized form of training is considered adequate for teachers called on to deliver such courses. This is why in Belgium, for example, some are beginning to ask whether this is really the right moment to be replacing such courses with philosophy courses proper.⁵²

46 Syllabus for the course in Moral Education 181/2002/, Ministry of the French Community of Belgium, p. 95. <http://www.restode.cfwb.be/download/programmes/181-2002-240.pdf> (unofficial translation from French) (accessed 24 January 2011).

47 See 'What place is to be given to philosophy in adolescence?' in 'Challenges' part of this publication, pp. 41–46.

48 In Spain, several 'Platforms for the defence of philosophy' websites have been set up to raise public awareness of the consequences of the new education reforms for philosophy teaching: for Castilla y León, see <http://www.filosofia.net/materiales/manifiesto.html>; for central Catalonia, <http://bloccs.xtec.cat/sphn/> (accessed 24 January 2011).

49 On this problem, see Véronique Dortu, *Les cours philosophiques revisités : une utopie?*, Éditions de l'Université de Liège, Coll. 'Sociopolis', 2006.

50 Loris Notturmi, 'Philosophia non grata', *Diotime. Revue internationale de didactique de la philosophie*. No. 43. The author, an agrégé in philosophy, teaches secular morality. <http://www.educ-revues.fr/Diotime/Acheter.aspx?iddoc=39077&pos=17> (accessed 24 January 2011).

51 Syllabus for the course in Moral Education 181/2002/, op. cit., p. 17 (unofficial translation from French).

52 *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, op. cit., p. 51. See also 'Religions, morales et philosophie à l'école. Comment penser ensemble?', *Regards croisés*, No. 4, UCL, 2004.

Box 8 - Philosophy as a substitute or alternative subject to religious instruction in Germany

Philosophy has gained importance as a subject particularly as it is intended as an option for those students who are not affiliated with the two main Christian Churches and consequently do not wish to attend the two courses offered for those groups. Their number has been continuously increasing and it is boosted by those students who opt out of religious education for reasons of conscience. Between 1972 and 2003, starting with Bavaria and ending with North Rhine-Westphalia, all the *Länder* introduced a so-called 'substitute subject' or 'alternative subject' which was offered alongside religious instruction. The exact term is crucial, as it defines the status of the newly created subject. A 'substitute subject' can only be taught in place of religious education; i.e. students can only choose this subject by opting out of religious education. Where religion is not taught, students cannot choose the substitute subject either. An 'alternative subject' exists by itself, along with religious teaching, i.e. it can be chosen as an alternative and exists independently of whether or not religion is being taught.

Philosophy has a hard time asserting itself as a subject in those *Länder* where it is offered as a substitute for religious education – and where the proportion of people with a religious affiliation is very small. This entails that only few courses of religious education are offered, and consequently philosophy is only rarely required as a substitute. This is the case in Mecklenburg-West Pomerania. There, philosophy has been given a prominent position in secondary teaching by law, but is hardly taught in practice. It would be sensible, in this case, to offer philosophy as an independent 'alternative subject' or a compulsory course. A special development has taken place in Lower Saxony where philosophy was marginalized by the alternative course, Values and Norms, but where it is now recognized as an independent and optional subject. This is a new opportunity for philosophy and a model that can only be recommended to other German *Länder*.

With respect to the distinction between substitute and alternative subject, *Länder* can be grouped as follows:

Group 1: *Länder* that chose philosophy (Practical Philosophy, Philosophyzing with Children) rather than ethics as a substitute or alternative for religious education. In these *Länder*, philosophy usually is an important subject (with the exception of Mecklenburg-West Pomerania).

Group 2: *Länder* that chose ethics (Universal Ethics, Values and Norms) as the substitute or alternative for religious education, e.g. Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg, Saarland, Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate. In these *Länder*, philosophy is normally marginalized as a subject in secondary teaching. Rhineland-Palatinate makes an exception: There, philosophy is taught relatively often as an elective subject in the last grades of high school – at the moment only minor courses are offered, but soon there will be also major courses in philosophy. Additionally, some *Länder* teach ethics as a compulsory subject: in Brandenburg it is on the curriculum for grades 5 to 10 (Conduct of Life – Ethics – Religions) and does not contain any philosophy teaching. In Berlin, however, where ethics is a compulsory subject in grades 7 to 10, philosophy is offered in the *Oberstufe*, i.e. the last two to three years of high school.

Prof. Johannes Rohbeck, University of Dresden
Contribution to UNESCO's update on Philosophy Teaching in Germany
UNESCO, April 2010

Box 9 - Some excerpts from the Paris Declaration for Philosophy

We, the participants in the International Study Days on 'Philosophy and Democracy in the World' ...

Emphasize that philosophy teaching encourages open-mindedness, civic responsibility, understanding and tolerance among individuals and groups;

Reaffirm that philosophy education, by training independently minded, thoughtful people, capable of resisting various forms of propaganda, prepares everyone to shoulder their responsibilities in regard to the great questions of the contemporary world, particularly in the field of ethics;

Confirm that the development of philosophical debate in education and in cultural life makes a major contribution to the training of citizens, by exercising their capacity for judgment, which is fundamental in any democracy.

Committing ourselves to do everything in our power in our institutions and in our respective countries to achieve these objectives, we therefore declare that: ...

- Philosophy teaching should be maintained or expanded where it exists, introduced where it does not yet exist, and designated explicitly as 'philosophy'; ...
- Philosophy as the free pursuit of inquiry, cannot consider any truth to be final, and encourages respect for the convictions of the individual but should in no circumstances, at the risk of denying its own nature, accept doctrines which deny the liberty of others, affront human dignity and sow the seeds of barbarity.

Quoted from 171 EX/12, Annex II - Paris, 28 February 2005

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001386/138673e.pdf> (accessed 24 January 2011)

Thematic/chronological approaches: how should they be integrated?

In those European countries where philosophy is taught in secondary schools, it is customary to distinguish between two didactic approaches: a thematic approach and a chronological one. The former is seen as approaching philosophy through a study of the great philosophical issues and related concepts, whereas the latter is said to transmit philosophical knowledge in the form of an account of the history of philosophy itself, starting from the philosophers of antiquity through to the philosophers of our own time. Advocates of the historical approach criticize the thematic approach as being too abstract, as it tends, according to them, to over-privilege speculation about the concepts without any reference to the context in which the philosophical debates emerged. Conversely, the charge levelled against the chronological approach is that it is too much like a formal lecture, consisting as it does in giving an account of the different philosophical doctrines, which are thus in danger of being perceived by pupils as static doxa.

Nowadays, however, after much research in recent decades into the didactics of philosophy, it has become clear that this opposition is more apparent than real for, when it comes to the actual teaching of philosophy, the two approaches should feed into each other and can only have a real impact on

pupils if they are joined up. Relevant discussions took place in Italy in 2003 at the National Congress on the Teaching of Philosophy, organized by the Italian Philosophical Society (SFI),⁵³ which were aimed at transcending this false dichotomy: both in terms of the constitution of philosophical thought itself and in terms of its transmission through teaching, philosophical problems must be thought through using conceptual and theoretical methods that have been handed down and accumulated by the different traditions making up the history of philosophy itself. This debate is taking place in France, too, where the traditional model for teaching philosophy has always been the thematic approach. A number of reports and articles published by the Ministry of Education have been at pains to explain that, in reality, 'resistance to the adoption of a historical perspective' in the teaching of philosophy should not be read as a condemnation of teaching pupils the history of philosophy, but as a rejection of a static account of it: 'Historical reference points are very much in evidence, but the philosophy course should never take the form of a chronological account of dead or outmoded doctrines'.⁵⁴

This debate is now behind us and the real issue is no longer didactic but political: what do we actually expect from the teaching of philosophy? We must not forget that the purpose of such teaching, where it exists, is not necessarily, or even primarily, to produce future philosophers, but free citizens with the ability to make a proper analysis and to ask the right questions when faced with the various types of knowledge they will inevitably encounter. To quote the French Ministry of Education, for example, a philosophy course, 'open to what other disciplines can offer, ... has the overarching aim of developing in pupils a capacity for analysis, a taste for conceptual precision and a sense of intellectual responsibility. It thus contributes to the development of minds that are capable of independent thought, attuned to the complexity of reality and capable of applying a critical awareness to the contemporary world'.⁵⁵ The same view prevails in Portugal, where courses in philosophy are perceived as a 'meeting point for knowledge and experiences, a privileged space rich in potential for the emergence of critical thought, the expansion of conceptual fields, the exercise of freedom and the opening up of new horizons'.⁵⁶ What emerges from these conceptions is that the prime objective of courses in philosophy is to develop independence of thought through a critical analysis of what one already knows.

Beyond the bounds of purely didactic debate, and inasmuch as it is a search for truth criteria capable of informing human action, philosophy can genuinely become a space that allows pupils to think through the knowledge they have acquired throughout their time in secondary school in a dynamic relation of complementarity with their other subjects. From this interdisciplinary perspective, there can be no total opposition between, for example, history and philosophy, as they feed into each other. Thus, 'the fact that concepts, problems and subjects seem to lie outside history, is above all, and more often than not, something that is taken for granted, that goes unnoticed even, which does not stop teachers or their

53 See in particular Mario De Pasquale, 'Alcuni problemi attuali in didattica della filosofia', *Comunicazione Filosofica*, 13. <http://www.sfi.it> (accessed 24 January 2011).

54 Mark Sherringham, 'L'enseignement scolaire de la philosophie en France', *La revue de l'inspection générale – 'Existe-t-il un modèle éducatif français?'*, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche, No. 3, September 2006, p. 63. <http://media.education.gouv.fr/file/38/6/3386.pdf> (unofficial translation from French) (accessed 24 January 2011).

55 Preamble to the philosophy syllabus for the final year of the general baccalaureate, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche, *Bulletin Officiel*, No. 25, 19 June 2003. <http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2003/25/MENE0301199A.htm> (unofficial translation from French) (accessed 24 January 2011).

56 Introdução à Filosofia. Organização Curricular e Programas, Ministério da Educação, Introdução à Filosofia. Organização Curricular e Programas, Direção Geral do Ensino Básico e Secundário, Portugal, 1992, p. 5.

pupils making a detour, whenever this seems necessary. Such a detour allows to examine some historically situated entity, and in doing so to more lucidly measure the actual conditions of a thought process that is a little too anxious to assert its status as a timeless and placeless subject'.⁵⁷ An interdisciplinary approach to teaching philosophy is being trialled more and more widely in Europe, sometimes with science subjects such as physics and mathematics. The 2007 UNESCO study makes particular mention of the Swiss experiment in this respect.⁵⁸

Box 10 - Illustration of the interactions between philosophy and the sciences

An experiment at a gymnase* in the canton of Bern allows us to observe a number of ways in which philosophy could be integrated with different subjects in the sciences. The teachers at the Bienne Gymnase are convinced of the importance of this, and have instituted an original way of teaching philosophy in which students are introduced to the history of philosophical ideas alongside a study of various contemporary issues. This method of teaching philosophy in terms of its interaction with other subjects demonstrates to students that the focused approach to reality practised in any particular academic subject, scientific or otherwise, must also be integrated into a philosophical questioning of reality as a whole, and of the overall meaning of our presence in the world. The method highlights the fact that reality cannot be reduced to the single-focused perspective we find in, say, biology, psychology or sociology, or even to an interaction of various scientific viewpoints in a more complex model. In proposing this interdisciplinary approach, proponents were not trying to give philosophy anything other than a role at the service of each of the other subject areas: their objective was to illustrate, for example, the complex reasoning involved in the formulation of an explanatory or interpretive hypothesis.

