

## Matthew Lipman on Philosophy for Children: a Look at the Root Advocacy

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### Abstract

*The striving for philosophical education is among the necessary conditions for effective advocacy of philosophy. In the year 2007, through the book titled *Philosophy, a school of freedom: Teaching philosophy and learning to philosophize: Status and prospects*, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) disclosed the results of its study on the global situation of teaching and learning of philosophy in the academia and outside the academia. Regarding philosophy at academia, UNESCO uncovers, amongst others, the global reality of philosophy for children (P4C), namely, teaching and learning of philosophy at the pre-school and primary school levels. But are children capable of philosophical thinking? That is among many questions which express doubt about children's aptitude for philosophical thinking. Therefore, with particular attention to Tanzanian educational context, this article attempts to show how the root (Lipman's) advocacy embodies strong theoretical reasons and plausible, practical orientation towards P4C. Four sections constitute the article's exposition. Introduction raises the subject of the discussion: the controversy over P4C. Lipman's rational defence of P4C forms the second section. The enquiry into P4C's relevance to Tanzania's educational context provides the third section. An envisaging of an advocacy's status of P4C in Tanzania creates the fourth section.*

**Keywords:** *Introduction to philosophy, philosophy for children, philosophy with children, philosophy education, philosophical enquiry, philosophising*

### 1. Introduction

Introducing the compilation of UNESCO study's results on the global situation of the philosophical education, which appeared 2007, under the title *'Philosophy, a school of freedom: Teaching philosophy and learning to philosophize: Status and prospects*, Koïchiro Matsuura, the former Director-General of UNESCO writes among other things, the following: "What is the teaching of philosophy if not the teaching of freedom and critical reasoning? Philosophy actually implies exercising freedom in and through reflection because it is a matter of making rational judgements and not just expressing opinions, because it is a matter not just of knowing, but of understanding the meaning and the principles of knowing, because it is a matter of developing a critical mind, rampart par excellence against all forms of doctrinaire passion" (UNESCO, 2007, ix). That is undoubtedly an expression of a strong

belief in the unique role of philosophical thinking in human development. However, according to the Kenyan philosopher, Maurice Makumba, “*the relevance of philosophy is not always obvious to everyone. The role of philosophy in the development of human civilization in general and for the realization of the human individual in particular has on many occasions been questioned, ridiculed and sometimes even met with outright rejection altogether*” (Makumba, 2005, 14-15). Makumba’s assertion seems to suggest strongly that the effectiveness of advocacy of philosophical thinking within a particular human society should commence with the question of addressees’ receptiveness to such thinking.

*Mlingano Philosophical Advocacy Attempts* (MPAA) is a proposed philosophical research programme which attends to the problem of addressees’ receptiveness to the philosophical mode of enquiry within Tanzanian intellectual context. The programme mainly aims to disclose necessary conditions for addressees’ acknowledgement of the irreplaceable role of philosophy in human development. Two reflection aspects constitute MPAA: Construction of foundational introductions to philosophy and construction of human philosophy. The two aspects are a response to two reasons attributable to people’s disregard of the role of philosophy: misconception of the inner nature of philosophy for which philosophy itself is not to blame, and philosophy’s self-alienation through its stubborn refusal to speak to the real life of the people (Makumba, 2005). While a foundational introduction reacts to the misconception of the inner nature of philosophy, human philosophy responds to philosophy’s self-alienation.

*Constructing a foundational introduction to philosophy: an investigation to the elements* is MPAA’s inaugural study. It is an enquiry into the nature of a foundational introduction to philosophy. The study proposes four elements that should constitute a foundational introduction to philosophy: A focus on the foundational meaning of philosophy, a focus on addressees’ outlook on the philosophical mode of enquiry, a focus on the permanent value of philosophy, and a focus on facts philosophical education (the programmatic habituation to philosophy). Concerning the facts of philosophical education, the study asserts in chapters four and five that as a way out of a possible misconception of the inner nature of the philosophical thinking, a foundational introduction should eventually be about the urgency of the philosophical education. Indeed, addressees’ conception of the meaningfulness of philosophical thinking lastly presupposes the addressees’ individual and collective habituation to such mode of thinking. And that is adequately achievable through clear advocacy of the systematic locating of philosophy in academic and non-academic open spaces. Regarding that, in the year 2007, UNESCO offered globe-based constructive, useful orientations through its study results named above.

