Learning landscapes in Europe: Historical perspectives on organised adult learning 1917-1939

Panorami dell'apprendimento in Europa: prospettive storiche sull'organizzazione dell'educazione degli adulti 1917-1939

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abstract

In a previous article addressing the 'social organisation of adult learning practices' in Europe in the period 1500 to 1914, the point of departure was a critique of the 'institutional fallacy' in the historiography of 'adult education' in many countries. Historical narratives predominantly tend to focus on descriptive categories of those phenomena manifesting the 'institutional' structures and practices that constitute the generally accepted and 'preferred histories' of distinctive national traditions of 'adult education.' Such narratives serve to construct an historical lineage for the development of long-standing forms of 'adult education', often with a strong celebratory purpose. However, these 'nationalist' institutional narratives of 'successful' innovations frequently manipulate the historical record with the exclusion of 'unsuccessful' institutions or innovations considered as having 'failed'. Critical historiography seeks to correct the historical record through the active recovery of contributions made by otherwise 'unremembered', plainly 'inconvenient', and simply 'embarrassing' phenomena. Such acts of historical recovery are significantly and systematically associated with alternative, radical, subversive, and revolutionary social groups and cultural movements. The standard work on Dutch workers' education in the early twentieth century, for example, devotes one footnote among 391 pages, to the repertoire of adult learning activities organised by the Union of Social Democratic Women's Clubs (Hake et al, 1984). This suggests that the historiography of organised adult learning practices must necessarily resort to revisiting 'forgotten sites' of struggle, in this case an autonomous women's organisation, that do not sit happily with widely accepted histories of 'workers education.' This suggests, furthermore, that the social organisation of adult learning activities can only be meaningfully comprehended in terms of the reframing of their more complex historical articulations with broader economic, social, political, and cultural forces in society.

Keywords: historiography of 'adult education', critical historiography, historiography of organised adult learning practices, Europe, 1917-1939

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Nel precedente articolo riguardante la "organizzazione sociale delle pratiche di educazione degli adulti" in Europa nel periodo che va dal 1500 al 1914, il punto di partenza è stato una critica della "fallacia istituzionale" nella storiografia della "adult education" in molti paesi. Le narrazioni storiche tendono prevalentemente a concentrarsi su categorie descrittive di quei fenomeni, illustrando le strutture e le pratiche "istituzionali" che costituiscono le "storie privilegiate" e generalmente accettate delle particolari tradizioni nazionali di "educazione degli adulti". Tali narrazioni sono utili per costruire una linearità storica per lo sviluppo di forme di "educazione degli adulti" di lunga durata, spesso con un forte carattere celebrativo. Tuttavia, queste narrazioni "nazionaliste" istituzionali di innovazioni "riuscite" spesso manipolano la cronaca storica attraverso l'esclusione delle istituzioni "fallite" o delle innovazioni considerate "infruttuose". La storiografia critica cerca di correggere la cronaca storica attraverso il recupero attivo dei contributi apportati da fenomeni altrimenti "dimenticati", del tutto "scomodi" o semplicemente "imbarazzanti". Tali azioni di recupero storico sono associate significativamente e sistematicamente ai gruppi sociali e ai movimenti culturali alternativi, radicali, sovversivi e rivoluzionari. Il testo base sull'educazione dei lavoratori olandesi all'inizio del ventesimo secolo, per esempio, su 391 pagine dedica una nota a piè di pagina al repertorio delle attività di educazione degli adulti organizzate dall'Unione dei Circoli delle Donne Social Democratiche (Hake et al., 1984). Questo suggerisce che la storiografia delle pratiche organizzate di educazione degli adulti deve necessariamente fare ricorso alla rivisitazione dei "luoghi di battaglia dimenticati", in questo caso un'organizzazione autonoma di donne, che non si conciliano felicemente con le storie della "educazione dei lavoratori" ampiamente accettate. Ciò indica, inoltre, che l'organizzazione sociale delle attività di educazione degli adulti può essere significativamente compresa nei termini della ricontestualizzazione della loro complessa articolazione storica con le più ampie forze economiche, sociali, politiche e culturali della società.

Parole chiave: storiografia della "educazione degli adulti", storiografia critica, storiografia della pratiche organizzate di educazione degli adulti, Europa, 1917-1939

The international mind knows no boundaries,
and the Büchergilde Gutenburg no foreign countries.
Knauf F. (1928: 5)

In a previous article addressing the 'social organisation of adult learning practices' in Europe in the period 1500 to 1914, the point of departure was a critique of the 'institutional fallacy' in the historiography of 'adult education' in many countries. Historical narratives predominantly tend to focus on descriptive categories of those phenomena manifesting the 'institutional' structures and practices that constitute the generally accepted and 'preferred histories' of distinctive national traditions of 'adult

education.' Such narratives serve to construct an historical lineage for the development of long-standing forms of 'adult education', often with a strong celebratory purpose. However, these 'nationalist' institutional narratives of 'successful' innovations frequently manipulate the historical record with the exclusion of 'unsuccessful' institutions or innovations considered as having 'failed'. Critical historiography seeks to correct the historical record through the active recovery of contributions made by otherwise 'unremembered', often plainly 'inconvenient', and or simply 'embarrassing' phenomena. Such acts of historical recovery are associated with alternative, radical, subversive, and revolutionary social groups and cultural movements. The standard work on Dutch workers' education in the early twentieth century, for example, devotes one footnote within 391 pages, to the repertoire of adult learning activities organised by the Union of Social Democratic Women's Clubs (Hake et al., 1984). This suggests that the historiography of organised adult learning practices must necessarily resort to revisiting 'forgotten sites' of struggle, in this case an autonomous women's organisation, that do not sit happily with widely accepted histories of 'workers education', all too often of male workers. This suggests, furthermore, that the social organisation of adult learning activities can only be meaningfully comprehended in terms of the reframing of their more complex historical articulations with broader economic, social, political, and cultural forces in society.

When the institutional categories of 'adult education' are subjected to the probing questions of a more critical historiography, doubts about the methodological validity of the demarcation of 'adult education' redirects attention towards the social organisation of the cultural practices of communication and learning that constitute the historical social forms of organised adult learning (Williams, 1961). This suggests that historical analysis should focus on the political economy of the contributions made by non-state actors, particularly collective actors, such as economic, political, social, and cultural movements, including religious movements, to the social organisation of communication and learning practices. Attention then focuses on the contributions made by, often radical if not revolutionary, economic, political, social, and cultural movements in order to mobilise distinct publics to participate in organised adult learning activities. Historically, these ideational and material forces in social and cultural movements have frequently revealed an uneasy affinity between the ideological tasks of instructing activist cadre and the increasingly in-

stitutional tendencies towards the organisation of 'movement education' for the mass membership of political parties, trade unions, labour organisations, and cultural movements. In turn, this gives rise to issues addressing the transformation of movement organisations into recognised 'voluntary' and 'public' providers of 'adult education', and their longer-term incorporation within legally defined institutional boundaries that circumscribe their activities as agencies recognised by the nation-state as providers of 'adult education'.