A relationship based on dialogue and reciprocity can be established between philosophy and other subject areas, even if philosophy plays the role of a meta-discourse. This interdisciplinary approach highlights the extent to which the history of philosophical ideas is unavoidable, even if its point of departure is outside philosophy – in the experimental sciences, the human sciences or the arts. This method aims to arouse students' curiosity about the classical canon, to show that these documents from the past continue to speak to us, by still confronting us with choices. After three years of working under this model, the school has come to a largely positive assessment of the interaction between philosophy and mathematics and physics, philosophy and economics and law, philosophy and music, philosophy and the visual arts, philosophy and modern languages, philosophy and psychology and pedagogy. The fact that students are discovering philosophy through the areas of knowledge in which they have made the greatest investment, and in which they have a personal interest – and with which some will continue to be involved in their professional lives as well – makes for greater motivation in their analysis. This motivation can help them to overcome the difficulty of taking on philosophical themes. The detour through philosophical analysis hones their perception of their own field of study, and many of them become aware of this during the process.

* *The gymnase corresponds here to the last three years of secondary school.*

Mireille Lévy, Daniel Bourquin and Pierre Paroz
Teachers, School of Philosophy, Gymnase français de Bienne (Switzerland)
Excerpt from *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 2007, p. 72

57 'Etat de l'enseignement de la philosophie en 2007–2008', Inspection Générale de l'Education Nationale, Report – No. 2008-084, September 2008. http://www.acireph.org/Files/rapport_ig_2008_opt.pdf (accessed 24 January 2011).

58 *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, op. cit., pp. 72–74.

The interdisciplinary approach to teaching philosophy can also provide a good opportunity for considering the existing methods of assessment for the philosophy course. What type of assessment would actually allow us to measure a pupil's ability to think critically about the truth conditions for scientific knowledge and about the ethical principles that should determine human conduct? Are traditional forms of assessment, particularly the weighting towards written work such as essays, appropriate or adequate? And more generally, how much credit should pupils be given for their oral contribution to classes throughout the year? It is absolutely essential to consider other assessment methods apart from essay writing, which is often seen as the method par excellence of displaying powers of reasoning. Pupils must be induced to ditch platitudes and knee-jerk reactions, and to reason things out fully and independently, but without sounding like parrots.

Competence-based approach:

what are the advantages and problems in philosophy courses?

In education science, the competence-based approach has become increasingly important in European countries since the 1990s. This approach has been strongly supported and promoted by the European Union as a response to the 'unprecedented social and economic changes in Europe', where 'scientific and technological progress, especially in the communications industry, have promoted international integration and cooperation but also intensified international competition'.⁵⁹ According to the European Commission, this situation requires that European education systems should put in place pedagogical approaches that are capable of reconciling [on the one hand] 'the competitive dimension of a society that promotes excellence, efficiency, diversity and choice, and [on the other] the cooperative dimension that supports social justice and equality of opportunities, solidarity and tolerance'.⁶⁰ The competence-based approach is therefore conceived as a pedagogical approach aimed at responding to a cultural and socio-economic context which, all the analyses tell us, has become more complex. Thus, during the Council of Europe symposium devoted to key competences, J. Coolahan defined competence as 'the general capability based on knowledge, experience, values, dispositions which a person has developed through engagement with educational practices'.⁶¹ This definition needs to be completed by that of P. Perrenoud, for whom competence is 'a capacity to act efficiently in a number of given situations, a capacity based on knowledge, but not limited to it'.⁶² These are not the only definitions and, even today, there is still much debate in an attempt to come up with an agreed definition of competences in education.

In any case, according to the various official bodies of the European Union, a competence-based approach must be aimed at developing in learners a set of skills and attitudes that will allow them to become integrated economically, culturally and socially in both a national and a European

59 Eurydice, op. cit., 2002, p. 11.

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/ressources/eurydice/pdf/0_integral/032FR.pdf (accessed 24 January 2011).

60 Ibid., p. 12.

61 J. Coolahan, *Key Competencies for Europe*, Report of the Symposium in Berne 27–30 March 1996, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, 1997, p. 26.

62 P. Perrenoud, *Construire des compétences dès l'école. Pratiques et enjeux pédagogiques*, Paris, ESF Editeur, 1997, p. 7 (unofficial translation from French).

context. To this end, the European Commission has identified eight ‘key competences’⁶³. The purpose of the document in question is to provide general guidelines for the national education systems of EU countries that will put competences on a common footing.

How can the teaching of philosophy best be incorporated into this pedagogical framework? It should be clearly stated at the very outset that no single discipline can, on its own, claim to provide a general education. In a more general way, just as other subjects commonly taught in schools, philosophy teaching for example gives pupils competences that are deemed necessary for their personal fulfilment and their successful integration in the community. But more specifically, this teaching goes beyond this function: it provides students with the theoretical means that enable them to critically analyse the very meaning of ‘living in community’, based on their own experiences. It therefore enhances specific competences, such as examining ourselves critically, criticizing opinions, framing arguments, questioning on ethical and political grounds, and being citizens. Consequently, the pedagogical debate should avoid focusing on prioritized competences pertaining to certain disciplines, which in this respect, it might be argued, ought be strengthened at the expense of disciplines seen as less useful. On the contrary, the teaching community should pay close attention to the education of the whole person, which requires the combination of all the competences – imaginative, argumentative, technical and rational.

In the context of the eight key competences laid down by the European Commission, the teaching of philosophy would probably contribute to the development of ‘interpersonal and civic competences’, as these involve ‘the ability to communicate constructively in different environments, to show tolerance, express and understand different viewpoints’, as well as ‘the ability to think critically and creatively’.⁶⁴ It seems, therefore, that, in principle, a competence-based approach, as advocated by the European Commission, reserves an important role for the teaching of humanities-based subjects, which are supposed to train young people to show a subtler understanding of reality and to engage in dialogue in a spirit of tolerance and healthy competition. However, this will only be true if, in practice, the human sciences subjects, among which philosophy plays a key role, are given the same treatment in terms of teaching hours and the allocation of resources as technically and scientifically based subjects.

There is another aspect to consider: combining the teaching of philosophy with the issue of competences comes up against two kinds of problem, which are important to examine. First, the debates generated by the competence-based approach have drawn particular attention to the fact that it risks creating the impression that there is an opposition between competences (a matter of form) and knowledge (a matter of substance). As some experts remind us, ‘it would be as well to make sure that concentrating on skills does not mean abandoning knowledge and the opportunity to build a culture of the world in the pupil’s mind, nor elevating the status of low-level, easily assessed but poorly developed skills: the notion of “key skills”, for instance, as it appears in some documents, may be used

63 DG EAC, op. cit., 2007. The eight key competences are the following: Communication in the mother tongue; Communication in a foreign language; Mathematical literacy and basic competences in science and technology; Digital competence; Learning-to-learn; Interpersonal and civic competences; Entrepreneurship; Cultural expression.

64 Ibid., pp. 9–10.

in an ambitious project that explicitly includes knowledge ... or it may on the other hand be more concerned simply with skills (one being how to “use“ knowledge, as in the OECD’s definition of “key competencies”), without strictly involving the “acquisition” of the knowledge in question’.⁶⁵ This remark applies to the teaching of philosophy in a rather special way, as such teaching is intrinsically based on a long tradition constituted by a corpus of texts that are both rich in ideas and numerous in quantity. It is the great texts of this tradition that provide the starting point for the philosophical problems examined and discussed in class, and therefore actually serve as teaching aids for the development of a pupil’s ability to analyse and conceptualize. Consequently, if we economize on essential historical references in deference to the priority given to the formal development of competences, then the transmission of philosophical thought cannot take place. The trouble is that the competence-based approach runs the risk of creating the illusion that skills can be developed independently of knowledge, precisely because the term ‘competence’ was traditionally used in a work-related context and in the world of business, and by extension, in professional training, to denote the ability to carry out a specific task.⁶⁶

This point brings us to the second problem linked to combining the teaching of philosophy with the competence-based approach, which is the problem of assessment. One of the advantages claimed for the competence-based approach does concern assessment which, it is argued, is more objective and accurate, thanks to this approach. It is clearly the case, to the extent that the assessment of a competence consists in determining whether a pupil has the ability to perform a given task effectively, that this assessment does indeed stand a good chance of being more accurate and better targeted. But, in this same perspective, how are we to assess the competences developed by the philosophy course? By definition, the capacity for abstract analysis and independent thought cannot be determined quite as easily (or by using a tangible indicator) as digital competence or communicating in a foreign language. But is that the same thing as saying that these competences are not important for the rounded development of young people? It is worth reminding ourselves that many areas of knowledge are not directly useful, at least not in the short term, but they play a part in making the world intelligible and in widening an individual’s experience notwithstanding. But in addition it can be dangerous to reduce what is taught at school to only those elements that are said to boost apparently ‘useful’ competences, as it is very difficult to decide categorically which competences actually are ‘useful’ to our social or even our professional lives. Consequently, it is vitally important that the school both takes account of and maintains a positive attitude towards the fact that developing reflection and rational argument requires modes of assessment that are more complex, more flexible and that are applied over a longer period of time, because ‘the concept of competence does not only evoke the application of knowledge to the performance of a particular task but also its acquisition by the pupil who radically modifies it: it is a quality that is acquired over time’.⁶⁷

65 R. F. Gauthier, *The Content of Secondary Education Around the World: Present Position and Strategic Choices*, Paris, UNESCO, ED-2006/WS/64, 2006, p. 84. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001475/147570e.pdf> (accessed 24 January 2011).

66 François Audigier and Nicole Tutiaux-Guillon (eds), *Compétences et contenus: Les curriculums en questions*. Brussels, De Boeck, 2008.

67 Bernard Rey, Vincent Carette, Anne Defrance and Sabine Kahn, *Les compétences à l'école. Apprentissage et évaluation*, De Boeck, Brussels, 2006. See also ‘*De la transmission des savoirs à l’approche par compétences*’, Veille scientifique et technologique, Dossier d’actualité, No. 34, April 2008.

<http://www.inrp.fr/vst/LettreVST/34-avril-2008.php> (unofficial translation from French).

Finally, it needs to be stressed that the competence-based approach, once we look beyond the form versus content debate, offers the very real advantage of allowing us to look upon the various subjects taught as having the potential to contribute jointly to the development of cross-disciplinary competences. This view should give legitimacy to philosophy's credentials as a school subject, given that its main objective is to develop a capacity for critical reflection and objectivity that is both useful and indeed necessary in any learning process, if it is to be an active and well-balanced one.

