

12th research seminar of the ESREA Network

History of Adult Education and Training in Europe

First call for papers

Adult education and learning for social change in the 19th-20th centuries: Ideas, movements, and circulation of knowledge

Federal Institute for Adult Education

5360 St. Wolfgang, Austria

27 June – 1 July 2022

This research seminar will focus on historical variations in relationships between adult education and learning, collective and individual emancipation, and social movements in Europe during the 19th and 20th centuries. In a Europe characterised, on the one hand, by nation-state formation, and, on the other hand, by breakdown of multi-ethnic states, like the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Czarist Russia, exceptionally diverse economic, political, social, and cultural movements were responsible for the ‘social organisation of communication and adult learning’, which played a key role in the circulation ideas concerning social change, organisation of society distribution of opportunities, and civil rights. Adult education and learning were central to the dissemination and acquisition of knowledge organised by multi-layered civil society movements which sought to empower groups and individuals in interpreting and sharing their experiences of class, religion, gender, region, race, language, citizenship, and nationality during the differential modernisation of European societies.

Although marked by significant variations in industrialisation and urbanisation, the social organisation of adult education and learning in European societies involved the dissemination and acquisition of knowledge among diverse audiences of potential adult learners. These learning activities ranged, on the one hand, from recruiting and training national and local organisers, and, on the other hand, organising and delivering learning activities for the rank-and-file membership of political, social, workers, women’s, suffrage, and temperance movements. The core modalities of these ‘social forms’ of adult education and learning were characterised by a) institutionalised ‘formal’ instruction, classes, lectures, and demonstrations; b) sociability of non-formal ‘mutual learning’ organised by reading circles, book clubs, popular

libraries, and discussion groups; and c) informal schemes of ‘self-organised learning’ characterised by autodidactic activities involving self-direction and auto-formation.

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, innovative forms of adult education and learning were associated with the aspirations of social reform movements to disseminate knowledge in order to change society, and this involved organised critique of repressive economic, political, social, and religious regimes. These critical repertoires also constituted the roots of ‘oppositional’ forms of collective and individual learning which were organised by diverse utopian, socialist, communist, anarchist, syndicalist, feminist, suffrage, and linguistic movements. The phenomenon of ‘underground’ learning was often vital to these movements when autonomous forms of adult education and learning in the public sphere were censored, repressed, prohibited, or banned by conservative and authoritarian regimes.

Throughout the volatile 19th and 20th centuries, a recurrent structural feature of adult education and learning comprised those social forms of communication and learning which were organised by migrant, émigré, refugee, and exiled diaspora communities ‘elsewhere’. Many border-crossers also returned, however, often bringing with them ideas and organisational forms acquired elsewhere through cross-border, cosmopolitan, trans-national, and internationalist movements. When books were banned, clandestine films seized, and radio stations prohibited, innovative forms of adult education and learning constituted significant historical dimensions of organised responses to navigating border-crossings throughout Europe. These cultural forms later became structurally recurrent features of the transformation of emergent internationalist communist and Bolshevik revolutionary activities into the post-1926 repressive Stalinist cultural regime. Post-1945, state socialism characterised the organisation of adult education and learning in the USSR, Central Europe, the Baltic states, and the Balkans, while forms of post-war resistance cultural resistance remain significant today in terms of the critical potential of internet as a mobilising medium for organised adult learning.

Significant cross-national variations in the social organisation of adult education and learning were associated, furthermore, with structural shifts in the relationships between nation states, civil society organisations, and markets as providers of organised learning. A mixed economy of philanthropy, independent workers’ education, and markets was gradually replaced during the 19th century by social reform movements’ efforts to resolve the ‘social question’ together with the emergence of progressive liberal/radical forces opposed to clerical paternalism and structurally conservative authorities. Social organisation of adult education and learning in the early 20th century was increasingly characterised by forms of co-operation between nation states, socialist parties and social democratic movements and in establishing ‘state-recognised providers’ of adult education. It is necessary to recognise, however, that adult education and learning was also appropriated from early 19th century by nationalist movements, and later put to work by corporatist regimes in mobilising nationalist, fascist, and national-socialist mass movements throughout Europe. State funding in Western Europe served to incorporate recognised providers of adult education in the post-1945 development of welfare states. Later 20th century developments were characterised by populist national revival movements based on reworked 19th century principles of personal responsibility, employability and self-help, in the service of private profit.

Call for papers

The network now calls for papers that report on original historical research that addresses the social organisation of adult education and learning with special reference to studies of:

- a) social movements, organised adult learning, and the circulation of political, economic, social, and cultural knowledge in relation to ideas for social reform;
- b) forms of knowledge, methods of learning, and change-oriented learning activities in relation to mobilising group and individual participation in movement learning activities;
- c) social organisation of communication and learning in relation to institutionalised ‘formal’ learning; and/or, sociability of non-formal ‘mutual learning’; and/or, informal schemes of ‘self-organised learning’ characterised by autodidactic activities;
- d) organising and delivering learning activities intended for a) national and local organisers of ‘movement education’, or b) for the rank-and-file membership of political, social, workers, women’s, suffrage, and temperance movements;
- e) studies of communication and learning involving migrant, émigré, refugee, and exiled diaspora communities.