From a cross-cultural perspective, the focus of comparative historical research during the period from 1917 to 1939 then needs to address the contribution of social movements to organised adult learning in relation to the development of bourgeois and proletarian public spheres. This directs attention to the local, regional, nationalist, internationalist and cosmopolitan cultural contexts of their contested development (Steele, 2007). In this regard, the historiography gives rise to five key questions concerning the social organisation of collective actors' repertoires for communication and learning. Firstly, it is necessary to identify the range of historical formations and movements that were actively involved in the social organisation of communication and learning practices. These may be readily recognisable providers of institutionalised 'adult education', for example university extension courses and folk high schools, but can also include organised adult learning activities such as Esperanto courses provided by trade unions for their members. Secondly, it is necessary to analyse organised adult learning movements in terms of the relationships between social movements and their specific programmes of economic, political, social, and cultural reform. These may be radical, oppositional, alternative, and revolutionary movements, which regarded the social organisation of adult learning activities as constituting an essential strategy in political struggles for collective emancipation. Attention must be paid, thirdly, to the complex range of positions taken up by those involved in such movements. This can provide a basis for the identification of social classes and class factions involved in the leadership of social and political movements. Such analysis can help to identify those who played significant roles in organised adult learning activities at international, trans-national, national, regional, and local levels. This makes it possible, fourthly, to locate individuals who contributed, as 'movement intellectuals', to the dissemination, reception, and adaptation of ideas concerning the social organisation of adult learning practices. Fi-

nally, it is of no little importance to examine the processes involved in the forming of distinctive 'publics' that were addressed by the bourgeois and proletarian public spheres. Here, it is of vital importance to examine the different manifestations of movement intellectuals as cultural disseminators in terms of their social relationships with potential publics, the social identity of publics addressed, and the degree to which distinct publics were effectively mobilised (De Sanctis, 1984).

1. New beginnings, old problems

The geo-political balance of organised adult learning in Europe was radically disrupted by the Russian revolution 1917, and the consequences of the end of the First World War in 1918. In 1919, Lenin's keynote addresses, on 6th and 19th May, opening and concluding the first All-Soviet conference on Adult Education did not fail to name the enemies of revolution, nor the ideological work required building communist societies with an internationalist agenda.

While different peace treaties – Saint Germain, Sèvres, Trianon, Versailles – confirmed the bankruptcy of the Czarist Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires, the immediate post-war transition was marked throughout Europe by military conflicts, revolutions, civil wars, political strikes, occupation of factories, and social unrest in Albania, Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, and Slovenia. National independence of Baltic, Central European, and Balkan states gave rise to tensions concerning national identity, democratic governance, citizenship rights, and recognition of minorities. Some nations acquired long sought-after independence, others lost territory, and there was a troubling post-war legacy of national minorities in many countries providing the roots of ethno-national movements and parties (Hobsbawm, 1994, p. 31). Consequently, organised adult learning became a battleground during the 1920s and 1930s for conflicts between democratic forces and the emergence of radical nationalist parties. In Italy, industrial unrest of the *Biennio Rosso* in 1919-1920 manifested the deep divisions among socialists, syndicalists, anarchists, and communists, Mussolini was elected in 1922 with a radical nationalist programme and became fascist dictator in 1925, strikes were outlawed, the leader of the Communist Party, Gramsci, was imprisoned in 1926, and political par-

ties were banned. In the same year, Portugal succumbed to a fascist dictatorship under Salazar, while the National Socialists of Hitler gained power in Germany in 1933. Nationalists defeated the republicans in the Spanish civil war in 1939. The consequences of these political developments for organised adult learning in Europe were to prove fundamental.

The human carnage of the First World War contributed to nationalist, pan-European and internationlist movements committed to promoting peace and international solidarity, and the contribution of organised adult learning in generating cross-border co-operation by pacifist movements. During the 1920s, development of national associations, government regulations, and public subsidies for recognised providers of adult education reflected the rapid professionalisation of organised adult learning provision in many countries. This was the case of British university extra-mural classes, municipal and residential folk high schools in Germany, popular 'adult education' organised by local governments, and residential colleges for adults in Scandinavia, Netherlands, and United Kingdom. National committees of inquiry resulted in reports on developments, policies, and legislation concerning organised adult learning, while the establishment of national associations encouraged interest in policies elsewhere, including efforts to undertake comparative studies of developments in other countries. Initiatives such as the International Peoples' College in Elsinore, established in 1921, demonstrated that organised adult learning had acquired an internationalist orientation focused on peaceful coexistence between peoples, fostering mutual respect and acknowledging cultural differences. With the World Association for Adult Education (WAAE) holding its first meeting in 1918, the 1920s witnessed regular international meetings of associations related to workers' education, such as the workers' educational associations (WEA) movement, the International Association of Settlements, International Co-operative Alliance, International Federation of Trade Unions, International Federation of Women Workers, International League of Religious Socialists, and the Socialist Educational International (Hansome, 1931). At the second international conference of workers' educational associations, at Ruskin College in 1924, accredited delegates represented the national organisations from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Palestine, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

