

CALL FOR PAPERS

# International Conference

## Comenius: education, anthropology & cosmology

Naarden/Amsterdam

The Netherlands

14-16 November 2024



Education lies at the heart of Johannes Amos Comenius' (1592-1670) thinking, works and practical efforts. Since the nineteenth century his educational thought has been intensively studied, often from the perspective of modern educational theory and with the aim to present Comenius as its founding father and a pioneer of a number of modern principles, such as sense-based learning, life-long education, democratisation of education and various innovative didactical principles.

This research, however, often suffered from anachronistic approaches and therefore Comenius' broader educational theories and his proposals for reforms of schools and didactics deserve a much deeper historicization, examination, problematization and contextualisation. The conference aims to address this important theme in the context of Comenius' broader views of mankind, primarily related to his anthropology, which itself is part of his cosmology: his vision of the unity and harmony between man and the wider world of nature and universe in general.

Topics of papers may include, but are not limited to:

**Educational theory:** His educational concepts, especially his ideas on **sense-based learning** and operationalisation of his ideas need to be reassessed. How were his theory and practical efforts received by contemporaries? To what extent was Comenius considered to be "modern" or "innovative" in his own time? Within which (educational) tradition can we place Comenius if we revise traditional canonical narrative of the history of education? Related to this, Comenius' **school leadership and teaching** are important topics. How did he operationalise his ideas in this practical context?

**Comenius' religious ideas:** To what extent were Comenius' educational theories embedded in his religious ideas, those about the paradisiacal origin and divine creation of man? To what extent were his and his contemporaries' concepts of eschatology related to educational reform projects? Related to this are his **practical religious educational texts** and their wider praxeological and religious educational contexts, for example *Praxis pietatis*, *Regulae vitae*, and homiletics, in contemporary contexts.

**Comenius' anthropology:** How did Comenius envision the 'learning man and woman'? What is his view of mankind? Where does he stand in relation to the contemporary scholarly community, both his supporters, his critics and alternative branches of early modern anthropology? On which contemporary anthropological ideas did Comenius base his own view of humanity? How is his anthropology related to optimistic Renaissance ideas of human beings and to Reformation ideas of corrupted human nature? How is his educational project related to the discussion about free will, fate and providence?

**Comenius' cosmology :** What does his vision of the unity and coherence between man and the wider world entail? How does his educational theory and work inform and/or represent Comenius' view of the world and vice versa? How are his concepts of pansophia and universal reform related to his educational efforts? What is, for instance, the place of his textbooks, like *Orbis sensualium pictus*, in the context of early modern encyclopaedias and systems of knowledge? What is the relevance of the macrocosmos-microcosmos teaching for Comenius's educational theories?

**Comenius' educational legacy:** How are these ideas on education, schooling and upbringing received in later times, especially in a museological and educational sense? How can they be and are they still instrumentalized? (workshops)

We would like to divide our conference into 1) academic panels focusing on Comenius and his contemporaries from the perspective of his own time, and 2) workshops, in which Comenius' educational legacy and his image in collective memory can be discussed in the context of current broader museological and educational debates.

Please send in an abstract (200 words, in English or German) and a short (max. 1 page) academic biography (including name, degree, and current affiliation) by **February 29<sup>th</sup> 2024** to [comenius2024@comeniusmuseum.nl](mailto:comenius2024@comeniusmuseum.nl)

Please indicate if you would like to contribute to an academic panel, workshop, or both. The conference committee will make the final selections by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024.

The conference is organized by the Comenius Museum and Mausoleum in Naarden, the University of Groningen, the Museum of Jan Amos Comenius, Uherský Brod, and the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague.