



Prof. Dr. Walter Omar Kohan

Department of Childhood Studies, State University of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

"Paulo Freire, childhood and a revolutionary education"

BiWi-International Lecture Series

Wednesday, November 15, 5 pm, Hörsaal 1

Sensengasse 3A, 1. OG

The educational work of Paulo Freire, now more than ever, continues to encourage educators to put their educational work into question. Education philosopher and Freire biographer Walter Kohan emphasizes Freire's interest for childhood and calls for more attention to be paid to this subject when dealing with Freire's thinking. For Freire, Kohan says, childhood is not just a stage of development in human life. Childhood for him means openness and sensitivity to curiosity, dreams and change, which should not be lost even in old age. The synthesis of education and social change is one of the great themes in Paulo Freire's work, which, for Walter Kohan, gains new dynamism through the inclusion of the transformative force of the inner child in each of us.

Walter Omar Kohan is a Professor of Philosophy of Education in the Department of Childhood Studies at the State University of Rio de Janeiro, Brasil. Since 2000 he is a Senior Research member of the National Council of Scientific and Technologic Development (CNPQ, Brazil) and of the Foundation of Support of Research of the State of Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ, Brazil). Dr. Kohan is the co-editor of *Childhood & Philosophy*, the ICPIIC journal. Since 2002, he has organized the Biennial International Colloquiums of Philosophy and Education in Rio de Janeiro.

In his most recent book "Paulo Freire: A Philosophical Biography", Walter Kohan interweaves philosophical, educational, and biographical elements of Freire's life, which prompt us to reflect on what we thought we knew about Freire, and about his idea of close ties between education, social justice and politics more broadly. It offers a new and timely reading of Freire's work and life. The book also includes a conversation with Lutgardes Costa Freire, Paulo's Freire's youngest son. In another publication of his – "Uma viagem de sonhos impossíveis/A journey of impossible dreams", Walter Kohan tells the dreams of a traveler and his hosts on a journey of 15,000 km, travelled for 100 days on roads in the northeast of Brazil to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Paulo Freire. Maps, images, testimonies, letters, poems, accounts written by the traveller and his hosts present the trails of a girl pedagogy of the question in schools, universities, settlements, social associations, community centers, libraries, kindergartens and cultural centers. The book includes a conversation with Fatima Freire and the learners of an inspiring journey for readers who want to continue to dream of another Brazil and another world.

This event is organized by the Department of Education of University of Vienna and will be followed by an open reception.