According to the UNESCO study, besides the secondary school and university levels, P4C / PwC, that is, the *teaching of philosophy and learning to philosophise at pre-school and primary levels* is the global reality. However, that is the controversial fact. To be sure, there are many questions raised by *philosophy with children*. The UNESCO considers fourteen questions under four categories. One category concerns the questions of children’s aptitude for philosophical thinking. Accordingly, the UNESCO study highlights eight questions: *What is the relationship between philosophy and children (a philosophical question)? Is philosophical thinking desirable in children (an ethical question)? Can we speak of ‘a right to*

*philosophy*, ‘a right to philosophize’ (a political question)? Are children capable of philosophical thought (a psychological question)? Does the belief that children can learn to do philosophy open up possibilities in itself (a question of will)? What about children in difficult situations, or those who struggle at school (a question of the challenge involved)? Pedagogy and didactics (a question of approach)! Is discussion the primary means (a question about how we learn to do philosophy)? (UNESCO, 2007; Masangu, 2020). The reality of P4C / PwC is, therefore, problematic. Hence, with a particular focus on the relevance to Tanzania intellectual context, this article attempts to show how notably the root (Matthew Lipman’s) advocacy of P4C / PwC embody strong theoretical reasons and plausible, practical orientation towards P4C.

This article is an extension of the rational defence of P4C as accommodated in the MPAA’s inaugural study. On that, it deserves note that, the name Matthew Lipman features in the MPAA’s inaugural study. Therein, Lipman is namely acknowledged as the founding father of the philosophy for and with children. However, the MPAA inaugural work does not incorporate a detailed account of Matthew Lipman’s thoughts. That is not by mistake; it corresponds to the study’s nature. The inaugural work seeks namely mainly to unveil the global witnesses to the realisation of the P4C. The work attends primarily to the question: Where on earth is the locating of the P4C a reality? That choice is based on “the conviction that exposure to life realities of an external world or foreign cultures can help one understand his life-world better and so effect positive changes in the human mindset” (Masangu, 2020, pp. 186-187). The need to re-emphasise the urgency of P4C within Tanzanian educational or intellectual context reasonably urges the disclosure of the thoughts of the root (Lipman’s) advocacy of the P4C.

Structurally, four sections constitute the article’s exposition. Thus, three sections follow this *introduction* which is the statement of the controversy over P4C. *Lipman’s rational defence of P4C* forms the second section. The enquiry into *P4C’s relevance to Tanzania’s educational context* provides the third section. An envisaging of an advocacy’s status of P4C in Tanzania creates the fourth section.

## **2. Lipman’s defence of philosophy for children**

### **2.1 Explanatory reasons**

What *philosophy for children* is or is all about is informatively captured in the following statements: “*PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN is an attempt to reconstruct and present the history of philosophy in such a way that children can appropriate it for themselves so as to reason well in a self-correcting manner. For children to develop the ability to think well for themselves about matters of importance, what is required is an educational enterprise consisting of philosophical dialogue within the context of a classroom community of inquiry. Such a community concerns itself with development of good critical and creative thinking and the cultivation of good judgement*” (Sharp, 1992, p. xiii). Further: “*But it is much more than this: Philosophy for Children is a method of dialogical reflection coupled with twenty-five*

*hundred years of various views and systems of thought regarding the nature of the universe, the characteristics of the good life, and the cultivation of wisdom*” (Sharp, 1992, p. xiii). Moreover, in his article *Philosophy with Children: The Lipman-Sharp Approach to Philosophy for Children*, Joe Oyler writes, amongst other, the following: “*Philosophy for Children (P4C) is a designation associated with Matthew Lipman’s and Ann Margaret Sharp’s particular approach, which exists within a broader, global educational movement, Philosophy with Children (PwC). Today, many approaches that share similar commitments to the Lipman-Sharp (L.S.) approach use the P4C label as well*” (Oyler, 2016, p. 1).