*Box 11 - Teaching philosophy and developing competences**

There is no doubt that any debate about competences entails a moral perspective: one that reveals the desire to focus precisely on what pupils get out of their learning, what they understand and can do with their knowledge. Competence-based teaching is a matter of putting oneself in the pupil's shoes, so as to encourage him or her to become authentically engaged. Promoting the competence-based model, not at the expense of the knowledge-based model but alongside it, means rediscovering, as much from the teacher's point of view as from the pupil's, the purpose of teaching. Competence-based teaching is concerned with (1) attempting to fathom why the pupil does not understand, (2) not falling back on an abstract approach but rather relating knowledge to a situational context: it is an aspiration to transparency, authenticity and the application of philosophical activity to real life.

Nevertheless, is it not this very ethic of transparency and of controlling the effects of the education process on the child that makes it possible for managerial ideology to invest in the rationale of the competence-based model? Is not the ideal of pedagogical control (knowing why the child has made a mistake, working out what is going on 'inside his or her head') perfectly compatible with the ideal of social control (being able to direct the thoughts and desires of the individual)? And from a strictly pedagogical point of view, could it not be legitimately argued that the subject in philosophy is shaped by confrontation, conflict and resistance? In short, it is a matter of reminding ourselves that there is always a negative element at work in any educational process, one that produces a discontinuity in the individual, a dislocation, and hence a rude awakening from the illusion of being an autonomous and self-sufficient individual. The education process should give due importance, therefore, to this crucial moment, when a qualitative change occurs – when the pupil takes a step sideways, without even realizing it. The transformation the pupil undergoes cannot then be captured by a grid of competences that attempts to measure (a mastery by metrics) all the different stages: such a grid would only pander to a requirement for observation and quantification, which would tend to straitjacket a child's development, to treat a dynamic learning situation as spatial – as if it could be cut into lengths – and so destroy the movement as a single entity.

There is perhaps, then, a need to maintain a degree of opacity within the teaching process, in order to counterbalance the desire for transparency that is at work in the teaching of competences. This might well amount to abandoning the 'useful' dimension of knowledge altogether, so that the pupil is sensitized to the 'true' and the 'beautiful' per se. It could be claimed that these things are the focal point of the teaching process generally and of philosophy teaching in particular, and yet these are the very things that competence-based teaching tends to ignore. From a pedagogical point of view, therefore, the question raised by competences is this: while we gain by better identifying learning difficulties,

prioritizing effectiveness and rationalizing teaching methods, are these gains not cancelled out, in terms of the real purpose of education, which is to truly emancipate both pupil and teacher?

The arrival of the 'competence' paradigm on the education scene forces us to ask whether the rationale of competences is compatible with educating children to adopt a questioning attitude to the world in which they live, and with educating them in schools that are truly places where children learn to think creatively and productively. So taking competence-based teaching into account, or perhaps discounting it altogether, we need to consider how we should make the transition, in teaching, from the old 'subjugated subject' system (characterized by a 'one size fits all' mentality) to a new kind of subject – a subject educated in thinking actively and critically.

** Summary of the contributions to the symposium, The Philosophy of Teaching – the Teaching of Philosophy: from the transmission of knowledge to the teaching of competences, organized by the Collège International de Philosophie (CIPh-CIRTEP), IUFM Créteil (Université Paris-Est Créteil) and Philolab, held at UNESCO, 19 November 2010, as part of World Philosophy Day 2010.*

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What kind of teacher training is needed?

The question of training for philosophy teachers is a fundamental issue, if good philosophy courses are to exist. Several challenges need to be taken up in this area.

The first of these challenges is that the training that teachers have received is not always adapted to the real demands of teaching at secondary level. The 2007 UNESCO study identifies three scenarios: (1) cases in which a university qualification in philosophy is required, as for example in Austria (at Master of Philosophy level), in Bulgaria (B.A. or M.A.), in Croatia (B.A., that is, four years of university), in Denmark (at least 90 ECTS credits),⁶⁸ in Spain (M.A. in philosophy), in Hungary (university degree), in Poland (M.A.), in Portugal (M.A.), in Romania (B.A. in philosophy), in Serbia (B.A. in philosophy), in Slovenia (four years of university study of philosophy) and in Turkey (B.A., M.A. in philosophy, sociology or psychology); (2) cases in which a teaching qualification is required, in addition to or instead of a qualification in philosophy, as for example in Canada, in the province of Ontario (the Ministry of Education recently decided that a B.A. in philosophy alone will allow graduates to apply for a place on a training course for secondary-school teachers. Previously, one needed a B.A. in mathematics or history, for example),⁶⁹ in Finland (university degree plus a university qualification in secondary-school teaching, but the degree can be in psychology or religious studies), in France (M.A. in philosophy and a Certificate of Aptitude in Teaching at Secondary Level or the Agrégation), in Italy (a university diploma and a degree in 'modern literature, classical literature, history, psychology, sociology or human sciences' plus two more years of specialized studies at a postgraduate institution for training secondary

68 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

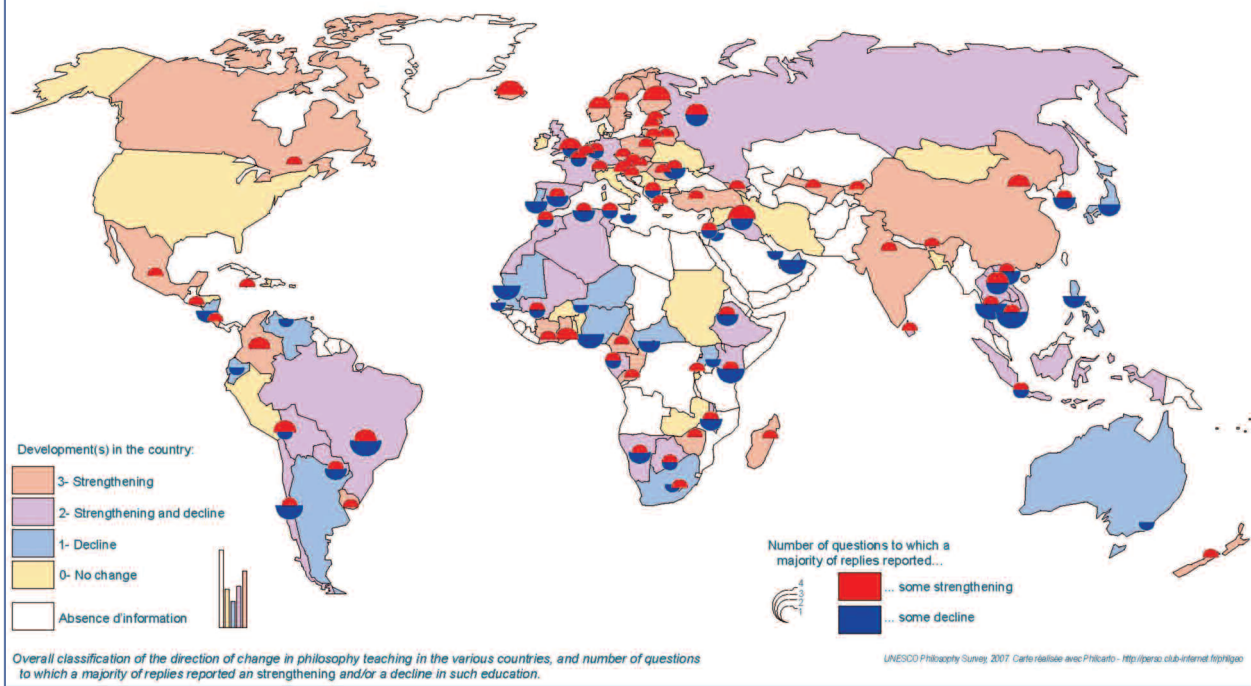
69 National report on the teaching of philosophy, Savolainen et al. (eds), op. cit., p. 99.

teachers), in Norway (four years of teacher training) and in the Netherlands ('a general certificate in education for secondary teaching'); and (3) cases in which other qualifications, like university degrees in other subjects, are accepted for teaching philosophy, as for example in Germany (in some Länder philosophy is taught by theology, literature, history or mathematics graduates), in Cyprus (classics teachers are usually responsible for teaching philosophy at secondary level), and in Greece (an arts degree: in ancient or modern Greek literature, history or theology). The last case shows that the education system has a tendency to consider that teaching philosophy at secondary level does not necessarily require specialization.

The second of the three challenges concerns in-service training, which is so essential for keeping teachers' interest alive, improving their skills and updating their knowledge of the field. In certain cases, this type of training can even serve to train teachers from other disciplines who are interested in acquiring the expertise to teach philosophy, as happens in Estonia.

The third challenge is that school teaching is only one of the professional openings available to graduates in philosophy, and not always the most attractive. This situation is partly responsible for a discrepancy between the number of philosophy teachers and the number of philosophy graduates. Not only that, but there also ought to be a closer fit between, on the one hand, the training universities provide and, on the other, what teachers actually need at secondary level.

Combined indicator of changes reported in philosophy teaching in each country.



Philosophy, a School of Freedom, Paris, UNESCO Publishing, 2007, p. 221

Teaching Philosophy in

higher education

Overview

Generally speaking, philosophy is taught as a subject in its own right in European and North American universities, and according to the 2007 UNESCO study *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, the subject as a university discipline is in a fairly healthy state. In the context of European culture, and this applies to some extent to North America as well, philosophy actually has a privileged status in universities, because of the long philosophical tradition inherited from antiquity which is embedded in the intellectual life of European countries. However, this historical fact must not cause us to forget that in the two geographical regions in question, philosophy teaching is influenced by a wide diversity of situations in the various countries and, within each country, between the different regions or states.

In the case of the United States and Canada, this diversity is accounted for by the decentralized nature of education in general and of university education in particular, which gives universities a large measure of freedom in planning their courses. In Europe, the diversity in philosophy teaching is coupled with a diversity of political perceptions and conceptions closely connected with Cold War developments on the continent. Between the great ideological confrontation and the period of readjustment to the post-Cold War situation, followed by regional integration in the European Union, it goes without saying that philosophy teaching in European countries has been subjected to a wide diversity of approaches and has undergone profound changes over the years. These socio-political upheavals have presented numerous challenges for philosophy teaching, the main ones being the harmonization of programmes and qualifications within Europe, academic freedom and the recruitment of philosophy teachers.

For the last few years, philosophy teaching has also had to contend with a sluggish economic situation, which has further increased the doubts raised about the importance and the benefits of the human sciences in a young person's education. Participants at the Milan meeting were unanimous in speaking of a 'crisis in the human sciences', of which philosophy is one of the disciplines. This has to some extent sidelined certain subjects in the human sciences in terms of funding and staffing allocations, and philosophy has often been the first to suffer. The implication is that a philosophical education does not make it any easier for young people to find suitable opportunities in the labour market. This perspective thus tends to make the logic of the market an insurmountable barrier to which all human action must be adapted and the entire education offer must serve. This judgement is still a major challenge to the teaching of philosophy today.

