

Jena - An Innovative Center of Adult Education

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Since the foundation of its university in 1558, Jena has traditionally been a most attractive center for thinkers, scholars and students of all ages. The town - it is by no means a big city - has at times been a prominent, indeed pivotal, hub in Germany. Again and again exemplary conceptions have been developed here, anticipating future potentials in technology and science no less than in culture and philosophy. An interesting exemplification of this trend-setting quality of Jena's is found in the field of adult education, where the scope for realization and institutionalization of innovative ideas has been unusually large. By the 18th century, if not earlier, Jena had become a center of intensive learning for those in adult age - especially in its university, in its literary societies, in its recreational and educational facilities, in its public libraries and their precursors, and in its *Volkshochschule*, established in 1919 at the beginning of the Weimar Republic.

Jena - in the heart of Germany, in the federal land of Thuringia - was privileged to host in September 1996 the Sixth International Conference on the History of Adult Education. All the more reason, then, to ask whether this town, where scholars from all over the world rubbed shoulders, does not itself possess some special significance for the history of German adult education. The question is serendipitous: Jena is far from being, or only being, a provincial outpost. In fact its importance in German adult education far outstrips what you might expect for a smallish city of this kind.

The Weimar-Jena cultural corridor is particularly celebrated for its central role in the German literary movements of Classicism and Romanticism. However, Jena's reputation as an intellectual center does not only date from the period of Goethe's residence or when Schiller, whose name the University bears, taught there as professor. The fact is that,

right from its foundation in 1558, it had been an extremely attractive town for scholars and scientists and such as aspired to tread in their footsteps. It developed into an intellectual waystation for many a thinker destined to make his or her mark on the history of the times and later ages - but also for those less prominent (or whose star has sunken by now), whose names feature no less than those of their more illustrious contemporaries on the university's rolebooks. These intellectual dimensions of Jena are also reflected in the multifaceted efforts made to encourage adult education - and it will be the task of this essay in regional studies to pick out some of these for presentation purposes. 'Adult education,' as the term will be used here, means four things: first, cultural and educational enrichment of life-world; second, self-education; third, institutionalized education; and fourth, theoretical reflection on all these dimensions of lifelong learning.

Two Kinds of Enlightened Educators: Professor and Student

In the year 1653 - the university was not yet a hundred years old - a young (he was not yet thirty) scholar came to Jena. He was later to acquire a Europe-wide reputation as an outstanding natural scientist, philosopher and educationalist, and is even today regarded as an exceptional figure in the University of Jena's history, not to mention its principal representative from the early Enlightenment: He was the new mathematics professor ERHARD WEIGEL (1625-1699). In the educational sector, WEIGEL not only was the founder of a reformatory school for children, but can also be considered one of Jena's earliest adult educationalists. Around 1670 he moved into a house which was to become one of the so-called "*Seven Wonders of Jena*." The house was seven storeys high and served WEIGEL not only as a place of residence but also a site for carrying out astronomical observations, scientific experiments and - what is especially interesting for us - demonstrations of the effects of the laws of physics and their practical uses. WEIGEL would transport his guests from one floor to the next by block and tackle, as if by lift. What's more, a hydraulic machine pumped water to each floor level. But his "cellar maidservant" is perhaps what he is most famous for: this was a pipe that lifted wine from the cellar to his upstairs quarters: When WEIGEL poured



Stadtmuseum Jena (Germany)

5. Erhard Weigel (16.12.1625 - 21.4.1699)

Copperplate engraving of the year 1688 by Elias Nessenthaler (ca. 1664 - 1714); Size 20,9 by 16,4 cm

The text around the picture runs: Erhardus Weigelius Consiliarius Caesareus & Palat. Mathem. Professor Publ. Acad. Senior Aetatis. LXIII. [Erhard Weigel, Imperial Councilor and Councilor of the Palatinate, Public Professor of Mathematics, Senior of the Academy (University Faculty), Sixty-Three Years of Age.]

a gallon of water into an opening in one of the walls of his study, precisely the same amount of wine would flow from a tap on the opposite side.¹ Unfortunately WEIGEL's house was torn down in 1898 to make way for a street (ironically, now bearing the name "Weigel Street"). If only it had been preserved, his house surely would have become a magnet, not only for tourists but also for those with an interest in education.