How does Lipman reasonably defend P4C? What are his arguments for P4C? An answering of those questions shall proceed in a twofold thematic order. The first part concerns Lipman’s awareness of the denial of the philosophy to children. Lipman’s defence follows that.

### *2.1.1 Concerning Lipman’s awareness of the denial of philosophy to Children*

Matthew Lipman was very aware of the difficulty of receptiveness to P4C. Here below are some of his direct statements.

- “Seldom in the history of philosophy has children’s capacity for philosophical reflection even been considered, much less encouraged in any systematic way” (Lipman, 1994, p. 3).
- “The capacity of children to think philosophically was scarcely considered because the very conception of philosophy, widely shared for many centuries, was that of a discipline so complex and formidable as to be unintelligible to most adults, much less children. This helps to explain why, during a period in which virtually every other academic discipline was reformulated to be made available to children, philosophy remained cloistered in the university” (Lipman, 1994, p. 4).
- “Philosophy was believed to require [...] informed thinkers and children were by definition too immature to cope with so formidable a discipline” (Lipman, 1994, p. 4).
- “The perception of the relevance of philosophy to childhood could not have been the product just of redefinition of philosophy by philosophers. What was needed was the redefinition of education” (Lipman, 1994, p. 6).
- “The ancient and medieval world did not doubt the capacity of children to study, absorb and master intellectual skills, and engage effectively in numerous mental acts. What children were not trusted to do was to reflect upon, appraise, and evaluate the content of the materials learned” (Lipman, 1994, p. 6).
- “Most other adults had no access to philosophy and were unable to hear the philosophical dimensions of their children’s discourse. Thus, for many centuries, we know a great deal about what children were required to learn but have hardly any record of childhood speculations about metaphysical, epistemological, moral, and aesthetic perplexities. They were not thought to merit preservation” (Lipman, 1994, p. 6).

- “Pre-adult studies are expected to prepare the way for the more sophisticated treatments of the same subjects in the later years. Interestingly enough, however, this was not the case with philosophy. Because curriculum developers could think of no way to make philosophy accessible to children (even though Kant had pointed out that the appropriate approach was to engage them in doing philosophical inquiry rather than to bore them to death by trying to get them to commit it to memory), they invented the excuse that children and philosophy were mutually exclusive” (Lipman, 1999, pp. 22-23).

### *2.1.2 Concerning Lipman’s defence of philosophy for children*

According to Lipman, there are reasonable explanations that justify the need for the advocacy of philosophy. Here below are examples of Lipman’s direct statements.

- “If Philosophy is seen to represent the natural fulfilment and culmination of childhood curiosity and wonder, of childhood speculation about the nature of things, and of childhood concern for truth about reality, then nothing could be more in keeping with children’s own intellectual dispositions than philosophical activities. Thus, the first justification for introducing philosophy into elementary education is that properly redefined, philosophy and childhood are eminently congenial.” (Lipman, 1994, p. 7).
- “A second justification is that children need critical tools that will enable them to assess effectively the philosophical dimension of the present curriculum. Critical thinking in itself cannot accomplish this end because, by itself, it is merely an inventory of scrupulous precautions, the prudence born of past experience” (Lipman, 1994, p. 7).
- “A third justification for doing philosophy with children is their need to find meaning in their own lives. Their having a philosophical impulse does not necessarily mean that they can discover by themselves the meanings they seek. This is where the enormous repertoire of philosophical ideas can be valuable. Children are curious, and we can show them an enormous amount, in ways they can understand, that will fascinate them and train their curiosity to work constructively” (Lipman, 1994, p. 8).
- “The fourth justification follows from the third. If children find the education they are being given meaningless, they will come to distrust it. A society that wishes its children to take education seriously must provide better incentives that ours has so far” (Lipman, 1994, p. 8).
- “Do children need philosophy? Philosophy definitely improves children’s thinking, by giving them practice in discussing ideas and in examining how they are connected with another. Children who study philosophy through the earlier grades are more prepared to think better in the later grades of schooling” (Lipman, 1999, p. 23).