While, without any doubt, international co-operation during the 1920s was focused predominantly on workers' education, institutional

developments at national level in many European countries were primarily marked by the professionalisation of the activities of so-called 'adult educators', and the first appointments of professors of 'adult education' at universities in Finland, Poland and the United Kingdom, although the German universities remained aloof. These developments marked the emergence of a cross-cultural debate focused on the 'extensive pedagogy' associated with university extension classes in many other countries in comparison with the 'intensive pedagogy' propagated by the post-war 'new direction' in Weimar Germany. During the 1920s, trans-national exchanges addressing methods of 'adult education' – including reports of visits, publications and conferences – were dominated by cross-cultural discourses comparing the 'extensive method', generally associated with the 'tutorial class' as the characteristic form of providing extra-mural adult learning by British universities, and the development of the 'intensive method' that characterised the small-group discussions adopted by residential folk high schools in Germany.

These distinctive pedagogical tendencies were politically and culturally embedded in very different value systems for understanding social and personal development. Ranging from social liberals to Marxists, German modernists of the new direction did not find their inspiration in the hierarchical order of 'academic' culture, which they regarded as the antithesis of 'learning in community'. Convinced that the maxim 'knowledge is power' had served to deceive workers and was outdated, supporters of the new direction argued that the intensive method enabled adult learners to bring their own experience of life to bear in group-discussion and enabling them to establish the meaning of their lives. As an ideology guiding the practice of 'adult education', the progressive notion of 'intensive learning communities', or *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*, was but one of many conflicting pedagogic ideologies permeating Germans discussion of 'adult education' methods alongside the work of evangelical Christian, Catholic, and farmers' residential colleges. These conflicting ideological positions of German political, social, and cultural movements marked the radically different assumptions as to how 'adult education' in the deeply divided Weimar Republic might contribute to the realisation of the 'creation of a common spiritual life embracing the whole nation', as this had defined been defined by the Ministry of Education in Prussia in 1919.

2. Mass media and organisation of new publics

The social organisation of adult learning was fundamentally influenced by major innovations involving the utilisation of 'new' media such as radio and film. These media were frequently regarded with quite significant trepidation by those used to the public lecture, as in university extension, when addressing groups of (working-class) adults. Indeed, film was particularly regarded by traditional 'adult educators' as a danger to morality, undermining sociability, de-personalising relationships, and as a threat to social stability. Nonetheless, the new media offered the modernist movement new opportunities for cross-cultural fertilisation with 'radio listening groups' by opening-up new channels for cultural mediation, cinemas and film clubs established new social spaces for mutuality, while they gave rise to new range of 'urban intellectuals.' These also played a significant role in the repertoires of those seeking to use radio and film seriously as vehicles to create an 'informed democracy', including workers organisations, but they also informed 'populist' broadcasting repertoires propagated by those with more sinister political motives. Furthermore, commercial actors, such as publishing companies, increasingly recognised the significance of these 'modernist' cultural forms for communication with traditional and new audiences. Rapid adoption of the typewriter and expansion of business administration resulted in new occupations, for both men and women, leading to significant growth of and face-to-face oral instruction, in typewriting, short-hand, foreign languages, bookkeeping, and office management. Correspondence courses expanded significantly in the 1920s, while the distribution of printed materials to support radio broadcasts provided innovative technological formats for commercial mass media in the expanding distance learning market. Mass unemployment during the economic depression in late 1920s and early 1930s provided a significant motivation for many adults to enrol in correspondence courses to improve their chances of remaining in, or gaining, paid employment in very difficult times on the labour market. Also significant among organised adult learning responses to mass unemployment were state-sponsored work-creation schemes, public employment services, vocational retraining programmes via subsidised adult learning providers, residential folk high school courses, labour camps for the unemployed, and traditional philanthropic organisations.