In the face of these challenges, philosophy can play to its strengths. In recent years, a growing number of universities have started to open up the subject to interdisciplinary approaches, which will certainly ensure a permanent role for it in university courses as a critique of systems of knowledge. Now, in a world increasingly characterized by information societies, it seems more and more important to give young people the chance to reflect on the meaning of different knowledge systems and how these are acquired, so that they are intellectually equipped to properly analyse the flood of information they are exposed to at global level. Acquiring knowledge that has a general and critical dimension is not only an additional asset in a competitive labour market geared to

economics and science; it also ensures the survival of the culture of democracy in an age when multiple world crises – financial, economic, ecological and identity – are in danger of compromising the human project of living in harmony.

This section seeks to identify the various challenges to philosophy teaching in European and North American universities.

Challenges

Philosophy studies, and then what?

The evidence assembled by UNESCO on the links between philosophy studies and the labour market reveal a wide diversity of possible careers after a philosophy course in Europe or North America. Traditionally, the teaching profession has provided the most direct and the most common openings for philosophy graduates. Philosophy is often taught in secondary schools in Europe, and teaching philosophy at this level is the path taken by a large number of philosophy graduates. At the same time, teaching philosophy at university level is another important opening, given the fact that many European and North American universities offer this subject to their students. Times of crisis, whether economic or ecological, also force us to rethink our place in the environment and provide an ideal opportunity for philosophical reflection. Philosophy graduates have a role to play in such a situation.

Newly qualified graduates also have the choice of a career in university research, especially now when fields of study are becoming increasingly diverse and we are witnessing the emergence of interdisciplinary research, for which a background in philosophy is often seen as a real asset. This is the case in both Europe and North America for research in areas such as bioethics and cultural studies, the question of their future direction requiring input from philosophers. Teaching and research in philosophy also now include areas which never used to feature in traditional university courses, such as Afro-American, Indian and feminist philosophy, research areas that are highly regarded in the United States. The labour market for research professors is becoming so internationalized that the expression ‘global campus’ is sometimes heard. Indeed, although in many countries the recruitment system remains anchored to national or even local sectors, new systems for advertising available positions internationally are expanding rapidly: websites, newsgroups and closed networks circulate hundreds of job advertisements open to candidates from any country. This practice is particularly popular among universities in English-speaking countries. One of the principal functions of the American Philosophical Association, probably the largest philosophical organization in the world, consists in keeping an up-to-date list of vacancies for academics. From this point of view, it functions more like a trade union than a learned society in the European style.

This internationalization of the labour market for philosophers has its parallel in the internationalization or globalization of research. Also, in addition to jobs in teaching and research, there are a substantial number of centres – and therefore posts – that provide support for research.

Academic societies and foundations, organizations and international associations often recruit from among philosophy graduates. The same can also apply to technical staff in universities and research centres.

Admittedly, as in other regions of the world, philosophy runs up against competition from other disciplines seen as being of greater benefit in terms of the priorities of economic and scientific development. However, Western societies today are facing change on a variety of fronts, and philosophers are being asked to cast a critical eye on these changes. In some countries, such as France, where philosophy is still held in high esteem, philosophers are also constantly asked to debate or to express their views on ethical issues, especially in biology, where progress is often accompanied by uncertainty. In Canada, where philosophy is much valued, emphasis is placed on the skills that a critical mind, shaped by training in philosophy, can contribute to the public sphere. So it is not uncommon for graduates to apply for posts in such areas as communication, public relations and even politics, which is the case in Austria, Slovenia and the Russian Federation.

Other potential openings for philosophy graduates to consider are jobs linked to culture. Positions are often available in national cultural institutions, such as museums, but also with publishers of scientific journals, which is the case in Croatia and Lithuania. In the Russian Federation and the Czech Republic particularly, a critical and analytical sense combined with editorial skills make philosophy graduates ideal applicants for jobs in journalism. Apart from these possibilities, because of the general nature of philosophy as a discipline, public service is also a possible route for philosophy graduates in Croatia and Estonia.

Philosophy teaching and diversity of approaches

In Europe, the teaching of philosophy, perhaps more so than any other discipline, has often found itself in a complex situation, particularly as a result of the political upheavals of the 1990s, which saw a reorganization of political and ideological systems. The end of the Cold War in 1991 and the easing of political tension between Eastern and Western Europe certainly allowed philosophy teaching in European universities to become less compartmentalized. The question of the reorganization, even the reorientation, of philosophy teaching at university level was covered in a study by UNESCO published in 1993, as 'L'enseignement de la philosophie: périmé ou indispensable?' (The teaching of philosophy: an anachronism or a necessity?).⁷⁰ The purpose of this section is to briefly recall the main challenges faced by philosophy in this area, so as to better understand the form these challenges take today.

Immediately following the collapse of the Berlin Wall, European countries had to cope with a deep division of lifestyles and mind-sets, brought about by forty years of political and ideological separation. The challenges of reunification, therefore, to a large extent revolved around the question of reforming the education systems, a problem area in which the teaching of philosophy

⁷⁰ Jürgen Hengelbrock, 'L'enseignement de la philosophie: périmé ou indispensable?' [The Teaching of Philosophy: an anachronism or a necessity?], in Raymond Klibansky and David Pears (eds), *La philosophie en Europe*, Gallimard/UNESCO, 1993, French only (unofficial translation from French).

occupied a unique position. Such teaching had been strongly influenced by entrenched ideological-cum-political positioning on both sides of the Wall, and in the eyes of many, philosophy seemed a cause of division and conflict. It became necessary, therefore, to rethink how philosophy should be taught in order to find texts and ways of teaching that would be acceptable to everyone and would promote the reunification process. This was particularly true for countries such as Germany.

On the one hand, in this delicate situation of unification and radical change of political regime, philosophy teaching only rarely featured among the priorities for educational reforms undertaken in the former Eastern Bloc countries in the 1990s. In this connection, the 1993 UNESCO study reveals that in the movements for educational reform in Germany, for example, it was the West German Government itself that decided philosophy was not a priority area for reform, both for ideological reasons (philosophy was too ideologically orientated) and for economic reasons (reform needed to focus on subjects that were deemed to be central). It was in this context that courses in Asian and African philosophy were discontinued, courses which had been a compulsory degree component for all students reading philosophy at university in the former German Democratic Republic. This did not happen in the Federal Republic's universities. Nevertheless, after 1990, initiatives to establish philosophy teaching sprang up everywhere in the former Eastern Bloc countries.

On the other hand, there was a clear determination in the different countries to be completely rid of the Marxist-Leninist departments of philosophy of the Soviet era. This led to the sudden closure of numerous philosophy departments, making it impossible to train teachers in the subject. The whole question of training teachers was, in any case, a sensitive issue, in that former school and university teachers from the Soviet era had become suspect and had been removed from their posts. In Germany, they were replaced by their colleagues from West Germany. In fact, the commissions responsible for reform were dominated by university teachers from the West,⁷¹ who completely rebuilt philosophy faculties and appointed exclusively West German academics. This created a difficult situation, with reform being seen as a series of unilateral measures, imposed by a single party.

Twenty years on from these upheavals, the results of the reforms undertaken still need to be studied, both in terms of the university courses on offer in Eastern European countries and in terms of teacher training, and the production as well as the translation of teaching and documentary resources. It would be equally important to determine whether academic freedom in philosophy departments has made any headway in recent years. Although it is true that academic freedom was a problem for the former Eastern Bloc countries, it would be wrong to believe that academic freedom is wholly guaranteed, now and in the future, in philosophy teaching in Western Europe and North America. This question remains a major one for philosophy teaching, the very essence of which is to challenge principles and norms that are regarded as immutable.

Taking stock of the movements for educational reform and for a reconfiguration of university disciplines, we cannot help being struck by an unprecedented phenomenon: the freedom of

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 740.

movement within Europe enjoyed by students and their teachers. The Erasmus programme set up by the countries of Europe has done an enormous amount to make university education more flexible and varied, and philosophy teaching has also benefited from this expansion of horizons, which would have been unimaginable even twenty years ago. The scale of this increased openness is all the more striking because the creation of a common space for sharing and exchanging knowledge has, on the one hand, been accompanied by a certain enthusiasm on the part of generations of young people who want to learn about each other's way of thinking and living. On the other hand, this same European space seems to be searching for a common identity that might be able to integrate the diversity and plurality existing within it. This mood is likely to restore to the teaching of philosophy a special role: that of rational thinking, driven by the search for the universal that starts with singularity, and a study of the canonical texts inherited from the intellectual traditions of the different European countries, but also from the other cultures and traditions that make up the cultural and intellectual landscape of Europe today.

Mobility mechanisms and harmonization of academic degrees: what are the challenges?

The various kinds of higher education institutions in Europe and North America have been the most heavily involved to date in both exchanges and one-way flow of students, researchers and teachers, at regional and international levels. It is certainly the case that European and American universities attract large numbers of students and researchers from around the world. Indeed, the European community is looking to strengthen its policy on mobility, which first of all requires that a system for harmonizing academic degrees and for exchanging information be set up and which at the same time encourages a period of study in another country, either within Europe itself or in other parts of the world.

Thus, the Bologna Process, which was adopted in 1999, has made provision for the creation of a European Higher Education Area, which will result in the harmonization of the university systems of the forty-six countries that are signatories to the agreement. The objective is to find solutions at supranational level that will make European universities more competitive on the world stage. It seemed particularly appropriate, given that exchanges were becoming globalized and easier to implement, to prepare European universities for greater mobility. It goes without saying that the mobility of students, teachers and researchers will also contribute to the mobility of teaching methods and ideas.

Box 12 - The Bologna Process or the construction of the European Higher Education Area

The model recommended by the Bologna Process, which is being established through several university reforms in various countries, is based on a two-tier undergraduate-master's structure, with a more general undergraduate programme followed by a more specialized master's programme, itself followed by a doctorate level recognized throughout Europe. Although the majority of countries are currently implementing it, this model varies from country to country, in particular concerning the number of years comprising the first two degree levels: three then two in Italy, four then two in Spain, three or four years, plus one or two years for an M.A. in the United Kingdom, and so on. It is, in particular, the relationship between the first two degree levels that makes the difference. The LMD Reform (B.A., M.A., Ph.D.) in France provides for a B.A. in three years, followed by two years for an M.A. and three years for a Ph.D., while Italian reforms introduced two levels for a B.A. (an initial three years, then a supplementary two years), followed by a one-year M.A. and three years of doctoral studies. To create comparable, compatible and coherent systems of higher education in Europe, a unit of common measure was introduced in 1998, called the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), a quantitative computational tool managed by each institution according to the principle of university autonomy.

The fundamental principle of this system consists in replacing years or semesters with teaching hours as the basic unit for measuring university training. One credit corresponds to 25 to 30 contact hours, and a year is 60 credits. Therefore one year's training is defined in terms of the number of teaching hours, whatever the actual duration of a year and the number of teaching hours per week. Although this does not settle all the problems with respect to specific university systems (think, for example, of the problems of integrating into the new system the years spent in preparing for the French *grandes écoles*), it makes it possible to create European standards of higher education.