- “Do children like philosophy? Since it gives them an opportunity to form and express their opinions, of course, they like it. It also helps them form classroom communities of deliberative inquiry, which they love” (Lipman, 1999, p. 23).
- “Can Children Do Philosophy? Children can engage in deliberations about the sorts of roughly defined issues or concepts that philosophers like to discuss. Once they discover that the teacher doesn’t pretend to be an authority about those concepts (e.g., justice, goodness, fairness, etc.), once they can express their opinions (with the understanding that they will be asked for their reasons for holding such opinions), once they can confer with one another without penalties, and once thinking for oneself is considered praiseworthy, the problem is not to get them started but to get them to stop” (Lipman, 1999, p. 23).

## ***2.2 Lipman’s comprehensive pedagogical approach: a practical orientation***

Matthew Lipman was born on 24. August 1923 in Vineland, New Jersey (USA) and died on 26. December 2010. His choice to bring philosophy to children was conceived during his 15 years of the professorship in philosophy at Columbia University. Lipman was namely challenged mainly by the inadequacy of reasoning skills he encountered in his students. Thus, as his response to that challenge, he sought to develop reasoning skills through the teaching of logic. His decision was based on his belief in children’s ability to think abstractly.

While still at Columbia University, 1969, Lipman released *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery* as “the first didactic philosophical novel to be written for children” (Sharp, 1992, xiii). Notably, the novel marked the origins of P4C; it opened the door to a broader acceptance of philosophy for children. On this, it is remarked that “since the publication of Lipman’s novel, Philosophy for Children has entered many classrooms” (Sharp, 1992, xiii). Indeed, bringing philosophy to children’s classrooms “has been a gradual process involving experimental research, curriculum construction and teacher training” (Sharp, 1992, xiii). In 1972, Lipman left Columbia University for Montclair State College to establish the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC). In 1974, as already stated above, his plan became a reality (Montclair State University, 2019, July 10). The subsequent years were filled with rigorous academic advocacy undertakings by IAPC. Therefore, the publication of *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery* and the academic accomplishments of the IAPC define what is often referred to as *the Lipman Approach to Philosophy for Children* (Oyler, 2016). Besides, it is observed that the notable academic achievements of the IAPC are “better understood as the result of an extensive and equal collaboration between Lipman (192[3]-2010) and Ann Margaret Sharp (1942-2010), cofounders of the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children” (Oyler, 2016, p. 1). That explains why it is reasonable to refer to *the Lipman Approach* as *the Lipman-Sharp Approach*. It deserves note that IAPC is a member of the International Council for Philosophy Inquiry with Children (ICPIC), established in 1985. And with numerous affiliate centres worldwide, the IAPC has become the home of Lipman Approach to Philosophy for Children.

It is remarked that “by 1973, it was apparent that if *Philosophy for Children* was to be presented to elementary-school children by classroom teachers on a large scale, manuals would have to be constructed that would not only contain a myriad of exercises and discussion plans aimed at fostering dialogue in the classroom and at reinforcing the cognitive skills introduced but would also provide the teachers with an introduction to the context of the philosophical novel and a way of proceeding” (Sharp, 1992, p. xiii). Consequently, an instructional manual to accompany *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery*, titled *Philosophical Inquiry* appeared in 1975 (Montclair State University, 2019, July 10). Together with the novel, the manual “forms the textual core of the initial teacher-education program in *Philosophy for Children*” (Sharp, 1992, xiii). Here, it should be noted that initially, Lipman imagined his approach to P4C “as a series of such novels, although he had a hunch that the program could become more than a curricular one” (Oyler, 2016, p. 2). Accompanied by significant participation of Sharp, Lipman’s efforts evolved into a unique “pedagogical program aimed at the improvement of thinking with a particular commitment to rigorous and respectful dialogue” (Oyler, 2016, p. 2). And with the contributions of other colleagues from all over the world, the Lipman-Sharp Approach “continues to be unique within the field of PwC, and pre-college philosophy in that it represents a comprehensive pedagogical approach with its own empirically verified, systematic curriculum and classroom methodology” (Oyler, 2016, p. 2).