It was WEIGEL's fate, well ahead of his time as he was, not to be understood by many of his contemporaries - though he never concealed his intentions, which were to demonstrate that the apparently miraculous occurrences in his house did not result from magic but from applied natural science, all of it founded in reason and grounded in experience. WEIGEL's primary aim, in any case, was not to amaze people but to enlighten them; WEIGEL wanted to be understood and promote the cause of understanding. Thus he insisted - and this was at a time when the academic language in Germany was exclusively Latin - on holding his lectures in the German vernacular, at least occasionally,² and made it clear to his students that, in their own articulations, they were to do likewise.³ With the intention of reaching beyond his own immediate circle of students, WEIGEL also penned progressive tracts with practical considerations foremost in mind and designed to reach a broader section of the public. Some examples are worth citing: "Newly Concocted Household Advice, Serviceable for the Relief of Nature as well as for Pleasure and Expediency, Together with a Humble Submission as to How Ingenious Inventions of General Utility may be Promoted to the Common Weal of Our Land;"⁴ "The Quintessence of the Art of Water and a Humble Submission as to How Those Endangered by Fire may be Relieved, and Oth-

1 Cf. *Geschichte der Universität Jena* ["History of the University of Jena"] 1958, pp. 128-140, esp. p. 132.

2 In this matter he anticipated CHRISTIAN THOMASIIUS (1655-1728), who is normally credited as having been the first to hold his university lectures in the vernacular.

3 Cf. *Geschichte der Universität Jena* 1958, p. 130.

4 The title in its original German runs: *Neu-erfundener Hauß-Rath, so wohl zur Nothdurfft als zur Lust und Bequemligkeit zu gebrauchen, nebst einem unmaßgeblichen Vorschlag wie die gemeinnützigen Kunst-Erfindungen und dadurch die Wohlfarth des Landes zu befördern.*

erwise to be Kept in the Household for both Utility and Distraction;"⁵ or "The Arts and Crafts Presented, Together with a Brief Exposition of Mechanical Elevating Devices and Scaffolding. To Which is Appended Advice Serviceable to the Relief of Our Common Corporeal Nature as well as to the Elevation of Our Tempers and Promotion of Learnedness by Means of the Science of Mechanical Arts."⁶ In all of these titles WEIGEL's desire to enlighten the common people speaks loud and clear.

Again it was WEIGEL whose reputation attracted many students to Jena, among them the philosopher GOTTFRIED WILHELM LEIBNIZ (1646-1716), later to be instrumental in founding the Prussian Academy of Sciences as well as its Russian counterpart. From earliest times, in fact, Jena was a thriving university with numerous important professors on its faculty.⁷ Among its most illustrious teachers and scholars were the poets and philosophers FRIEDRICH SCHILLER (1759-1805) and AUGUST WILHELM SCHLEGEL (1767-1845), the philosophers JOHANN GOTTLIEB FICHTE (1762-1814), GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH HEGEL (1770-1831), FRIEDRICH SCHELLING (1775-1854), RUDOLF EUCKEN (1846-1926), and GOTTLÖB FREGE (1848-1925); the chemists JOHANN WOLFGANG DOEBEREINER (1780-1849) and HEINRICH WACKENRODER (1798-1854); and the physicians CHRISTOPH WILHELM HUFELAND (1762-1836) and JUSSUF IBRAHIM (1877-1953). And it was in Jena that MATHILDE VAERTING (1884-1977) was appointed as first 'ordinary' (i.e. full) Professor of Educational Science in Germany. In addition, she was only the second woman in Germany to achieve professorial rank. Among famous names to have been undergraduates or postgraduates of the University of

5 The original runs: *Concentrirte Wasserkunst und Unmaßgeblicher Vorschlag zur Rettung in Feuers-Gefahr, sonst aber im Hauß Zu Nutz und zur Belustigung zu gebrauchen.*

6 Thus the original: *Vorstellung Der Kunst- und Handwercke, nechst einem kurtzen Begriff des Mechanischen Heb- und Rüst-Zeugs. Samt einem Anhang Welcher Gestalt so wohl der gemeinen Leibes-Notdurfft als der Gemüths-Wohlfahrth und Gelehrsamkeit selbst, durch die Wissenschaft der Mechanischen Künste geholffen werden möge.*

7 Apart from the mathematician HEINRICH HOFFMANN (1576-1652), other famous professors of early times were the physician WERNER ROLFINCK (1599-1673), the historian JOHANN ANDREAS BOSE (1626-1674), the theologian JOHANN FRANZ BUDDEUS (1667-1729), and the philosopher and educationalist JOACHIM GEORG DARJES (1715-1791).