Today, more than forty countries are involved in this process of standardizing higher education: they include Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom. But the success of the reform, and in particular the ECTS system, seems to go beyond the borders of Europe. It is becoming a standard of reference on a global scale and can be found in countries across the world, from Africa to Australia.

Luca Maria Scarantino,
Deputy Secretary General

International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (ICPHS),
Excerpt from *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, UNESCO Publishing, 2007, p.132.

In addition, the Community's action programme for education and lifelong learning includes several sectoral schemes, notably: Comenius (teaching at pre-school and school levels), Erasmus (higher education, advanced vocational education and training), Jean Monnet (European integration of universities, support for institutions and associations active in the field of education at the European level). There are also schemes for international cooperation at higher-education level, such as the Erasmus Mundus programme between the EU and non-member countries, aimed at improving the quality of higher education in Europe and giving it world-class status. Other regional schemes, such as Tempus (Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, central Asia and Mediterranean partners), Alfa (Latin America) and Asia-link (Asia), are focused on modernizing higher education in the partner countries.

In Europe, it is the Erasmus scheme (European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) that best reflects the surge in intellectual mobility that is contributing to Europe's vitality, as it allows students to spend from three months to a year studying in a European institution abroad, with staff being allowed to teach on the same basis. Comprising seventeen countries when it was set up in 1987, including France, Germany and the United Kingdom, it was not until 2000 that the scheme was extended to Eastern European countries, at which point Romania and Poland joined the scheme. Today, Erasmus brings together the twenty-seven countries of the European community with, additionally, the membership of Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey.

The scheme provides the opportunity for a student to spend several months of total immersion in another country, thus becoming steeped in its language and culture. This could provide a significant boost to a transnational culture in Europe, especially as the declared goal of the scheme has been, from the outset, to reach a target of 3 million student exchanges by 2012. Erasmus is based on the principle of reciprocal recognition of academic degrees and is closely aligned with the Bologna Process, given that it is the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) (built into the Bologna framework, see Box 12) that will ensure the validity of a year of study across institutions. At the moment, roughly 1 per cent of all students participate in the scheme. However, it is not only students who are eligible; the scheme is also open to teachers who benefit slightly more from the scheme, with about 1.4 per cent of them opting to do some teaching abroad.

When East European countries joined the scheme in 2000, the range of choice and mobility were expanded, but this did not lead to a significant increase in the number of exchanges with these countries, which are not among the most popular destinations for students. As an illustration, during the academic year 2007–2008, 174,163 students studied under the Erasmus scheme, and apart from Poland (2.4 per cent), the Czech Republic (2 per cent) and Hungary (1.2 per cent), take-up for the other Eastern European countries has never been more than 1 per cent of the total number of Erasmus students, which reflects a clear lack of interest in these destinations. Conversely, these countries send more students abroad than they take, thus, 7 per cent of all Erasmus students come from Poland and choose to study mainly in France and Spain.

Although there is variation between countries in the exchange flow, mainly from East to West, the Erasmus scheme is nonetheless looked upon as an opportunity for exchanging ideas. We should read into this trend an emerging interest among Eastern countries in the cultural standards of the West that

includes philosophy. The Erasmus scheme has therefore come to play a structuring role in the creation of a European identity, a contemporary problem that makes philosophy more than a passing interest.

Beyond any shadow of doubt, philosophy teaching can only gain, and gain considerably, from this framework of international academic cooperation. It strengthens both intellectual solidarity between students and the exchange of good practices and pedagogical innovations between teachers and academics. In the field of philosophy, the training of the latter presents a considerable challenge for many countries. The exchange schemes set up by European and American universities can therefore be a useful way of strengthening North–North and North–South cooperation.

The challenge of liberalizing universities

The moves to liberalize university teaching are not without their challenges. The Bologna Process, for example, advocates a more hierarchically structured governance of universities based on increased autonomy. In France and Germany likewise, this autonomy is taking the form of reduced commitment on the part of the state. Consequently, the private sector is being given a greater presence on university councils as it becomes more involved in university affairs. Moreover, this collaboration between universities and industry is positively encouraged by the Bologna Process. The result is a rechanneling of university funding in favour of courses that best respond to the needs of the labour market. This can hold back the development of philosophy programmes, given that the ‘usefulness’ of the subject is not immediately obvious.

Participants at the Milan meeting evoked the recent case of Middlesex University in north London which, in April 2010, announced the closure of its Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy. After a six-month consultation exercise, the university council made the decision in favour of closure on economic grounds. As Prof. Peter Hallward, programme leader for the M.A. programmes in philosophy at Middlesex, said: ‘The dean explained that the decision to terminate recruitment [to philosophy] and close the programmes was “simply financial”, and based on the fact that the university believes that it may be able to generate more revenue if it shifts its resources to other subjects.’⁷² And yet this department was assessed as the best in the university, with 65 per cent of its research activities being classified as ‘world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour’, but its reputation could do little for it in the face of the priority of economic growth promoted by the new policies of universities. Moreover, Middlesex University is one of the few universities to have introduced postgraduate courses in philosophy at master’s and doctorate levels, and the closure of the department, as well as being a bitter blow for the discipline in England, is one more testimony to the threat that hangs over the teaching of philosophy in Europe, in a climate in which economic growth is the number one priority. The outcome of this affair was positive as two months after Middlesex University’s decision, Kingston University, also in London, accommodated the centre with all its programmes and students as well as four of the professors.

72 For further information, see the website on ‘The campaign to save philosophy at Middlesex University’, <http://savemdxphil.com/about/> (accessed 24 January 2011), or article in *The Observer*, Sunday 9 May 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/may/09/middlesex-university-cuts-protest-philosophers> (accessed 24 January 2011).

Another example of threats to philosophy teaching at university occurred in Denmark around the same time as the Middlesex affair. The dean of the School of Education, a faculty of Aarhus University in Copenhagen, had informed three associate professors of the philosophy of education that they were to be dismissed, because in his opinion they belonged in a philosophy rather than an educational institute. Faced with the protests of over 350 researchers from other Nordic countries, from the fields of both philosophy and education, notably in the name of the academic freedom which must be guaranteed to lecturers, the dean had to go back on his decision, recognizing that the motivation for it had been purely economic. But why had he chosen to dismiss three philosophers among over 200 lecturers? This case shows that philosophy teaching is often the first to be hit when universities are obliged to follow the logic of the labour market. Note that the number of students enrolled on philosophy of education courses at Aarhus University has now tripled.

In Europe we are now seeing a movement towards mega-faculties and mega-universities. Just as private sector enterprises, university institutions are obliged to merge, and philosophy and other human sciences are the losers in this tendency which leaves them less visible. Peter Kemp, professor of philosophy at the University of Copenhagen, pointed out at the Milan meeting that this development is supported by the idea that teaching ought to be directed towards a single end, that is towards an effectiveness that can be measured by national examinations and stimulated by competitions between classes and schools. For some fifteen years this approach has typified education, beginning in the United States and spreading through many other countries. So an accountability strategy is spoken of, resulting in pressure on educational research to become 'scientifically founded', i.e. empirical, in order that forms of education may be compared and measured in relation to fixed standards. The slogan of this approach to education is 'What works?'. From this viewpoint the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) was set up in the United States, as a documentation centre on efficiency in education, founded on the preposition that education must withdraw from ideologies and norms and concentrate on a single aim: efficacy measured by empirical or evidenced-based documentation.

Faced with such a trend, a philosophical criticism is called for which says that a ready-made truth on the content of education does not exist, and may even present a threat to individual freedom, which should see itself given all available resources to develop its potential without a preconceived plan of what would be useful or useless (see also Boxes 11 and 13).

Philosophy and academic freedom: what is at stake?

One of the major roles of a university, and of philosophy teaching at this level, is to foster intellectual debate in order to advance the state of knowledge. In these debates, the political or, in other words, issues relating to the evolution and future of the polis, has a very significant place. However, for philosophy to be a genuine agora for public debate, the academic freedom of universities must be guaranteed.

The problem in many countries is to reach an adequate conception of the connection between philosophy, politics and academic freedom. The danger arises when political regimes or systems

claim the right to impose on lecturers and students certain forms of obedience, or even of political fidelity, thus reducing philosophy teaching to nothing more than the means of disseminating an ideology. This is the case, for example, when oaths of fidelity or political orthodoxy are periodically imposed on academic communities. Another form of political constraint, which is prevalent even today, is the refusal to include certain subjects in the teaching programmes. Political constraint also takes the form of imposing on a country's researchers a philosophical orthodoxy to which they are expected to conform.

These are just some of the scenarios that may interfere with freedom of research, teaching and learning of the academic community and students, especially when their field, philosophy, is specifically based on constantly questioning certainties. There is also a more subtle form of pressure on teachers and students, difficult to detect, which several researcher-teachers have denounced. This pressure is caused by the political climate established within a scholarly community and takes the form of self-censorship on the part of the members of this community, particularly where politically sensitive or controversial subjects are broached.

Box 13 - Thinking at/of the University of Leuven (Belgium)

At the Catholic University of Leuven – as in most European universities – philosophy enjoys privileged status. Traditionally, all first-year students receive at least one course of philosophy. Due to several changes that took place in academic teaching in the last decade the demand grew for a new debate on the teaching of philosophy. In the course of the project *Thinking at/of the University*, teachers and students were interviewed, and philosophers and representatives from all the different faculties of the university engaged in a discussion on the value of philosophy. As the presence of philosophy at the university was never questioned, the aim of this project was to get a clear picture of current expectations, motivations and content of these introductions to philosophy.

One thing we noted was a shift of the legitimacy of philosophy from the rationality of its own traditional thought to the criterion of societal relevance. No longer is philosophy an introduction in a canon of thought that has value in itself. On the contrary, in our quick and efficient society traditions are 'activated' and put to good use. They are thoroughly questioned for their purpose, and only if they can prove their relevance for this society are they allowed a place in the curricula.

But as history has shown, a practice of thought with the primary goal of questioning all reasoning external to it cannot so easily be brought under the auspices of society. How can philosophy serve what it is supposed to question? Several philosophers try to solve this by claiming philosophy is necessary for good citizenship. As it improves their capacity for reflective thought, it makes citizens – and thus societies – more resistant to prejudices, unfounded beliefs ... Therefore it should be part of education.

One of the most surprising findings of the project was that at the university there existed a general resistance against philosophy's tendency to place itself too much at the service of society. A colloquium on Philosophy, Education & Citizenship (February 2011) was organized on this matter. 'Philosophers aren't useful, and they should stay that way' was one of the positions defended. It was even argued that very often in history, philosophy had corrupted citizens. Would a democratic society still want philosophers in its classrooms if it was aware of this? Also it was claimed that a philosophy that puts itself so eagerly at the service of society forgets one of its primary purposes: to fundamentally question that society.

The project resulted in two recommendations concerning philosophy at this university. (1) As it is always part of a tradition of critical thought, philosophy can be expected to teach students the canonical figures and ideas of that tradition. (2) Philosophy should not concern itself too much with serving society, as it runs the risk of forgetting one of its central tasks: to question that society.