According to Oyler, four distinguishing features of the Lipman-Sharp approach to P4C underlie its unique place in the field. For Oyler, although other programs and approaches across PwC reflect similar features, none reflect all four systematically and comprehensively as Lipman-Sharp approach does. The four characteristic features include: (a) clear theoretical foundations in philosophy, psychology, and educational theory, (b) a systematic curriculum involving philosophical novels and teacher manuals, (c) clearly defined pedagogical objectives that guide and inform the approach, and (d) an empirically researched and supported model of classroom discussion (Oyler, 2016).

### 2.2.1 Theoretical foundations

Regarding the educational theoretical foundations, the curriculum and methodology of Lipman’s approach to P4C rest on social-constructivist learning theories according to which “a human development is socially situated, and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others” (McKinley, 2005, p. 184). Those theories take social interaction (dialogue) to be “a mechanism for the internalization of new and more complex ways of thinking and speaking” (Oyler, 2016, p. 2). Observably, “an important insight of these theories is that the modelling of these more complex ways of speaking and thinking is not exclusively the role of the teacher. When groups of young people engage in thoughtful and disciplined discussion, any one of them may activate effective way of thinking and speaking that serve as strategies to be internalized by others” (Oyler, 2016, p. 2).

The philosophical foundations of Lipman approach to P4C owe much to Lipman’s and Sharp’s vast knowledge of philosophy, especially of the Western tradition (Oyler, 2016). For example, Lipman appeal to Western philosophy in defence of the urgency of P4C is nicely

captured in the following statement: “Vico, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and many others had denounced the tradition of the child as a passive recipient of external sensations and had urged instead that children be seen as active agents who learn by doing and creating, full partners with the teacher in learning” (Lipman, 1994, p. 6-7). Regarding pedagogical components, Lipman’s P4C is significantly grounded in the insights of many American philosophers such as Justus Buchler, and the pragmatics John Dewey and Charles Sanders Peirce. As for Dewey’s insights, for example, Lipman declares, among other things, the following: “John Dewey’s contribution, it must be acknowledged, dwarfs those of all the others, much as does his standing in the philosophy of education. For surely it was Dewey who, in modern times, foresaw that education had to be redefined as the fostering of thinking rather than as the transmission of knowledge” (Lipman, 1998, p. 4). And further: “Rejecting both romanticism and its opponents, Dewey saw the child neither as “trailing clouds of glory” nor as a “barbarian at the gates” but as a being of such creative promise as to require on our part a grasp of the whole of civilisation for any understanding of the meaning and portent of the child’s developing conduct” (Lipman, 1998, p. 4).

It also deserves note that “Lipman’s and Sharp’s conception of critical thinking is also strongly influenced by pragmatist epistemology that sees the “truth” replaced by “reflective equilibrium” as something that evolves over time, through an ongoing process of inquiry, communal scrutiny and verification in action” (Oyler, 2016, p. 2).

### 2.2.2 *The IAPC Curriculum*

The other pillar of Lipman approach to P4C is the IAPC Curriculum which involves philosophical novels and teacher manuals. As said above, each philosophical novel is accompanied by the teacher’s manual. Those two – the novel and the manual – constitute a curriculum’s programme (Montclair State University, 2019, July 10). Hence, *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery* (1969) and *Philosophical Inquiry* (1975) form the first programme. Till the end of 1988, the construction of six more programmes in Philosophy for Children had already followed. In 1996, the IAPC released the eighth programme.