Tremendous changes took place in the production, distribution, and consumption of books during the 1920s with people reading on a scale never witnessed before, while books were more widely available in cheap series that transformed the habit of learning associated with reading across Europe. In mass consumer society, commercial booksellers competed with commercial lending libraries, the rapid growth of public libraries, and book clubs. While the provision made by public libraries elsewhere in Europe became a source of modernising pride for local governments, commercial lending libraries remained significant in Germany until the late 1920s. With books remaining an unaffordable luxury for most working-class households, reading as self-instruction was supported in Germany by the Book Hall Movement. Associated with the 'intensive' faction among German 'adult educators', especially the Central Agency for Popular Literature, librarians acted as 'adult educators' and stressed the need to closely supervise the reading process, while the open 'browsing' in books associated with public libraries elsewhere in Europe was strictly forbidden. Although historical evidence suggests that German workers' reading interests were more diverse than the pedagogical pre-occupations of intensively inclined librarians, library stacks remained closed to readers until 1945. Nonetheless, in the heady intellectual atmosphere of Weimar, internationalism rather than patriotism became the basic ideological driving-force behind the establishment of book clubs. When book clubs first emerged in the early 1920s, membership offered the sense of belonging to a circle of like-minded readers. Some disseminated only national literature, while others were 'internationalist' and published contemporary literature in translation. *Der Bücherkreis* and *Büchergilde Gutenberg*, both founded in 1924, were characterised by their ideological commitment to working-class interests worldwide (Kaus, 1992). Like denominational book clubs, they were organised with membership fees charged to finance the production and distribution of books. Members received one book each quarter on easy payment terms, and, furthermore, they received a monthly journal with information about new publications, reviews, and the opinions of members. Books published manifested the importance attached to the dissemination of a broad selection of literature from many countries with the intention of enabling workers to become aware of the common ground of workers' experiences of capitalism and to give direction to struggles for better living conditions. Elsewhere, the syndicalist *Librairie du Travail* in

France, the Dutch socialist *Arbeiderspers*, and the Left Book Club, established in 1936 by the socialist publisher Gollancz in the United Kingdom, pursued this partisan repertoire of radical literature throughout the 1930s with the intention of halting the growth of fascism in Europe and promoting the cause of socialism. Modelled on the cultural practices of the French left, the organisation of local reading groups did much to spread the anti-fascist message associated with Popular Front politics of the socialist government of Blum formed in 1936. To this end, Left Book Club was launched with the publication of *France Today and People's Front* by the communist leader Thorez, while its monthly publication *Left News* commented critically from a socialist perspective on political developments elsewhere in Europe. Following the example of cheaply available books in transforming reading for leisure by a general audience, Penguin Books launched the Pelican series 1937 as a serious non-fiction imprint for low-cost intellectual paperbacks that focused on making contemporary writing on politics, economics, history, and science accessible as vehicles for generating an 'informed democracy'.

3. Workers' education: learning solidarity or diversion?

If the 'new direction' in German adult education, focused as it was on the personal development of adult learners, signalled both innovative methods in 'adult education' together with the emergence of the professional 'adult educator', modernising tendencies also exerted an influence on the development of workers' education throughout Europe. Organised by socialist parties, trade unions, and labour movements, workers' education was marked in many countries by a growing dissensus concerning the priority given to 'organisation', 'agitation', and 'education'. The 1920s, however, were characterised by the emphasis on socialism as a cultural movement: the so-called 'third front' of socialist development. Alongside the organisational and agitational work of socialist parties and trade unions, national associations for workers' education were increasingly regarded as the 'cultural front' of social democratic working-class movements. In addition to training courses for cadre and activists, the positioning of workers' education as a third front manifested the tendency towards the development of a broad repertoire of organised adult learning activities, which were intended to promote a sense of 'socialist