History of this network:

This ESREA network first met in Leiden, the Netherlands, in 1991. To celebrate its 30th anniversary, the network returns in 2022 to the Federal Institute of Adult Education, St. Wolfgang in Austria, which hosted this network’s third seminar in 1993, and the first ESREA triennial conference in 1995. The convenors wish to express their thanks for the hospitality extended to ESREA over the past three decades by the Ministry of Education, and the Federal Institute of Adult Education.

Previous meetings of this network

2018: Paris, France, *Pioneering women and men in European adult education in 1860s-1910s*

2013: Berlin, Germany, *Historical Approach Specificities in the Context of Adult Education Research* (Round table session in the framework of the ESREA 7th European Research Conference)

2011: Budapest, Hungary, *Adult Education and Citizenship. Relations in Space and Time* (together with the ESREA Network on Active Democratic Citizenship)

2009: Turku, Finland, *Life Course and Learning in History: Cultural, Societal and Individual Perspectives on Adult Education and Training in Europe*

2006: Paris, France, *The 'Social Question': European-wide Struggles for Adult Education in the Public Sphere during the 19th and 20th Centuries.*

Earlier conferences were held in Frankfurt, Germany (1997); Strobl, Austria (1996); Salamanca, Spain (1994); Strobl, Austria (1993); York, United Kingdom (1992); Leiden, Netherlands (1991).

Convenors

Francoise F. Laot, Université de Paris 8 Vincennes-Saint-Denis, France

Kirsi Ahonen, University of Tampere, Finland

Scientific Committee

Michal Bron, independent researcher, Uppsala, Sweden

Fanny Gallot, Université Paris-Est Créteil, France

Barry J. Hake, independent researcher, The Netherlands

Jenny Jansson, Uppsala University, Sweden

Christian H. Stifter, Austrian Archives for Adult Education, Vienna, Austria

Submission of Abstracts

Abstracts must be max. 500 words in WORD.

Please submit two separate files: one containing only the Abstract, and the other including the Abstract, your name and your institutional affiliation.

Deadline for Abstracts: 31 October 2021.

Addresses for submitting the Abstract:

francoise.laot@univ-paris8.fr and kirsi.a.m.ahonen@gmail.com

Important dates

Deadline for abstracts: 31 October 2021

Notification of acceptance: 30 November 2021

Deadline for full papers: 1 May 2022

Conference dates: 27 June-1 July 2022

Accommodation and meals

The Federal Institute of Adult Education has made it possible to offer 30 residential places, including individual study/bedroom, with all meals in the Institute's restaurant to participants in this research seminar. The seminar is generously supported by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research. Therefore, there are no costs for accommodation and meals for the participants.

A seminar registration fee is required.

Early/late seminar registration fees, 31 October 2021/01 January 2022

ESREA members:	200/250 euro
Non-ESREA members:	300/350 euro
PH.D. Students/non-institutional:	100/150 euro

Bursaries

5 bursaries for PhD. Students are available. To submit the application for a bursary, when you submit your abstract, you should include in a separate file all the relevant information regarding your academic position, as well as a letter of support from your supervisor and reasons for applying (e.g., lack of funding from your institution). Please note that the Secretary of ESREA will check that the students (or their institutions) are members of ESREA and whether they have already been awarded a bursary recently.

3 bursaries of 100 euro are available for non-institutional independent researchers. Application should accompany your abstract.

Publications by this network:

Laot, F. F. & Bron, M. (eds.) (2020). Pioneering women and men in European adult education in 1860s-1910s. *Social Pedagogy*, 75(1).

Hake, B. J. & Laot, F. F. (eds./dir.) (2009). *The Social Question and Adult Education: European Perspectives in the 19th and 20th Centuries/La question sociale et l'éducation des adultes: Perspectives européennes, XIXe – XXe siècles*. Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang.

Hake, B. J. & Steele, T. (eds.) (1997). No 5: *Intellectuals, Activists and Reformers: Studies of cultural, social and educational reform movements 1890-1930*. Leeds: Leeds Studies in Continuing Education.

Hake, B. J., Steele, T., Tiana, A. (eds.) (1996). No 4: *Masters, Missionaries and Militants: Studies of social movements and popular adult education 1890-1939*. Leeds: Leeds Studies in Continuing Education.

Marriott, S. & Hake, B. J. (eds.) (1994). No 3: *Cultural and Intercultural Experiences in European Adult Education: Essays on popular and higher education since 1890*. Leeds: Leeds Studies in Continuing Education.

Hake B, J. & Marriott, S. (eds.) (1992). No 2: *Adult Education between Cultures: Encounters and identities in European adult education since 1890*. Leeds: Leeds Studies in Continuing Education.

Friedenthal-Hasse, M., Hake, B.J., Marriott, S. (eds.) (1991). No 1: *British-Dutch-German Relationships in Adult Education 1880-1930: Studies in the theory and history of cross-cultural communication in adult education*. Leeds: Leeds Studies in Continuing Education.