Jena may be mentioned the poets MATTHIAS CLAUDIUS (1740-1815), FRIEDRICH HÖLDERLIN (1770-1843), NOVALIS (1772-1801), CLEMENS BRENTANO (1778-1842) and KURT TUCHOLSKY (1890-1935); the zoologist ALFRED BREHM (1829-1884); the educationalist FRIEDRICH FRÖBEL (1782-1852) - and not least KARL MARX (1818-1883), who took out his doctorate from the University of Jena. Without exaggeration it can be said that the University of Jena has always been one of Germany's most important universities. By the time the university was founded in the mid-16th century, Jena had already become an important place in the movement of the Reformation and, connected with this, in printing and the book trade. In the centuries to come Jena developed into a most influential center of Classical and Romantic culture and philosophy, the Enlightenment, and also of technological innovation.

Jena's central position is particularly conspicuous in the field of practical adult education, where trend-setting ideas from earliest times on were realized and institutionalized. An interesting example of this from the 18th century is the work of the otherwise not particularly conspicuous CHRISTIAN FRIEDERICH MYLIUS (1762-1841), "a man with a passionate bent for philosophy and education," who came from southern Germany to Jena as a student when he was twenty years old. Two years later, in the year 1784, he founded a literary society in Jena and devised a library system. In 1785 MYLIUS wrote a book of about one hundred pages⁸ about Jena's two then existing libraries (one of them he had himself founded) as well as about the musical institute. In this work he also developed the idea of a comprehensive system of public educational institutes. It also reveals MYLIUS as an enlightener who sought to disseminate education among the people. His library can be regarded as the first lending library in Jena.⁹ Housed in a room of the chemist's shop on the market place, MYLIUS offered the latest academic works to appear in German and in foreign languages, irrespective of the field, together with a carefully compiled selection of novels, plays, lyrical poetry, almanacs,

8 CHRISTIAN FRIEDERICH MYLIUS: *Nachrichten von einigen in Jena errichteten neuen Literarischen Anstalten nebst verschiedenen frommen Wünschen und gutgemeinten Vorschlägen* ["News of Several New Literary Institutions Established in Jena, Together with Assorted Devout Wishes and Well-Intended Suggestions"]. Jena 1785.

9 Cf. MARWINSKI 1991, p. 13.

travel reports and biographies, as well as popular books, educational writings, and books for spiritual edification.¹⁰ He intended the books to be read not only by professors and students, but by a larger public as well: indeed the entire population of Jena and its surroundings. MYLIUS was especially concerned to address women, children, and the rural population. This he did by propagating his ideas during summer excursions into the nearby regions. In particular, he targeted village parsons who, so he believed, would then win over teachers, well-to-do farmers, and parsons to the task of spreading his ideas among the people.¹¹ In his writings MYLIUS provides a detailed description of his lending system, setting out particulars on the need for, and the necessity and uses of, a focus on sustained reading, both within the family and for the self-improvement of the responsible adult.¹² The reading of good books was seen as vital if female education was to be improved, if women were to be enabled to undertake the proper education of their children. But not only that: it was also intended to increase the diligence and insight of students, not only for their own sake as learners, but also to equip them to be good fathers and teachers later on in life; and finally, it was intended to spread good manners among the people, to help them spend their free time in sensible and gratifying pursuits. With respect to the didactics of reading, MYLIUS recommended beginning with modern easy works before proceeding to more difficult and demanding ones. In effect he was advocating the same method of 'reading upwards' that, at the beginning of this century, was regarded as innovative.

MYLIUS also founded a literary society of students to provide a center of recreation and further education for them (with such activities as social gatherings, readings, debates, concert attendances, and dances). But as the number of members soon grew too large and their interests too divergent, the society had to be disbanded after six months. MYLIUS,

10 Cf. MYLIUS 1785, p. 9f.

11 Cf. MYLIUS 1785, p. 12ff.

12 MYLIUS particularly recommends keeping constantly upgraded what he called a *Collectaneenbuch* ["Collection Book"], in which the most important passages from all kinds of books were to be entered. Not only were the powers of memory, the ability of clear articulation, and the faculty of judgment to be trained, but the book itself was to become a valuable collection of ideas (cf. MYLIUS 1785, p. 22ff).

however, wrote in his work that he hoped to have learned from the mistakes made, and went on to give detailed recommendations on how such literary societies should be set up. He very much favored the establishment of such societies at every university. And, in fact, this idea was later taken and further developed by others. Regarding general adult education, it is remarkable that MYLIUS wanted every literary society to have a 'philanthropic fund,' financed by member fees. He intended this money to be spent on social and educational purposes - for example, the acquisition of good popular books to be given away free of charge in the nearby villages, or the establishment of libraries for women, craftsmen, and farmers.