community' among the mass membership. Activities expanded beyond the traditional repertoire of 'proletarian sociability' – drama, choirs, art and crafts, sports, recreation, festivals and ceremonials – to include new media such as photography, film, radio, and book-clubs, but also workers' travel associations. A specific feature of the gradual institutionalisation of workers' education in this period was the transformation of significant numbers of party and union officials, including those associated with social democratic youth movements, into an emergent cadre of professional organisers and teachers. Within the working-class movement, this constituted the emergence of a new category of 'movement intellectuals', who served socialist and communist movements by working as professional cultural intermediaries responsible for the organisation of workers' education.

The broader European landscape of organised adult learning was marked the divergent signs of liberal reformism, introverted radical nationalism, social democratic modernism of the 'Amsterdam rump' of the Second International, and the Soviet-directed Third International. At the 9th national conference on adult education in 1921, the German domestic situation was described as two ideological worlds confronting each other. With British universities recognised providers of extra-mural studies for adult learners, farmers' folk high schools in Germany in the 1920s were already propagating racialist 'blood and soil' nationalism. When invitations to the second International Conference on Workers' Education, at Ruskin College in 1924, were not sent to revolutionary Russian workers' organisations, members of the Finnish labour movement's Red Guard paid their debts in prison camps throughout the 1920s and 1930s. One of the many such camps was called the 'University of Tammisaari' since prisoners spent their incarceration studying smuggled Marxist literature. The Third International was responsible throughout Europe for the organisation of agitprop activities, Labour Colleges, Marx and Lenin Schools, while Esperanto clubs made significant contributions, often underground, to international communism (Simon, 1990). During the 1930s, workers' theatre groups disseminated the message of international proletarian solidarity using agitational street theatre at meetings and demonstrations organised by the communist parties, Red Help, International Workers' Help, and the Association of Friends of the Soviet Union.

In this context of managing 'internationalist' border-crossings, the de-

velopment of 'instructional travel' for workers constituted a significant repertoire for organised adult learning throughout the 1920s and 1930s. While cross-cultural mediation associated with often unplanned and chance encounters of migrant workers declined as the borders of nation-states became effective barriers, the early decades of the twentieth century were characterised, however, by the institutionalisation of organised encounters between workers from different countries. The organisation of 'instructional travel' for workers was widely regarded as a meaningful contribution to international working-class solidarity. Early reports of 'instructional travel' referred to Toynbee Travellers' Club in 1889, where the International Friends of Nature was established in 1905 during an international conference. Its purpose was to encourage instructional travel that required serious preparation in order to contribute to workers' cultural and intellectual development. Disrupted by the 1914-1918 war, renewed international *élan* was a feature of workers' travel during the 1920. The Workers Travel Association (WTA) established in the United Kingdom in 1921 to organise group travel for members of Co-operative Societies and for Labour Party municipal councillors (Williams, 1960). Socialist parties in Belgium and Austria also established workers' travel organisations closely linked with their other educational work, while organised travel and exchanges supported by youth camps became an important dimension of the Second International during the 1920s. Convinced that the spirit of travel was now alive among workers, the WTA sought support, from the International Labour Organisation and the Socialist International, for an international conference. The first International Conference on Workers' Travel was held at Trade Union House in London in January 1927. Delegates came from Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Danish, French, and Swedish workers' organisations did not accept invitations, arguing that they had no experience of organising instructional travel for their members. Despite very significant differences of approach between the British and other delegations – specifically regarding different approaches to the pedagogical and organisational aspects of workers' travel – the London conference resulted in the International Federation of Workers Travel Associations (IFWTA), with national associations for workers' education playing a significant role. The Dutch association for workers' travel amalgamated in 1928 with the Institute for Workers' Education and the Dutch branch of Friends of Nature. Any possible contri-

