

Fourth International Conference *Why Still Education?*

Experience of Education

Belgrade, 9–11 October 2024

Conference Call

Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade, invites submissions for the Fourth International *Why Still Education?* Conference, under the title “Experience of Education”.

Relying on the traditions of theories of *Bildung*, phenomenology and critical pedagogy, this conference aims to approach the fundamental questions of nature and role of education by focusing on the lived experiences of education. We believe this may help tackle the problems of contemporary education by reorienting educational theory towards what truly matters: from education as a tool of human capital management, to education as a process that shapes human life, relations and personal growth. Drawing on a variety of lived educational experiences should reveal their underlying structures, leading to a deeper understanding of educational phenomena in their rich diversity and significance.

We welcome contributions from **all areas of social sciences and humanities**. The conference is open to both the theoretical analyses of the general structures, as well as to the empirical studies of lived educational experiences. The inspiration for the topic comes from the phenomenological concept of lived experience, but we also welcome contributions that do not belong to the school of phenomenology.

A turn to lived experience opens numerous themes, starting with the fundamental questions of the very essence and purpose of education.

The Essence of Education. What *is* education insofar as it is actually *lived*? What are the main types of educational lived experiences and how do they influence and transform the way the world is experienced? What kind of intentionality is involved in education? Does education require a specific intention to teach and a willingness to learn, or does it occur for the most part inadvertently and implicitly, behind our backs as it were? What distinguishes processes and events that can be properly called educational from those that cannot? Is education possible beyond a student-teacher relation? Is it possible to educate oneself, and if it is, how is this form of education distinct from the one in which one is educated by the other?

Educational Relationships. Education is a complex phenomenon: on the one hand, it is a deeply personal subjective experience for the one undergoing this process. On the other hand, from the very start, it is something received from others. Furthermore, we are not only educated by others, but also with others, which in itself has educational effects. This leads to an array of questions,

each of which motivates multiple possible answers. How is one's own education experientially intertwined with their experience of self? How do the educated experience their educators and vice versa? How should we approach shared and collective educational experiences? We invite contributions that discuss a wide variety of educational relationships: within family, between adults and children, teachers and students, between childhood peers (friends, classmates, siblings, etc.), as well as between adults (mentor and protégé, master and apprentice, love relationships, etc.)

Education and Values. There is also the question of what educational lived experiences *should* be like and how decisions about this are made in the sphere where many intersecting interests and perspectives must be taken into account (the perspectives of children, parents, educators, educational experts, institutions, policymakers, minorities, etc). How do all these factors influence the process of making sense of and assigning specific value to education? How are educational experiences shaped by the values, principles and interests that various educational actors, educational and societal institutions stand for, and the conflicts between them? How do different actors respond to the question of why education matters and why it should be pursued in specific ways? For example, how do students explain to themselves why they attend school, or how, on the other hand, teachers explain to themselves why the content they teach matters? Finally, how are values themselves (ethical, esthetical, political, personal, collective, etc.) experienced in educational contexts when they are communicated, promoted, defended, discussed, disputed, reevaluated, criticised, etc.?

Critiques, Resistances and Alternatives. We are encouraging critical approaches that focus on lived experience. How are contemporary problems of education manifested in the lived experience of educators and students, e.g. by distorting and impoverishing it? And what kinds of educational lived experiences could counter them? We invite critiques of educational forms that are alienated from the true purpose of education, as evidenced by the inauthentic educational experiences they generate (e.g., indoctrination, black pedagogy, various forms of neoliberal distortions of education). We also invite explorations of the normative and political dimensions of educational experiences, both in terms of their colonisation by external interests and in terms of the resistances and alternative experiences they can engender. Thus, we invite contributions that engage in imagining different educational arrangements and possibilities, with a focus on the changes in lived experiences that they could bring about. For example, could we imagine a school where care for others would have primacy over academic success? Or an educational system without grading?

School. As the primary educational institution, school stands at the intersection of all the aforementioned issues, and warrants therefore special attention. Schools are embedded in local, communal, and societal lifeworlds, as well as the broader global human lifeworld. However, they also maintain a degree of seclusion, constituting distinct lifeworlds of their own. A variety of intersubjective relations become prominent in school. It is a lifeworld within the lifeworld, an intra- and intergenerational meeting place with a transgenerational dimension. At the same time, it is a highly structured and organised environment explicitly dedicated to knowledge and learning.