Table 1  
*Eight more programmes in Philosophy for Children*

s/n	Novel's name	Accompanying teacher's manual	Target Grade
1.	<i>Harry Stottlemeier's Discovery</i> (1969): Reasoning about Reasoning	<i>Philosophical Inquiry</i> (1975)	5-6
2.	<i>Lisa</i> (1976): Reasoning in Ethics	<i>Ethical Inquiry</i> (1977)	7-8
3.	<i>Suki</i> (1978): Reasoning in Language Arts	<i>Writing: How and why</i> (1980)	9-10
4.	<i>Mark</i> (1979): Reasoning in Social Studies	<i>Social Inquiry</i> (1980)	11-12
5.	<i>Pixie</i> (1981): Reasoning about Language	<i>Looking for Meaning</i> (1982)	3-4
6.	<i>Kio and Gus</i> (1982): Reasoning about Nature	<i>Wondering at the world</i> (1986)	2-3
7.	<i>Elfie</i> (1987): Reasoning about Thinking	<i>Getting Our Thoughts Together</i> (1988)	1
8.	<i>Nous</i> (1996): Reasoning about Ethics	<i>Deciding What to Do</i> (1996)	4-6

The eight programmes published by IAPC with two others published by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) – *the Doll Hospital* (1999) and *Geraldo* (2000) – constitute what today is known as IAPC curriculum. The curriculum “is designed to help teachers and students develop a philosophical ear – to recognise philosophical dimensions of their experience and of school subjects – to engage in group dialogue and to practice critical, creative, and caring thinking” (Oyler, 2016, p. 3).

It is remarked that “one of the [...] unique contributions Lipman made to the field of PwC is the philosophical novel as philosophical text” (Oyler, 2016, p. 3). Furthermore, the curriculum’s “materials have been translated into over 40 languages and are now used in over 60 countries” (Montclair State University, 2019, July 10).

### 2.2.3 Pedagogical objectives

Central to the Lipman approach to P4C “is a commitment to helping children strengthen their capacities for inquiry, with the goal of helping them to arrive at their own reasonable, philosophical judgments concerning questions and issues that arise in their own experience. This commitment is established and elucidated in a vast collection of theoretical materials from Lipman, Sharp, and their colleagues in P4C and PwC” (Oyler, 2016, p. 2). Regarding that, it is observed that although often generalized as empowering children to “think for themselves”, the advocates of Lipman approach to P4C understand “thinking for oneself” to involve the application and development of critical, creative, and caring thinking (Oyler, 2016).

### *2.2.3.1 Critical thinking*

Among many critical thinking programmes and perspectives, Lipman approach to P4C “is unique in its focus on judgement as the key function of critical thinking” (Oyler, 2016, pp. 2-3). From the perspective of Lipman approach to P4C, critical thinking entails the application of criteria, sensitivity to context, inferential reasoning, metacognition, and self-correction. (Oyler, 2016). For Lipman approach to P4C, critical thinking is further about the application. In that regard, “the product of this kind of thinking results in a judgment that can be put into practice or initiate change” (Oyler, 2016, p. 3). To accomplish that, IAPC curriculum’s “teacher manuals and methodological literature reflect a focus on testing ideas in action” (Oyler, 2016, p. 3).

### *2.2.3.2 Creative thinking*

Unlike critical thinking, which might be conceived as the application of the rule and standard criteria of logical and inferential reasoning a given context, creative thinking involves transcending those rules to construct new possible answers, new criteria, or new ways of framing things (Oyler, 2016; Montclair State University, 2019, July 10).

### *2.2.3.3 Caring thinking*

The role of caring thinking is considered to be one of the unique aspects of the Lipman approach’s pedagogical vision and its conception of higher-order thinking (Oyler, 2016). According to Oyler, “the idea of caring thinking arose from Lipman’s and Sharp’s sensitivity to the role that our passions and emotions play in thinking” (Oyler, 2016, p. 3). Therefore, caring thinking refers to thinking that “reflects care through a sensitivity to how we are thinking, what is worth thinking about, and what is important to consider as we are thinking” (Oyler, 2016, p. 3). On this, it remarked that “a number of P4C programs around the world, especially ones concerned with developing pro-social behaviors and the reduction of violence, make caring thinking their central focus” (Oyler, 2016, p. 3).

## **2.3 The Lipman’s advocacy of P4C and Tanzanian educational context**

### *2.3.1 Narrowing the context: From the World to Tanzania*

This article is a contribution to MPAA, the Tanzania-focused philosophical advocacy programme. So, much as the exposition could be relevant to varied contexts, it is aimed primarily to attend to Tanzanian intellectual or educational context. That urges, for example, a specific question: What does the Lipman’s advocacy of P4C precisely mean to Tanzanian educational context?