bution by organised travel to cultivating workers cross-cultural understanding, particularly what was referred in the United Kingdom by workers' travel organisations as a 'well-travelled democracy', became increasingly difficult given tense geo-political developments. British workers participating in organised instructional travel witnessed the destruction of the Weimar Republic in 1933, and the suppression of the Austrian Workers' Travel Association itself in 1934. Seeking to influence foreign opinion-makers, National Socialists actively fostered visits by foreign observers and organised tours by delegations from other countries up to the outbreak of the Second World War.

4. Popular 'adult education' and the fascist nation-state

From the early 1920s onwards, radical reorganisation of organised adult learning in the service of the nation-state had come to dominate fascist and National Socialist regimes in Austria, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. Mussolini's government, elected in 1922, made autonomous workers' education impossible following the ban on all political parties, and the dismantling of independent trade unions in 1925. The fascist regime's preoccupation with the corporate state and autarky policies of national self-sufficiency contributed to the state's fascist cultural policy of organising recreational activities for adults by the national agency for the National After-work Programme. This mode of socially organising the fascist public sphere focused on the corporate provision of local clubhouses radio stations, libraries, sports, cinemas, theatres, and orchestras (De Grazia, 1981). The *Associazone Editoriale Libraria Italiana*, established in 1922, was taken over by the regime and subsequently ensured that all books had a recognisable fascist signature. In Portugal in 1926, the Salazar regime likewise put an end to the secular liberalism of the First Republic and established a corporative dictatorship to implement a 'national revolution' that emphasised a highly selective sense of Portuguese national identity. Cultural policy comprised a 'modernist' mixture of using the mass media to generate a 'festival state' with an emphasis on commemorative events combined with rigorous censorship in order to 'ration' and undermine independent cultural activity.

In Germany, a fundamental change of direction in the work of folk high schools had already become apparent following establishment of the

Freiwilliger Arbeitsdienst (FAD-voluntary labour service). The availability of government subsidies for work camps rather than 'adult education' was distraction the poorly organised and increasingly impoverished folk high schools could not resist. Given the revolution by the ballot-box in January 1933, the National Socialists revealed their awareness of the potential offered by the FAD when they introduced compulsory labour service for university students the following summer. This was one of the first moves towards transforming the FAD into a compulsory labour service, and it signified a major intervention designed to link manual labour with ideological (re-) education. This transformation of the FAD in the name of national unity went a stage further with its transfer to the Ministry of the Interior in July 1934, when its political and ideological purpose became more explicit. By mid-1935, more than 7 per cent of the participants in FAD activities were either academics or students, a major over-representation of their numbers in the total population of working-age. Conscription of young men between 18 and 25 for work camps was introduced in 1935, when the FAD's nomenclature was changed to *Deutscher-* and subsequently *Reichsarbeitsdienst*. By 1937, the total number of males attending the compulsory work camps was 435,000, to which must be added 30,000 young women. The mass character of labour camps in Germany, extended to include Austria in 1938, meant the 35 per cent of German youngsters had thus been mobilised. As a result, young adults in Germany were confronted with a form of residential re-education combined with hard work, which supposedly served, in the spirit of National Socialism, to develop in the youth of Germany a sense of national solidarity, a true conception of labour, and, in particular, due respect for manual labour.