We invite contributions that focus on the variety of school experiences: experiences of teachers, students, and other relevant actors, classroom life and interactions, relations of power, points of contact and conflict between school and the outside world, the curriculum, the teaching methods and other educational practices (e.g. testing, grading, counselling, etc.), temporal and spatial organisation of school... The same questions can also be posed with respect to other educational institutions (kindergarten, special education, higher education, informal educational institutions, etc).

Conceptual dimensions of educational experiences: openness and closeness, mind and body, knowing-how, knowing-that, and not-knowing, immanence and transcendence, freedom and coercion, possibility and becoming, ability and disability, old and new, past, present and future, anticipation and disappointment, habit and surprise, continuity and discontinuity, uniqueness and similarity, call and response, activity and passivity, spontaneity and receptivity, reality and virtuality, meaningfulness and meaninglessness, purposefulness and purposelessness, self and other, connection and alienation, equality and inequality, justice and injustice...

Educational tools, methods, and technologies of teaching and learning: the written text, textbook, children's literature, visuals, audio material, technology, the internet, AI... Teacher-centred and student-centred education, learning by doing, learning through play, problem-based, inquiry-based, collaborative, project-based approaches, etc.

Faculties that can be “educated” and/or contribute to education: theoretical and practical reason, intuition, imagination, feeling, perception, attention, senses, bodily movement...

Various subjects, and the way in which the world is disclosed in the course of education dedicated to them: e.g. the experience of a philosophical, mathematical, artistic, athletic education...

Emotions and education: e.g. love, hate, anxiety, empathy, care, the joy of learning, curiosity, boredom, indifference, frustration, embarrassment, shame, pride, sense of accomplishment...

Educational acts and activities and how they are experienced: studying, learning, teaching, critical thinking, reflecting, exploring, (re)searching, reading, writing, playing, creating, practicing, memorising, discussing and moderating the discussion, paying attention, explaining, counselling, asking and answering, testing and taking tests, presenting, interpreting, etc.

Transformative educational experiences, such as encounter, wonder, awe, mystery, paradox, discovery, questioning, changing perspective, etc.

Lived experience of time and space of education.

Education, art and media: analyses of the role of art and different media in shaping educational experiences, as well as discussions of representations of educational experiences in literature, film, music and visual arts.

Historical accounts that focus on lived experience of education of a particular historical period or within particular historical institutions.

The questions of method: how can educational experiences be properly studied and adequately described? What is the value of insights gained in this way? How can phenomenological method be applied to the topic of education in a systematic way? What are some possible shortcomings of approaches that start from lived experience?

Organization of the Conference

The conference is organised by EduLab – the Laboratory for Educational Theories of the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory, University of Belgrade.

Keynote Speakers

Gert Biesta (Maynooth University Ireland & University of Edinburgh)

Malte Brinkmann (Humboldt University)

TBA

Application Procedure

Conference **applications** should be sent via e-mail to the following address: wse@ifdt.bg.ac.rs no later than **1 May 2024**.

*Please add the aforementioned email address to your list of safe contacts.

The official languages of the conference are **English and Serbian**.

Possible **presentation formats** are individual or co-authored papers.

Presentations should not exceed **20 minutes**.

We kindly ask you to put the following title in your email subject: *'APP Last name of the applicant'*. The complete proposal in .doc, .docx or .pdf format (Times New Roman, 12, double), needs to contain:

- Abstract (up to 350 words), including title, keywords (up to 10).
- Name and surname, affiliation (include the complete hierarchy of the affiliation), and email address of every author that may be published in the book of abstracts.

There is **no registration fee**. The Program Committee of the conference will select the presenters based on the submitted abstracts. A book of abstracts will be published and distributed during the conference. Papers presented at the conference may be considered for future publication.

Important Dates

Application deadline: 1 May 2024

Notification of acceptance: 5 June 2024

Conference dates: 9–11 October 2024

Links

[\[EduLab\] Laboratory of Educational Theories – INSTITUTE FOR PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL THEORY \(bg.ac.rs\)](#)

[Second International Conference Why Still Education? Emancipation and/or Education: Challenges and Frictions](#)

[Third International Conference Why Still Education? Humanism, Posthumanism and Anti-humanism: Educational Perspectives](#)

If you have any questions, please write to us at wse@ifdt.bg.ac.rs.