MYLIUS was abrim with ideas concerning applied adult education. He wrote about the forthcoming founding of a library for women, which would, he hoped, cater to their special needs and interests. Moreover, he propagated as a top priority the academic training of teachers and the establishment of educational institutes or seminars at every university.¹³ This last proposal was to be realized in Jena only several decades later, in 1844, by the then professor of education KARL VOLKMAR STOY (1815-1885).¹⁴

Forums of Encounter and Cultural Exchange

Clubs dedicated to a wide variety of pursuits were flourishing in Germany by the end of the 18th century, but in the 19th they really came into their own. On the 1st of September 1823, four university academics and one university-trained amateur and citizen of Jena - a chemist, a physician, a geologist, a classical philologist, and a mathematician - took the decision to found a "Society for Science and Art." Its mandate would be the interdisciplinary broadening of its members, the rounding-out of their educations, so to speak. At every meeting several speakers would discourse on some aspect of, or new development in, their respective fields of knowledge. The first meeting was held, some two months later, in the "Black Bear" tavern. During its first year of life, the club met every fort-

13 Cf. MYLIUS 1785, p. 27f.

14 Cf. CORIAND 1994 and 1996.

night for educational and social exchanges - for after the lectures members would stay together for a while "to make merry over a hearty meal."¹⁵

Founded in the university tavern "The Rose" in 1816, the "Literary Museum," a precursor of the free public libraries, also developed into a forum of educated communication.¹⁶ Though the Literary Museum was in contact with the university library, it was nevertheless an independent organ. Originally conceived as a reading room where the - in the main - academically educated members of the Museum could find various journals, the composition of its members soon widened to include students. In addition, a reading circle developed links with the Museum with a view to making its reading material - not just newspapers and scientific journals, but also popularly entertaining magazines, e.g. for the family or about fashion - also available to the families and friends of the members. The variegated history of the Literary Museum in the course of the 19th century certainly shows its permanent striving for organizational and political independence together with a high intellectual level - which, however, led some members of the Museum to insist that it was an elitist circle that ought not make itself so generally accessible.

Towards the end of the 19th century, however, the movement for free public libraries got underway, influenced by British and American models and favored by advancing democratization and industrialization. In 1890, the Carl Zeiss Optical Workshops set up a small library for their workers. And in 1896, a public library was opened with the purpose of making good literature available to all social classes.¹⁷ This new public library, which was supported massively by the Carl Zeiss Foundation,¹⁸ was very well received and, indeed, turned out to be a rival for the Literary Museum. The latter, in turn, sought to escape looming isolation by

15 Cf. MARWINSKI 1991, p. 36.

16 On the history of the Literary Museum cf. more closely MARWINSKI 1991, pp. 39-67.

17 Besides the Carl Zeiss Foundation, it was primarily the local branches in Jena of the Comenius Society and the Society for Ethical Culture that militated for the establishment of a public library. For an earlier characterization with an additional statistical overview cf. HEIDENHAIN 1900.

18 An overview of costs arising in connection with the public library from its establishment in 1896 to the end of 1901 explicitly emphasized, "Thus the Carl Zeiss Foundation directly or indirectly covered *approximately* 75% of all expenses." (Archives of Carl Zeiss Jena GmbH, Act Arch 1700, emphasis in the original)

uniting with the public library a year later (in 1897). The Carl Zeiss Foundation was presided over by ERNST ABBE (1840-1905),¹⁹ who can be regarded as one of the foremost promoters of adult education in Germany at the end of the 19th century.²⁰ Teaching physics at the university of Jena (since 1870 in the rank of professor), ABBE became collaborator, adviser, and commercial partner of CARL ZEISS (1816-1888). One year after ZEISS's death ABBE set up the Carl Zeiss Foundation which right from its inception pursued a social and educational mandate. Its statutes explicitly mention the promotion of general education and the creation of opportunities for the instruction and intellectual stimulation of workers.²¹ It was ABBE, too, who in 1903 had the famous *Volkshaus* ["house of the people"] erected, which soon became a forum of education, of personal encounter, and of cultural exchange.²² In 1903, the Public Library of Jena was moved to the *Volkshaus*.²³ The organization of the library was based on the British system and was regarded as trend-setting in Germany.²⁴