With political parties and autonomous trade unions banned, the state-operated programme Strength Through Joy was organised by the National Socialists in order to pacify workers and their families (Baranowski, 2004). Organised on corporatist principles as a division of the German Labour Front and modelled on Mussolini's Opera Nazionale, it was a mass leisure organisation set up to ensure that all aspects of workers' after-work activities were catered for. These ranged from factory beautification schemes and travelling art exhibitions in factories; mass tourism including organised picnics, group travel, holiday camps, and even cruises; sport events; cultural activities such as choirs, recitals, and theatre performances, and organised adult learning provided by popular

libraries and evening classes. This vast programme was funded by compulsory deductions from workers' wage-packets. National Socialists also set out to bring the numerous existing forms of organised adult learning into line with their political objectives. Evening and daytime classes organised by local popular education centres – the municipal folk high schools were renamed as *Volksbildungsstätten* – that expanded rapidly and, from 1935, were co-ordinated by the Public Instruction Agency, which rigorously screened teachers to ensure their ideological reliability. Instructional methods were primarily extensive in nature comprising single-topic lectures, or series of themed lectures, while learning of foreign languages and domestic science were by far the most popular courses on offer. Esperanto was banned by the National Socialists who regarded its speakers as 'internationalist' enemies of the German nation-state. On the one hand, Strength Through Joy mitigated the tension between the regime's demands for hard work to support rearmament, and German workers' desire for improved living standards. The programme played down the sacrifices made in the present by offering the vision of a prosperous future when more *Lebensraum* had been acquired. On the other hand, the entire project reduced organised adult learning to an instrument of mass Nazification via the superficial consumption of cultural symbols representing Arian racial superiority.

5. Border-crossings: emigration, exile, deportation, incarceration

When National Socialists assumed constitutional power in Germany in January 1933, Jews were immediately expelled from participation in all officially organised forms of 'adult education.' This clearly applied to the folk high schools, but also included organised adult learning associated with the Bauhaus movement (Hansen-Schaberg et al., 2012), and the non-formal learning activities organised by workers' gardening associations. This mirrored their more fundamental total exclusion from German public life, the professions, and public education, while 'underground' vocational retraining by Jewish organisations was tolerated by the Gestapo on the grounds that they prepared Jews to emigrate, a primary National Socialist objective (Stahl, 1939). On May 10th, national student associations in Berlin, under the approving eye of the new minister for propaganda Goebbels, staged the ritual burning of books held to

be responsible for Germany's perceived degeneration during in the Weimar Republic because they disseminated pacifist, defeatist, and un-German ideas. In 1934, the National Book Day, launched in 1929, was replaced by the annual National Socialist 'book week.' If the book burnings were indeed a symbol of National Socialist cultural policies, the hard materiality of these policies involved the physical incarceration of thousands of German left-wing intellectuals, social democrats, communists, trade unionists, and many professional adult educators, who were transported to the first concentration camps on the German-Dutch border. There, they endeavoured to organise fragile 'underground' learning networks among fellow dissidents. Diasporas of Jewish émigrés from Germany, and other nations, became, significant structural features of the European cultural landscape during the 1930s. In fear of, or as a direct result of, National Socialist policies, Jewish refugees within Europe included eminent academics, theologians, clergymen, scientists, engineers, architects, artists, musicians, actors, authors and journalists. But those who sought asylum elsewhere also included many workers, working-class political activists, trade unionists, worker educators, and professional 'adult educators.' While many countries originally accepted these Jewish émigrés, the 1930s witnessed the imposition of ever stricter border controls throughout Europe. Workers' organisations sought to provide critique – particularly of work camps and forced labour – of developments in Austria, Germany, Italy, and Spain, and left-wing book clubs continued to disseminate critical texts to their members expressing working-class international solidarity in the struggle against Franco with the supporters of the democratic Spanish republic and the International Brigade. While Mussolini's 1935 invasion of Abyssinia in led some British workers to cancel educational travel Italy, organised WTA groups continued to depart on educational visits to Austria and Germany. Furthermore, there is also clear evidence that some 'adult educators' maintained their contacts in Germany and Italy even when these were known to work in the service of National Socialism and Fascism (Griffiths, 1984). On the eve of the British declaration of war on Germany in September 1939, organised groups of British trade unionists had departed for Germany. Research is needed to explore this still largely unrecorded history of 'underground learning to survive'.

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