In 1998 Matthew Lipman said: “Our goal [IAPC’s goal] is to introduce P4C into grade-school classrooms around the world, first as a required subject and secondly, as a core that connects with all the other subjects in the curriculum” (Lipman, 1999, p. 23). This statement is part of the response to his question at the Twentieth World Congress of Philosophy. The question reads: What is happening with P4C? (Lipman, 1999). Indeed, in the years after 1974, the IAPC’s advocacy has registered notable successes across the globe. In that regard, Lipman (1999) discloses, amongst others, the following registered achievements: The World Congress of Philosophy (1998) recognises “Philosophy for Children” as a new sub-area of philosophy. Also in 1998, UNESCO offered to help with the worldwide dissemination of P4C. Thus far it has organised and subsidised a conference of 17 or so international experts on pre-adult philosophy. These experts recommended several steps needed for the more efficient dissemination around the world. Furthermore, the first PhD programme in elementary school philosophy began (1995) at Ibero Americana University in Mexico City. An Ed. D. programme in Philosophy for Children will begin 1999 at Montclair State University, New Jersey. Moreover, the Master’s programme in Philosophy for Children, besides the one at Montclair State, is also found in Brazil and Australia. The International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children, founded in 1986 and meeting bi-annually ever since, is the membership for teachers, administrators, and parents interested in P4C.

What is happening with P4C? Undoubtedly, that is continually a relevant question. It should be raised by anyone who is seriously committed to children’s intellectual emancipation. It is over two decades now (2020) since Lipman reaffirmed the IAPC’s goal in 1998 and 46 years since the founding in 1974 of the IAPC. Is it not now appropriate to narrow or particularise the scope of Lipman’s question? Lipman is concerned with the global situation of the dissemination of P4C: What is happening with P4C (in the world)? Today, four years before the celebration of half a century of the existence of IAPC, more gainfully, it is high time that Lipman’s question becomes a continent-focused. But most fruitfully, it should be appropriated by each of the world’s countries. Consequently, there should be engagement with questions like, ‘what is happening with P4C’ in Tanzania?

What is happening with P4C in Tanzania? With that question, readers are, most probably, eager to discover progress stages reached thus far regarding the advocacy of P4C in Tanzania. But that would be the case only for those readers who are not aware of the exposition of MPAA’s inaugural study. There it is asserted: “The formal study of philosophy is negligibly honoured in the pre-university Tanzania’s education curricula” (Masangu, 2020, p. 55). Indeed, as per Tanzanian education curricula, philosophy is not taught at pre-school and primary school levels. Neither does the teaching of philosophy exist at secondary school ordinary level. A scant study of philosophy is available at the advanced level of secondary school education.

Concerning the study of philosophy at tertiary education, MPAA’s inaugural study discloses that the further reception of the study of philosophy in Tanzania’s education system can lastly be traced in the academic enterprises at the tertiary level. The inaugural study underscores developments registered by few Tanzanian universities in advocacy of philosophy through the incorporation of the study of philosophy in their academic programmes. Much as that is an

acknowledgeable step, the clear view is that the study of philosophy is mainly alien to Tanzania's tertiary education (Masangu, 2020).

Therefore, it is evident that concerning the Tanzanian educational context, the lack of philosophy for children is not a particular case. It is no more than one of the faces of the enduring common challenge, namely, the homelessness of the philosophical mode of enquiry in Tanzanian educational context; yes, even in the adult education, philosophy is meagrely honoured. As it stands, Tanzania needs vigorous comprehensive advocacy of philosophical mode of enquiry; the advocacy which seriously takes care of all levels of education: pre-school to tertiary levels. But the pre-adult level is the most vulnerable. It can easily be forgotten, neglected or deleted from anticipated advocacy programmes, based even on feeble reasons. Regarding that, Matthew Lipman's advocacy of P4C, decisively encountered, provides theoretical reasons and practical orientation which are worth embracing.