David Dessin
Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium)

Towards innovative and varied resources

The use of electronic tools in teaching is becoming increasingly important. Any differences are more noticeable here than in other fields because of the disparity of access to technology (due to the digital divide and lack of access to broadband connections) and because of the difficulties educational establishments may have in obtaining powerful technological equipment.

In the majority of universities in the United States and of some European ones, distance learning is already an everyday reality. British appraisers in the last Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education report on philosophy (2001)⁷³ comment that philosophy departments are increasingly making use of internet and intranet resources to enhance student learning. Three other reports observed that departments might wish to further consider developing and applying e-learning resources. It has been estimated that by 2009, 50 per cent of the courses offered in the European Union, across all disciplines, will be available online, and 80 per cent of students will use mobile learning. In the majority of American universities, lectures, seminars and other forms of teaching are already available by podcast. The University of California, Berkeley, for example, puts the majority of its lectures online, organized according to semester. On the University of Oregon's website, it is now possible to view interviews and conversations with research professors, several of whom belong to the university's own philosophy department.

In the changing context of publishing in the social sciences, especially with regard to journals that the majority of publishers are increasingly editing and distributing in digital format, the methods of

⁷³ Subject Overview Report Q011/2001. Philosophy, Gloucester, UK, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2001. <http://qaa.ac.uk/reviews/> (accessed 24 January 2011).

accessing these electronic collections are an important issue. Today, most scientific publishers offer contracts for distribution on a national scale, allowing library networks and educational establishments to access all their publications. Comparable consortia exist in Germany, through the Max-Planck Institute, in Canada through the Canadian National Site Licensing Project (CNSLP), and the Canadian Resource Knowledge Network (CRKN), in Greece through HEAL-LINK, in Italy through the Consorzio Interuniversitario Lombardo per l'Elaborazione Automatica (CILEA) or in the United Kingdom via the National Electronic Site Licensing Initiative (NESLI-2), as well as in the majority of Western countries.

Philosophy Teaching and Interdisciplinarity.

The presence of philosophy classes extends well beyond the borders of philosophy departments, often through diffuse channels of single lessons or complements to other subject structures. For example, in Greece, philosophy classes are given at the School of Methodology and History of Science as well as in law schools, and in Lithuania in all faculties as a part of a general higher education. There is no shortage of examples, which demonstrates the fact that philosophy is taught in a wide variety of contexts, including faculties of literature, gender studies, arts and history.

Beyond diplomas and majors in philosophy, the contribution of these classes is often regarded as useful for improving the comprehension of problems specific to the various subject domains. Classes in aesthetics, philosophy of art or philosophy of music appear in the programmes of art and architecture faculties, in music academies and art schools. Courses in the philosophy of law are a feature of the majority of law faculties, just as political philosophy and the theory of the state are on the timetables of faculties of political sciences. Business ethics, bioethics, the philosophy of science and the philosophy of mathematics have a strong presence in faculties of economics, medicine, natural science and mathematics. These classes are sometimes brought under one umbrella, forming institutes or departments within the faculties. In addition, students of other faculties regularly attend philosophy courses as adjuncts to their specific subjects. The relevance of philosophy teaching to all areas of academic study is one of the most distinctive characteristics of the subject.

Although philosophy has its own conceptual specificity, its transdisciplinary nature enables it to contribute to a whole range of specialized teaching programmes. Philosophy teaching concerns, at one level, philosophy specialists, who receive a technical training relating to the concepts, categories, methods and history of philosophical thought. At another level, however, it can also take the form of an enquiry into the epistemic and moral structures of other disciplines, learning and practices. Students in economics, medicine, law and architecture soon discover that a philosophy course is not a mere appendage to their education but a tool that lets them perfect their understanding of their principal subjects.

This adaptability of philosophy teaching must go hand in hand with a philosophically inspired examination of the concerns these disciplines raise. When this objective is achieved, these courses have a real impact on the subjects they address – and they can make a substantive contribution in cultivating in students a lasting interest in philosophy. This pervasive presence of philosophy

can play an important role in reinforcing its social impact and should be encouraged. A philosophy entrenched in its own departments, or one that has nothing to say to students in other faculties, lacks bite and is destined to lose its influence in society. It is apparent, therefore, that the creation of more chairs of philosophy in various faculties must be considered and encouraged. If this were to happen, it would make it easier to create interfaculty departments or institutes, generating a positive dynamic for the development of philosophy studies.

Interdisciplinarity, or at least the opening up and interpenetration of the various kinds of knowledge generated and transmitted by the different faculties, can also be fostered by an appropriate method of recruiting university staff. Frequently in Europe, carving up the sciences into 'faculties' has led to a watertight division between them, creating, in the process, the illusion that reality itself can be put into little boxes, each neatly labelled with one of the logical categories devised by the human mind. This induces each faculty to appoint staff who conform strictly to the recruitment criteria applicable to their own specific discipline. Such recruiting methods leave little scope for an interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approach to teaching, as teachers with a pluridisciplinary background are not valued. Pigeon-holing recruitment in this way is even more bizarre in philosophy faculties, given that the original idea of a department or faculty of philosophy was derived precisely from the transdisciplinary nature of the subject. Taking their cue from the German system, certain scientists of the time, among them the mathematician and Italian philosopher Federigo Enriques (1871-1946), developed the idea of maximum interchange between the various academic structures, in order to prioritize and widen the capacity for learning in the post-university world, relative to the narrower, technical teaching delivered by the curriculum. What they recommended instead was a teaching approach that was as outward-looking and as diverse as possible, one which moved easily between the sciences and other academic disciplines, so as to give students an overall view of contemporary science. The idea was that once the basic technical concepts had been mastered, the university's contribution would be measured by the capacity of its graduates to adapt to the successive changes that the profession in question had undergone.

Box 14 - Didactics in philosophy as a university discipline in Germany

Since philosophy was introduced in secondary schools in the late 1970s, the former Federal Republic of Germany established didactics of philosophy as an independent university discipline. The beginning of didactics research is marked by the publication of *The Dialogical-Pragmatic Didactics of Philosophy* by Ekkehard Martens in 1979 and *The Didactic of Philosophy* by Wulff D. Rehfus in 1980. In this period, Martens and others founded the journal *Zeitschrift für Didaktik der Philosophie* (ZDP) and later the journal *Ethikunterricht* (EU).

The above-named protagonists started the first debate about the aims and methods of philosophy teaching. Martens and Gisela Raupach-Strey argued that philosophy teaching should be guided by the Socratic method and must be understood primarily as a dialogue, which draws on the experiences and interests of the pupils and deals with their problems. *Rehfus and Jürgen Hengelbrock*, on the contrary, regarded the philosophical teachings as assets that should be transmitted to the students. They thus argued that students should primarily read philosophical texts.

It is about fifteen years since this debate was concluded, leading to important innovations in the didactics of philosophy. Since 2000, a new concept of didactics in philosophy has emerged: it was proposed to use the didactic potential and specific methods of philosophy itself for philosophy teaching – particularly of analytical philosophy, phenomenology, dialectics, hermeneutics, deconstruction and constructivism. Students are encouraged to apply these methods independently. This approach can be found in contributions to the journal *Zeitschrift für Didaktik der Philosophie und Ethik* as well as to the journal *Jahrbuch für Didaktik der Philosophie und Ethik*, edited by Johannes Rohbeck. Further journals devoted to this subject are the *Methodik des Philosophie- und Ethikunterrichtes* (2003), edited by Ekkehard Martens, and the *Didaktik der Philosophie und Ethik* (2008), edited by Johannes Rohbeck.

The new Bachelor/Master system presents didactics with a new challenge and task: it will be important to consider how philosophy teaching can be improved at universities and institutions of higher education, particularly with view to the Bachelor's degree.

These innovations are discussed and developed in the Forum for Didactics of Philosophy and Ethics (Forum für Didaktik der Philosophie und Ethik), founded in 1999 by Johannes Rohbeck in Dresden. Since 2003 it has been integrated into the German Philosophy Society (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Philosophie) as a working group. The forum promotes didactics of philosophy both in teaching and research, through conferences at a biennial rhythm. The results of these conferences are published in the *Jahrbuch für Didaktik der Philosophie und Ethik* (Dresden). The forum furthermore contributes to the policies of education by counselling political institutions on which teaching guidelines are required for schools and on how to restructure teacher education. The forum promotes an increase in philosophy and ethics teaching in secondary schools, as well as on university level – in cooperation with the Philosophy Association (Fachverband Philosophie).

Prof. Johannes Rohbeck, University of Dresden
Contribution to UNESCO's update on Philosophy Teaching in Germany
UNESCO, April 2011



PHILOSOPHY

A SCHOOL OF FREEDOM

**Teaching philosophy
and learning to philosophize:**
Status and prospects

UNESCO Publishing, 2007

Recommendations on the Teaching of Philosophy

in Europe and North America

High-Level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Europe and North America - Milan (Italy), 14–16 February 2011



Commissione Nazionale
Italiana per l'UNESCO

Recommendations

*R*eferring to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Bearing in mind the Paris Declaration for Philosophy,⁷⁴ which states that philosophy teaching should be maintained or expanded where it exists and introduced where it does not yet exist, on the understanding that, by training independently minded, thoughtful people, capable of resisting various forms of propaganda, philosophy teaching prepares everyone to shoulder their responsibilities in regard to the great challenges of the contemporary world,

Convinced that the contemporary complex challenges relating to globalization and induced social changes, the multifaceted crises that human societies face, and the new ethical paradigm that is emerging in relation to the balance between our way of life and ecological concerns, require that youth are equipped with solid conceptual tools that enable them to question the existing models, to seek meaning and to imagine new possibilities,

Considering that, as an exercise of rational and critical reflection that takes universally comprehensible concepts as its starting point, philosophy offers valuable instruments conducive to the construction of rationally and calmly argued dialogues, especially in increasingly multicultural societies,

Acknowledging that the very goal of education is not to instil exclusively measurable and expectable competences, and being aware of the threat that such an approach would present for collective and individual fulfilment,

Well aware of the increasingly pervasive role of an ideology that is inspired by a rationale of 'performativity', of result, of quantitative indicators and of evaluation methods arbitrarily imposed upon philosophy teaching,

⁷⁴ Adopted during the International Study Days on 'Philosophy and Democracy in the World' organized by UNESCO, 15–16 February 1995, Paris. UNESCO, 171 EX/12, Annex II. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001386/138673e.pdf>

Believing that philosophy teaching can also strongly develop imagination and creativity, which are indispensable for youth to be proactive in engendering social, political and scientific innovations,

Taking reference from the results of the study published by UNESCO in 2007, *Philosophy, a School of Freedom – Teaching philosophy and learning to philosophize: Status and prospects*,

Building upon the recent Italian initiative in organizing a national meeting to examine the place of philosophy teaching in curricula, as well as the French education reform announced on 18 November 2010 in favour of introducing philosophy class beginning from the 10th grade of secondary education,

We, participants in the High-Level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Europe and North America, jointly organized by UNESCO and the Italian National Commission for UNESCO on 14–16 February 2011 in Milan (Italy), highly welcome this initiative that has allowed us to exchange ideas and experiences, as well as to unify our efforts in favour of philosophy teaching in the region and in our respective countries.