- 19 An overview of adult educationalists who actively worked in the German language during the 19th and 20th centuries may be found in *Biographisches Handwörterbuch der Erwachsenenbildung* ["Biographical Lexicon of Adult Education"], edited by JOACHIM H. KNOLL und GÜNTHER WOLGAST, in which many of the Jena personalities mentioned here have individual biographical essays devoted to them.
- 20 For a characterization of ABBE und the Carl Zeiss Foundation with special reference to adult education cf. e.g. BUCHWALD 1992, in particular pp. 262-279.
- 21 Cf. the statute of the Carl Zeiss Foundation dated 26-8-1896, in particular § 1, B.2 and § 103 (reproduced in DAVID 1954, p. 32 und p. 71f).
- 22 The *Volkshaus* was greeted by the press in the most enthusiastic of possible terms. Cf. e.g. the articles on the subject in the "Blätter für Volksbibliotheken und Lesehallen" (anon. 1903b) and the "Gemeinnützige Blätter für Hessen und Nassau" (anon. 1903a). In the first documentation of the Carl Zeiss Foundation the *Volkshaus* is dubbed "the pride of Jena" (AUERBACH 1903, p. 103).
- 23 On the 20th of September 1902 the new premises were handed over to the *Lesehallenverein Jena* [the Library Association of Jena]. (Cf. on this matter the *Ansprachen...*, undated). By 1904 the *Volkshaus* could be designated a place housing under one roof the "public reading rooms complete with library, the 'Literary Museum', the Schaeffer Museum [i.e. a collection of physical gadgetry collected by a local professor by the name of Schaeffer - E.M.], the trades school, a large chamber for assemblies, concerts and festivities, two rooms for lectures, an exhibition of works of art, a studio for artists and amateur photographes, music rooms, and so on" (AUERBACH 1904, p. 9f).
- 24 A critical report on this may be found in HOFMANN 1967, p. 13ff.



1840 · ERNST ABBE · 1905

Sculpture of Ernst Abbe (23.1.1840 - 14.1.1905). Created by Adolf von Hildebrand (1847 - 1921) in 1910; full plastic; bronze; height 100 cm. The sculpture is placed in the Hall of the main building of the Friedrich Schiller University of Jena.

From the very beginning, the *Volkshaus* served as a center for adult education courses. Initially, up to 90% of the participants of these courses were workers (among them many women).²⁵ This public adult education was so well supported by the Carl Zeiss Foundation that Jena would appear to have been the only town at the time in Germany that didn't have any problems concerning premises or money. At any rate, a statement to that effect is found in an empirical survey from the year 1910, concerning the situation of 'university extension' in Germany.²⁶ Moreover, right from the start adult education in Jena was promoted by representatives of the university. The connection between theory and practice in education can certainly be seen from the fact that, from 1904 on, five of the 13 members of the independent organizing committee of adult education in Jena came from the university. Another five members belonged to workers' organizations; one other member came from a women's club and one from the Carl Zeiss Foundation, which put up the money. In addition, there was a press officer.²⁷