### 2.3.2 P4C and the day-to-day children-based educational orientation in Tanzania

Taking Lipman's advocacy of P4C to Tanzania is admittedly by no means bringing completely 'new songs' to the Tanzanian educational context. Indeed, the urgency of 'education for children' is integral to people's everyday-life educational awareness. In truth, it is integral to people's traditional didactic awareness which is powerfully embodied in the everyday-life language. To be sure, the everyday language of the Tanzanian society accommodates many proverbs which underline the firmness of the traditional African belief in the necessity of education for children. Some examples of Swahili proverbs should help to clarify the point.

- *Mtoto umleavyo ndiyo akuavyo* (Translation: As you bring up your child so it will be).
- *Samaki mkunje angali mbichi* (Translation: Bend the fish when it is still wet).
- *Adabisha mtoto angali mdogo* (Translation: Teach a child good manners when it is still young).
- *Mchelea mwana kulia, hulia mwenyewe* (Translation: One who fears the tears of his child, will cry himself).

According to those proverbs, what the 'future results' will be, presupposes what happens with the present time. So, the manner a child matures intellectually, ethically etc. depends very much on what happens to his childhood. In the everyday language of the Tanzanian society, those proverbs are used to assert the necessity of teaching children life's values when they are still young. They are used to campaign for the obligation of leading children to the right understanding of life's values when they are still young. Thus, according to the everyday educational awareness, the orientation of an individual to the right understanding of life's values should necessarily start as early as possible; it should start at the individual's childhood if it is to have desired effects.

But if indeed it is about a right understanding of the meaning of life, philosophical thinking cannot reasonably be forgotten or ignored. What therefore Lipman's advocacy of P4C means

to Tanzania people's everyday didactic awareness is that Lipman adds to that awareness a new and essential horizon and thus elevating or complementing it.

### 3. Conclusion

The primary aim to advocate the irreplaceable role of the philosophy in human life should be to awaken addressees' intellectual disposition that is receptive to philosophy. That is excellently achievable, amongst others, through philosophical education at academia. Now, while the striving for such education at the secondary and tertiary level might seem a natural thing to do, advocacy of P4C / PwC is debatable. In that regard, I believe that Lipman's theoretical reasons and practical orientation, the root advocacy of P4C, offer a reasonable basis for advocacy of P4C.

As seen above, for Lipman, the denial of philosophy to children rests on unwarranted cancellation of children's strong aptitude to the philosophical mode of enquiry. In truth, one stands, even as a child, at the door into of philosophical enquiry, when she or he raises the philosophical questions (Anzenbacher 2002; Masangu 2020). So, in Lipman's view, for example, *"if Philosophy is seen to represent the natural fulfilment and culmination of childhood curiosity and wonder, of childhood speculation about the nature of things, and of childhood concern for truth about reality, then nothing could be more in keeping with children's own intellectual dispositions than philosophical activities. Thus, the first justification for introducing philosophy into elementary education is that properly redefined, philosophy and childhood are eminently congenial"* (Lipman, 1994, p. 7). Lipman's firm commitment to P4C manifests itself further in the disclosure of practical orientation which is embodied in his comprehensive pedagogical approach.

This article offers a short, but an informative extension of the exposition of MPAA's inaugural study. Indeed, Lipman has spoken and written extensively about P4C. His approach to P4C is doubtlessly a significant source of inspiration and invaluable treasure to the world of education. According to Oyler (2016, p. 6), the Lipman's approach to P4C "continues to grow through the work of IAPC via educational programming, dissemination, and professional affiliation and through continued empirical and theoretical research." For Oyler (2016, p. 6), the approach "continues to produce empirically verified educational results, and the IAPC is committed to increasing the effectiveness of the approach" (Oyler, 2016, p. 6).

Regarding Tanzania's educational context, it should be said that he continuing growth and production of the Lipman's approach should awaken the nation and individual Tanzanians to critically think of the place of the children in their educational endeavours. Admittedly, if a nation firmly believes that her rewarding future presupposes, amongst other, an education system which rests on strong foundations and determinedly cares for children, the formation of her national curricula for all levels including pre-school cannot plausibly encounter P4C negatively or even indifferently.



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