We recommend:

1. The Member States of the region, to:

National policy, planning and administration of education

Encourage the elaboration of education policies that accord a full, complete and autonomous place to philosophy in curricula at secondary and higher education;

Reaffirm that education contributes to building the intellectual autonomy of individuals and refuse to reduce the education process to training for instrumental techniques and competences;

Reaffirm the crucial importance of philosophy teaching for critical thinking and take action to strengthen it;

Work with the relevant stakeholders towards reintroducing philosophy where it has disappeared from the curricula, and strengthening it where it already exists;

Avoid subjecting philosophical work to evaluation practices and performance indicators that are not compatible with the specificity, the sense and the essence of this discipline;

Ensure that academic freedom is fully respected in philosophy teaching, since academic freedom is a 'necessary precondition to guarantee the proper fulfilment of the functions entrusted to higher-education teaching personnel and institutions', as stated by UNESCO's Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel;⁷⁵

75 UNESCO General Conference, 29th Session, Resolution, Vol. 1, 1997.

http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13144&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Educational innovations

Promote research, pilot experiences and practices in the field of philosophy with children in pre-school and primary education, and, when possible, institutionalize this approach in the education system;

Foster academic and pedagogical debates on the specific nature of and relation between philosophy class, civic or moral education, and religious education, so as to draw maximum benefits from each of these;

Entrust philosophy teachers with reflection on issues relating to moral education and religion, in collaboration with moral education and religion teachers;

Support intercultural approaches in philosophy teaching in secondary schools, and support teacher training accordingly;

Teacher training and public debates

Provide systematic academic and pedagogical training – initial, in-service and distance-learning – to all philosophy teachers;

Introduce philosophy courses and training on conducting communities of philosophical enquiry and philosophically directed discussions (PDD, or discussion à visée philosophique, DVP) in teacher training in general, with the support of philosophy departments, with the aim of making philosophical enquiry a principle of primary and secondary education in general, and of developing future teachers' critical thinking;

Encourage practitioners of philosophy with children to attend philosophy courses as a condition for doing philosophy in primary schools;

Enhance public awareness through philosophy teaching based on in-depth analysis of priority themes such as norms, culture, social justice, peace, tolerance, etc.

2. UNESCO, to:

International cooperation in the field of philosophy teaching

Pursue its strategy in promoting and advocating philosophy teaching at all levels of formal and informal education, and in fostering intercultural dialogue in this field, notably by supporting the translation of texts from different philosophical traditions, as well as research and mobility programmes in favour of researchers from different cultures and nationalities;

Intensify its initiatives aiming at establishing links, at supporting existing networks and at creating, on the one hand, networks between philosophers, teachers and students from the different regions of the world; and on the other hand, an International Network for Development and Support of Philosophy with Children Practices;

Encourage UNESCO Associated Schools to launch pilot projects on philosophy with children;

Assist the states that wish to set up programmes of regional exchange between universities and training centres in order to enhance the skills of philosophy teachers at all levels of education;

Strategic orientations and research

Acknowledge that education cannot be reduced to a mere training of measurable and predictable competences, while endorsing the competence-based approach to education in general, as well as to philosophy teaching when this approach is adapted to this teaching;

Support philosophical and pedagogical research (i) on the conditions of possibility for children to philosophize, (ii) on the impact of such a practice on children's social/ethical, cognitive, discursive and affective development, (iii) on a comparative study of the different approaches in philosophy with children and their applications, and (iv) on the relationship between the philosophical traditions and philosophy with children, notably through collaboration with the International Council of Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (CIPSH) and the creation of a working group on this matter;

Given the increase of different forms of violence, terrorism and other similar calamities all over the world, promote in cooperation with strategic partners, namely UNESCO Chairs, CIPSH and other specialized bodies, research on the causes of such increase, and more specifically on rethinking the role of education, from a philosophical, humanistic and human rights-based perspective, so as to promote a culture of peace and non-violence;

3. National Commissions for UNESCO, to:

Technical educational support to Member States

Advise Member States in the elaboration of national policies in favour of the introduction of philosophy in curricula and of its strengthening where it already exists;

Support national initiatives on philosophy with children, and liaise with UNESCO for international coordination;

Encourage Member States to address the diversity of philosophical traditions, by assisting them in publishing research findings, philosophical texts and anthologies, notably through translations of texts from authors of other regions of the world, in order to foster and facilitate intercultural dialogue;

Encourage the creation, strengthening and expansion of the UNESCO Chairs in Philosophy;

Plan specific UNESCO scholarships for Ph.D. and post-doctoral students from other countries, on the basis of competitive exams;

Earmark specific funds to assist and financially support major philosophical events at the international level;

4. *The European Commission - Directorate-General for Education and Culture, to:*

Strategic orientations

Make necessary efforts to maintain spaces of dialogue and of questioning on the sense of education, and to ensure that the practical application of the competence-based approach does not feed an illusion of transparency in education and does not impede on philosophy teaching on the grounds that this discipline does not develop 'key competences';⁷⁶

Take into due account the various valuable inputs of philosophy teaching at all levels of education in the intellectual development of all individuals;

Give an equal place and importance to the teaching of scientific and technical disciplines on the one hand, and to that of philosophy and the humanities on the other, when elaborating European strategic orientations in education;

5. *Philosophy teachers and practitioners as well as civil society actors, to:*

Exploring new approaches to philosophy teaching

Develop suitable courses and philosophical fora that foster public awareness on the new social and ethical challenges for humanity while making reference to classical texts and authors belonging to various philosophical corpora;

Foster critical exploration of the different philosophy schools belonging to Western traditions and to other cultural and intellectual heritages;

Work with teachers of other disciplines in order to experiment an interdisciplinary approach to philosophy teaching, for instance through introducing philosophical analysis and specifically philosophical topics into existing subject matters in primary and secondary schools;

Promote different approaches in teaching philosophy, including in a framework of progressivity in school curricula, in order to instill a view of philosophy teaching as a continuous process from primary school to higher education;

Encourage the universities, philosophy departments, research centres on philosophy and human sciences to overcome disciplinary compartmentalization and to promote more interdisciplinarity on the basis of solid disciplinary knowledge, with a view to reaching out to the wider public;

⁷⁶ *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning – A European Reference Framework*, Brussels, DG EAC, 2007, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ll-learning/keycomp_en.pdf (accessed 24 January 2011). See also *Key Competencies. A Developing Concept in General Compulsory Education*, Brussels, Eurydice, 2002. http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/compulsary-edu-oth-enl-t05.pdf (accessed 24 January 2011).

Use the New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs), when available, to facilitate interactions, active learning methods and international communication, while engaging in conscious and critical reflection on this issue so as to avoid giving youth the feeling that knowledge is a mere juxtaposition of fragmented information;

Organize, with the support of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP), specific sessions and workshops during the World Congress of Philosophy that will be dedicated to philosophy teaching.

Annexes

Appeal List of Participants

Appeal to create an international network for development and support of philosophy with children practices

On the occasion of the High-Level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Europe and North America

14–16 February 2011, Milan (Italy)

Philosophy with children has triggered increasing interest from civil society actors as well as from education authorities in the last ten years; it has also acquired a certain academic legitimacy thanks to theoretical and field researches; and at the international level, there is a tangible awareness that philosophy with children can substantially contribute to quality education in primary and secondary levels.

Considering these developments, we wish to encourage the creation of an International Network for Development and Support of Philosophy with Children Practices. The High-Level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Europe and North America, jointly organized by UNESCO and the Italian National Commission for UNESCO, may be an important step in this direction.

This is an Appeal from civil society actors who believe that no one is too young to start philosophizing, because to think conceptually and to analyse critically cannot be considered today as a privilege reserved to the happy few. We believe that the effective exercise of freedom depends on how men and women have been familiarized with the exercise of judgement and reflection since their childhood. To build a solid culture of peace and democratic dialogue, we need to get our children acquainted with listening to others, questioning and reasoning in an open-minded and demanding way, so that they can gain a wise and shared understanding of the word, in a respectful and friendly atmosphere.

This Appeal is aimed at all those who want to help us in development and promotion of philosophy with children around the world: teachers, practitioners, academics, associations, networks, universities, institutions, volunteers, donators, decision-makers, states. We need their support and collaboration in order to create a best world through a renewed educational experience for our children.

In these troubled and unsettled times, the exceptional quality and force of UNESCO's commitment in favour of philosophical teaching and practices is essential and makes us very optimistic about the future. We want to thank very warmly this organization and specially Ms Moufida Goucha, Chief of Section, for all their support in our action.

Baseline

In 1998, a meeting of experts organized at UNESCO on philosophy for children recommended that 'networks [are created] between countries to promote philosophy for children and share experiences',⁷⁷ by assembling information that is available in this field around the world.

In 2007, UNESCO published a study entitled *Philosophy, a School of Freedom*, whose first chapter is dedicated to examining the state-of-the-art of research and practices of philosophy with children in the world.

Since 2005, UNESCO has supported the annual organization of the international symposium on New Philosophical Practices, which, among other things, aims at sharing information on existing initiatives and on research outcomes in the field of philosophy with children. Currently, these symposia are organized in the framework of UNESCO's cooperation with the PHILOLAB association,⁷⁸ and have set up in 2009 standing thematic working groups, addressing the issues of introducing philosophy with children in school curricula and setting up teacher training in this field.

Many other impetuses exist in the world which strive to advance philosophy with children practices.⁷⁹ Among them, the ICPIC and SOPHIA networks play an important role.

Representatives of some of the other existing associations and networks, as well as academics or decision-makers will be participating in the High-Level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Europe and North America. We hope that many of them will join us to prepare this new initiative towards the creation of an International Network for Development and Support of Philosophy with Children Practices.

The needs to be addressed

We need an open international network to pursue two main purposes:

- to foster interconnections around the world between well-intentioned supporters (volunteers, donors, institutions, decision-makers, etc.) who want to act in favour of philosophy with children

77 Proposals of Philosophy for Children, Meeting of Experts, 26–27 March 1998, Paris, UNESCO, p. 28.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001161/116115mo.pdf>

78 *With the support of UPEC/IUFM de l'Académie de Créteil, Sciences Humaines Magazine and Groupe Hervé.*

79 At the European level, SOPHIA, the European Foundation for the Advancement of Doing Philosophy with Children, established in 1993, launched the 'SOPHIA Network' in 2006, whose aim is to exchange on research and practices. At the moment SOPHIA Network members come from the following twenty-seven countries and regions: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Catalonia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey and Wales.

In the United States, the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) and the International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC) aim at promoting, coordinating and disseminating research, as well as organizing international congresses, emphasizing Matthew Lipman's and other different approaches to introducing philosophy in formal and non formal education. The ICPIC network includes experts and practitioners from many countries.