The Adult Education Movement in Theory and Practice

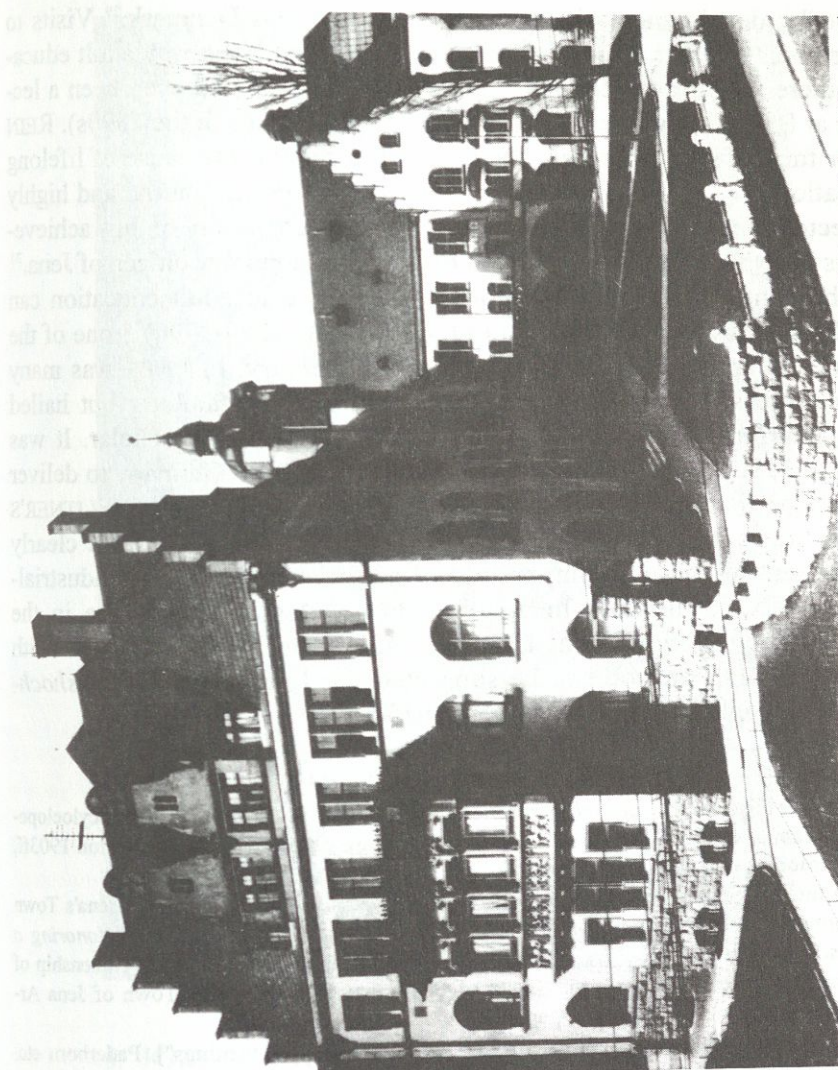
Jena was also the first town in Germany to organize Summer Courses. These were first held in 1889, under the direction of WILHELM REIN (1847-1929), then professor of education at the University of Jena. Originally set up as further education for teachers during their summer holidays, it soon attracted participants of both sexes - as well as participants from abroad.²⁸ REIN was one of Germany's most enthusiastic promoters of adult education at the turn of the century, and was much influ-

25 This is stated in an address given by an engineer named DOROVIVUS who represented Jena on the occasion of the first official conference on 'popular academic lectures' [*volkstümliche Hochschulvorträge*] within the German language area [*Erster deutscher Volkshochschultag*], taking place in 1904 in Vienna (cf. *Bericht über die Verhandlungen...* 1905, pp. 54-56).

26 Cf. LAMPA 1910, in particular pp. 59-62.

27 Cf. LAMPA 1910, p. 59.

28 The checkered history of the "Jena vacation courses" is plotted by the acts of the University of Jena Archives (Stand C, Acts 24 and 25). A statistical breakdown of the same can also be found in REIN 1909, pp. 712-714.



Copyright: Peter Cott, Fotozentrum der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena (Germany)

7. The Volkshaus ["House of the People"] of Jena, founded by Ernst Abbe in 1902

enced by developments in both Great Britain and Denmark.²⁹ Visits to these countries had made him fully conversant with the way adult education there was structured and organized (indeed, he had even been a lecturer at British university extension summer meetings in the 1890s). REIN never tired of supporting, in practice and in theory, the cause of lifelong education - by, among other things, publishing his substantial and highly respected *Encyclopedia of Education*.³⁰ In recognition of his achievements REIN was later - in 1927 - to be made an honorary citizen of Jena.³¹

The connection between theory and practice in adult education can also be seen by the work of WILHELM FLITNER (1889-1990)³², one of the foremost German educationists of the 20th century. FLITNER was many years professor of education at the University of Hamburg but hailed from Thuringia and worked in Jena when still a young scholar. It was there - in 1922 - that he became the first academic in Germany to deliver his inaugural academic lecture on the topic of adult education. FLITNER'S lecture was entitled "The Problem of Adult Education."³³ In it he clearly pointed out the growing importance of adult education in the industrialized society of the day. In addition, FLITNER was very active in the *Volkshochschule* movement after the First World War. Together with WILHELM REIN and others, he supported the foundation of *Volkshochschulen* [people's highschools] from 1919 on.³⁴

29 Cf. on this matter the essay by NORBERT VOGEL in this volume, pp. 243-257.

30 WILHELM REIN (ed.): *Encyklopädisches Handbuch der Pädagogik* ["An Encyclopedic Manual of Educationalism"]. 7 volumes. Langensalza 1895ff. (2nd edition 1903ff, 10 volumes plus register volume)

31 On the subject of Point 20 of the Agenda of the confidential meeting of Jena's Town Council, which was held on 21-7-1927, the acts state the following: "*Honoring a Distinguished Fellow-citizen*. The Town Council confers the honorary citizenship of Jena on Professor Rein-Jena." (Acts of the Town Council 1927, Town of Jena Archives, B, Dept. I d, No. 349, page 49.)