In Asia and the Pacific, the Asia-Pacific Philosophy Education Network for Democracy (APPEND) gathers resource persons who are engaged in the promotion of philosophy with children practices at the national and regional levels. This network also cooperates with UNESCO in the promotion of philosophy teaching.

practices, and actors in the field (teachers, associations, networks, academics, etc.) who have projects and ideas but lack financial, material, moral, political and human support to fulfil all that seems to us necessary to develop philosophy with children on the ground.

- to pool resources and information between the actors themselves through an international platform of data, debate and exchanges on research, pedagogical methods, practices and experiments with teaching materials, teacher guides, and advocacy tools freely available and accessible online.

Proposal

An International Network for Development and Support of Philosophy with Children Practices can be created with UNESCO's support, in order to foster synergies for concrete action in this field. The initial and founding tool of the network will be a website hosted on UNESCO's webpage.

The purpose of such a Network will be to disseminate and promote the advancement of different practices of philosophy with children by:

Connecting supporters to actors

- by building an international database which identifies concrete demands (needs of funds, skills, materials, etc.) from existing actors in different countries through online forms
- by offering to counsel and direct supporters (firms, institutions, public authorities, etc.) to relevant actors

Connecting actors one-to-another

By networking and communicating

- Creating liaisons with universities, research centres and institutes, individual teachers and practitioners, youth associations, UNESCO Clubs, etc.;
- Identifying at least one responsible person or team in different countries where there is an interest in philosophy with children, who will be the focal point in ensuring communication of information, stemming from the local and national to the international level;
- A Journal of the Network can be launched on a biannual basis, which will publicize all relevant information and articles on philosophy with children initiatives.

By making resources free and available online

- Assembling information on research outcomes and making it available online for free access;
- Giving free access online to the existing pedagogical guides and teaching materials from the different countries, in different languages. In the long run, a system of distance learning could be envisaged;
- Making freely available some online advocacy toolkits, including videos, for practitioners to approach and sensitize the national education authorities and potential donors, as well as the general public.

By fostering intercultural cooperation

- Encouraging links and cooperation between practitioners and teachers from different cultural backgrounds in creating teaching resources that are adapted to cultural diversity and specificity.

In order to start the project, an organizing committee should be set up, composed of benevolent focal points who are engaged in philosophy with children in the various countries in the world. their mission will be to figure out the best features of the network, to ensure that the website's content is duly filled and updated with information and relevant resources, to advertise the initiatives in their country and professional environment, to mobilize other actors' participation and contribution, and to remain connected with UNESCO.

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Administrator of Philolab,
in charge of Philosophy with Children
www.philolab.fr

Félix García Moriyón

President of ICPIC
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Member of SOPHIA Board
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List of Participants at the High-Level Regional Meeting on the Teaching of Philosophy in Europe and North America, Milan (Italy), 14–16 February 2011

Representatives of UNESCO Member States

1. Albania

Nora MALAJ

Deputy Minister of Education and Science

Dhori KARAJ

Dean of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Tirana

Grida DUMA

Chief of Department, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Tirana

2. Belgium

Hugo VANHEESWIJCK

Advisor, Agency for Quality Assurance, Flemish Ministry for Education, Youth, Equal Opportunities and Brussels Affairs

Michel WEBER

Expert, Cabinet of the Minister of Obligatory Teaching of the French Community Government

3. Croatia

Marie-Elise ZOVKO

Institute of Philosophy

Bruno CURKO

Institute of Philosophy

4. Estonia

Einar VÄRÄ

Chief expert of Curriculum Division, Ministry of Education and Research

5. France

Mark SHERRINGHAM

Dean of the Philosophy General Inspection group, representative of the Ministry of National Education, Youth and NGOs

6. Latvia

Gita REVALDE

Director of Higher Education Department, Ministry of Education and Science

7. Luxembourg

Julie-Suzanne BAUSCH

Representative of Ms Mady Delvaux-Stehres, Minister of National Education and Professional Training, and President of the National Commission of Philosophy Programmes in Secondary Education

8. Montenegro

Branko LATINOVIC

Philosophy teacher, Petar I Petrovic Njegos High School, Danilovgrad

9. Republic of Moldova

Roman BELOGORODOV

University professor, Philosophy and Anthropology Department, Moldova State University

10. Spain

Margarita LARRAURI GOMEZ

Expert in philosophy teaching

11. Turkey

Haci Mustafa ACIKOZ

Member of National Board of Education, Ministry of National Education

Representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO

Armenia

12. Karina DANIELIAN

Counsellor, Embassy of Armenia in Italy

Azerbaijan

13. Gunay AFANDIYEVA

First Secretary of the National Commission for UNESCO

Italy

14. Giovanni PUGLISI

President of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO and Rector of the Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione IULM

15. Lucio Alberto SAVOIA

Secretary-General of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO

16. Maria Adelaide FRABOTTA

Vice-Secretary General of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO

Lithuania

17. Gintarė TAMAŠAUSKAITĖ

Secretary-General of the National Commission for UNESCO

18. Liliana BUGAILIŠKYTĖ-LIDEIKIENĖ

Education and Science Programme Coordinator, National Commission for UNESCO

Luxembourg

19. Jean-Pierre KRAEMER

President of the National Commission for UNESCO

20. Paul KLEIN

Secretary-General of the National Commission for UNESCO

Russian Federation

21. Grigory ORDZHONIKIDZE

Secretary-General of the National Commission for UNESCO

San Marino

22. Patricia DI LUCA

President of the National Commission for UNESCO

Turkey

23. Harun TEPE

Philosophy professor, Chairperson of the Philosophy Committee of the National Commission for UNESCO

Speakers experts - Philosophers

24. Maria BETTETINI (Italy)

IULM

25. Beate BØRRESEN (Norway)

Directorate for Primary and Secondary Education, University College, Oslo

26. Josiane BOULAD-AYOUB (Canada)

UNESCO Chair in Studies of Philosophic Foundations of Justice and Democratic Society, UQAM

27. Oscar BRENIFIER (France)

President, Institut de Pratiques Philosophiques

28. Werner BUSCH (Germany)

President, International Association of Philosophy Teachers (AIPPh)

29. Daniela CAMHY (Austria)

Vice-President, International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC) and Director, Austrian Center for Philosophy with Children and Youth (ACPC)

30. Barbara CASSIN (France)

Chair, International Network of Women Philosophers, directeur d'étude CNRS

31. Luis María CIFUENTES (Spain)

President, Spanish Society of Philosophy Teachers (SEPFI)

32. Michele DI FRANCESCO (Italy)

Dean, Faculty of Philosophy, Vita-Salute S. Raffaele University, Milan

33. Félix GARCÍA MORIYÓN (Spain)

President, International Council of Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC), member of European Foundation for the Advancement of Doing Philosophy with Children (SOPHIA) and Centro de Filosofía para Niños (Spain)

34. Peter KEMP (Denmark)

Danish University of Education

35. Michele LENOCI (Italy)

Dean, Faculty of Communication Sciences, Catholic University of Milan

36. Armando MASSARENTI (Italy)

Il Sole 24 Ore

37. Ciprian MIHALI (Romania)

Philosophy Department, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca

38. Stefano POGGI (Italy)

President of the Italian Philosophical Society (SFI)

39. Riccardo POZZO (Italy)

Chair, FISP Committee on the Teaching of Philosophy, Director, Istituto per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo e Storia delle Idee – CNR

40. Marina SANTI (Italy)

Padua University

41. Luca Maria SCARANTINO

Deputy Secretary-General, International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences (CIPSH), Secretary-General of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP)

42. Pascal SEVERAC (France)

Collège international de philosophie – CIPh

43. Marietta STEPANYANTS (Russian Federation)

UNESCO Chair 'Philosophy in the dialogue of cultures', Institute of Philosophy, Academy of Sciences

44. Michel TOZZI (France)

IUFM Creteil and Paul Valéry-Montpellier 3 University

45. Stelios VIRVIDAKIS (Greece)

Athens University

Other participants

Pre-school and primary school

46. Adolfo AGÚNDEZ

Centro de Filosofía para Niños (Spain)

47. Ángeles ÁLVAREZ LASO

Centro de Filosofía para Niños (Spain)

48. Gloria ARBONES

Grup IREF: Innovació i Recerca per l'Ensenyament de la Filosofia (Spain)

49. Véronique BARCELO

Director for Culture, General Council of the Oise (France)

50. Jean-Pierre BIANCHI

President, Philolab (France)

51. Edwige CHIROUTER

Philosophy professor at Nantes University, responsible for the Philoécole project at Philolab (France)

52. Irene DE PUIG

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53. Goedele DE SWAEF

European Foundation for the Advancement of Doing Philosophy with Children (SOPHIA)

54. Federico FERNÁNDEZ LEYTE

Centro de Filosofía para Niños (Spain)

55. Fiorenzo FERRARI

Philosopher with children, Quarto Circolo didattico di Verbania (Italy)

56. Manuela GOMEZ

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57. Lizzy LEWIS

Development Manager, SAPERE: Society for the Advancement of Philosophical Enquiry and Reflection in Education (United Kingdom)

58. Giorgio LUPPI

President, Athena Forum per la filosofia (Italy)

59. Eva MARSAL

Karlsruhe University of Education (Germany)

60. Laura MOSCHINO

Teacher expert in P4C, Padua University and Teaching assistant for History of Ancient Philosophy at the Sacro Cuore di Milano Catholic University (Italy)

61. Jean-Charles PETTIER

IUFM Créteil and École Intégrée de l'Université Paris Est Créteil (France)

62. Marjan SIMENC

Pedagogical Research Institute (Slovenia)

63. Eva ZOLLER MORF

Schweizerische Dokumentationsstelle für Kinder - und Alltagsphilosophie (Switzerland)

Secondary education

64. Miloš JEREMIC

Pozarevac High School (Serbia)

65. Guy LÉVY

Deputy Secretary-General, Public Instruction Directorate of the Canton of Berne, and Chair of the Conférence de Coordination Francophone (COFRA, Switzerland)

66. Mireille LÉVY

Teacher at the Gymnase Français de Bienne (Switzerland)

67. Herman LODEWYCKX

Vice-President, International Association of Philosophy Teachers (AIPPh)

68. Ricardo SIRELLO

International Secretary of the Board, International Association of Philosophy Teachers (AIPPh)

Higher education

69. David DESSIN

Catholic University of Leuven (Belgium)

70. Ana DIMISKOVSKA

Institute of Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy, University Ss Cyril and Methodius, Skopje (FYR Macedonia)

71. Luca ILLETTERATI

Padua University (Italy)

72. Wolfgang KALTENBACHER

European coordinator, Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici (Italy)

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UNESCO Chair in Philosophy and Human Rights, Maltepe University (Turkey)

74. Marco SGARBI

Researcher, Verona (Italy)

75. Želimir VUKAŠINOVIĆ

Lecturer in Philosophy, Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade (Serbia)

UNESCO

76. Ângela MELO

Director of Human Rights, Philosophy and Democracy Division, , Social and Human Sciences Sector

77. Moufida GOUCHA

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78. Phinith CHANTHALANGSY

Assistant Programme Specialist, Philosophy and Democracy Section, Social and Human Sciences Sector



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