32 Cf. WILHELM FLITNER: *Gesammelte Schriften* ["Collected Writings"]. Paderborn etc. 1982ff (comprises 11 volumes).

33 Cf. WILHELM FLITNER: *Das Problem der Erwachsenenbildung. Eine akademische Vorlesung, gehalten am 11. November 1922* ["The Problem of Adult Education: An Academic Lecture, delivered on 11th November 1922"]. Langensalza 1923.

34 REIN was, for example, one of the signatories to the proclamation of 1st March 1919 calling for the setting-up of *Volkshochschulen* in Thuringia; he was also, from April 1919 on, chairman of the "Working Committee" of the *Volkshochschule* of Jena, of



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8. Wilhelm Flitner (20.8.1889 - 21.1.1990)

The picture was taken in 1926 (c.)

For a while FLITNER was principal of the new *Volkshochschule* of Jena, then situated in the building opposite the *Volkshaus*.³⁵ Jena was home to the headquarters of the "*Volkshochschule Thüringen*" (the regional association of adult education centers in Thuringia),³⁶ and it was very much the center of a specific didactical approach, the so-called 'Thuringian Approach,' highly influential in the German adult education of the 1920s. This was inspired by the Youth Movement, with its ideals of personal reform, and was especially supported by the publisher EUGEN DIEDERICH (1867-1930).³⁷ DIEDERICH had already made a name for himself as a furtherer of education, and especially the Youth Movement, in the years preceding World War I. The Youth Movement attached great importance to a new life-style centered around parties, dances, and celebrations, and DIEDERICH would arrange and fund numerous meetings for the young avant-garde.³⁸ DIEDERICH published many books on the adult education movement, adding considerably to its new body of theory. His publishing house was conveniently close: right next door to the building housing the headquarters of the *Volkshochschule* of Jena.

which FLITNER was also a member. Cf. on the local history FLITNER 1986, p. 261ff; also HERRMANN 1994, RÖLKE 1994, and WERNER 1994. On the *Volkshochschule* movement during the Weimar Republic years in general cf. FRIEDENTHAL-HAASE 1994 and 1995.

35 The opening ceremony of the Jena *Volkshochschule* on 1st April 1919 took place in the *Volkshaus*.

36 In the journal *Blätter der Volkshochschule Thüringen*, whose pages were given over to both theoretical and practical debates in the fields of education, the women's movement, book publishing, and public hygiene in Germany as a whole and even on the international level, this association possessed a publication of transregional significance. A reprint of this journal is about to be published by M. FRIEDENTHAL-HAASE and E. MEILHAMMER (*Blätter der Volkshochschule Thüringen*, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim).

37 Cf. the biographical sketch by his wife, the poet LULU VON STRAUSS UND TORNEY-DIEDERICH, which may be found in the collection of his letters and notes published by the latter (STRAUSS UND TORNEY-DIEDERICH 1936, pp. 7-26); in addition, the chapter on DIEDERICH in BUCHWALD 1992, esp. pp. 177-220 and also the catalogue of the exhibition held in Jena to mark the centenary of the Diederichs publishing house (*Versammlungsort moderner Geister* ["Meetingpoint of Modern Minds"] 1996).

38 Cf. FLITNER 1986, p. 134ff.



Picture taken from: Natte Flygare (ed.): *Die beiden ersten schwedischen Ferienkurse, Jena 1920.*

9. Eugen Diederichs (22.6.1867 - 10.9.1930) welcomes his guests for a celebration at the so-called 'Hohe Lehden,' a clearing situated high up near Jena. All the ladies are wearing flower garlands.

The *Volkshochschule* of Jena attracted other prominent promoters, for example REINHARD BUCHWALD (1884-1983),³⁹ who later became professor of education in Heidelberg and then director of the National Literary Archives in Marbach. Another even more famous, influential but also tragic figure was ADOLF REICHWEIN (1898-1944):⁴⁰ one time director of

39 REINHARD BUCHWALD became managing director of the "*Volkshochschule Thüringen*" in 1919. At the time Buchwald worked as a reader at the Eugen Diederichs publishing house, and indeed Eugen Diederichs "appears to have initially put up much of the funds" (FLITNER 1896, p. 262). BUCHWALD himself described the cultural and educational life in the Jena of his days in his own autobiography (cf. BUCHWALD 1992, pp. 259-303).

40 Cf. in particular BORINSKI 1981, esp. pp. 73-81; also AMLUNG 1991, esp. pp. 192-244, and AMLUNG 1994.

the local *Volkshochschule*, he was later executed by the Nazi regime as a resistance fighter.

Collapse and Rebirth

After the National Socialists seized power in 1933, innovations in the field of adult education were abruptly terminated as a result of the Nazi politics of *Gleichschaltung*. After the Second World War, when Germany was divided in two states, Jena belonged to the socialist German Democratic Republic. Adult education, to be sure, played an important role in the socialist system of those years.⁴¹ However, the state sought to shape and control education in its entirety, which made it very difficult to initiate independent movements in education. Such could only exist in small circles or were even forced to operate underground. Since the dramatic political events of 1989, which saw the overthrow of the socialist state, the independence of adult education has been guaranteed by the federal and state constitutions of a reunited Germany and is fully supported by law. The newly established Chair of Adult and Continuing Education at the University of Jena (held by DR. MARTHA FRIEDENTHAL-HAASE), has been responsible for embarking on a re-orientation of the academic training of junior adult educationalists. With this as its charter, it has established close contacts, and promoted multiple exchanges, with the many new institutions of practical adult education that have been set up in Jena and Thuringia. Despite the present structural and financial difficulties, numerous initiatives in education have been realized since 1989. That an international conference on the history of adult education could be held in Jena shows just how far this town has come towards resuscitating the international and liberal traditions so closely associated with it between the turn of the century and 1933. It is to be hoped that Jena will win back its traditional place as a

41 Thus Article 38 of the Constitution of the German Democratic Republic (DDR) guaranteed to all its citizens the right, "without interruption to their occupational lives, to acquire knowledge in Volkshochschulen." Besides the *Volkshochschulen*, the "Regulation concerning Educational Facilities for Purposes of Adult Education" of 27-9-1962 also recognized special schools and factory- and village-level academies as institutions.

center of intellectual aspiration, cultural encounter, and educational innovation.

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gen befürchtete (vgl. Laack 1984, S. 418). So arbeitete das Archiv zwar bis zum Jahr 1933 weiter, jedoch ohne die notwendige Verankerung in der Erwachsenenbildung. Am 31.3.1933 wurde es aufgelöst (Nachrichtendienst Deutscher Gemeindetag, Nr. 238, 1933); die gesammelten Dokumente wurden im Krieg ein Opfer von Bombardierungen.

Ein weiterer Versuch der Errichtung eines Archivs - wenige Jahre nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg - kam aus dem Bereich der Wissenschaft. Am "Seminar für Erwachsenenbildung" an der Frankfurter Universität, das Heinrich Weinstock begründet hatte, schuf man auch ein Stelle zur Sammlung von Arbeitsplänen, Tagungsprotokollen und anderen Unterlagen von Erwachsenenbildungseinrichtungen, die sich ebenfalls "Archiv für Erwachsenenbildung" nannte. Die Aktivitäten von Kurt Gerhard Fischer und der sogenannten "Deisfelder Gruppe" gehören in diesen Zusammenhang. Der Versuch mußte 1955 abgebrochen werden,⁴ das gesammelte Schriftgut gelangte später zur Pädagogischen Arbeitsstelle des Deutschen Volkshochschulverbandes.

2. Nicht nur ist es so, daß der Staat sich lange Zeit wenig um die Erwachsenenbildung gekümmert hat - große Teile der Erwachsenenbildung hielten auch immer auf Distanz zum Staat. Erwachsenenbildung in Deutschland ist in beachtlichem Umfang in privater Trägerschaft, oft verbunden mit gesellschaftlichen Interessenverbänden wie Gewerkschaften und Kirchen. Charakteristisch für sie sind 'plurale' Strukturen. Das heißt im positiven Sinne: Wettbewerb und Ideenreichtum und - vermittelt über Interessengruppen - die Nähe zu bestimmten Zielgruppen. Das bedeutet aber auch im negativen Sinne: Schwierigkeiten, sich zu gemeinsamen, übergreifenden Aufgaben zusammenzufinden.⁵

⁴ Vgl. *Volkshochschule im Westen*, H. 9/10 1956, S. 100

⁵ Die Mechanismen der Herausbildung pluraler Strukturen nach 1945, die sich dabei abspielenden Konflikte und Versuche der Politik und der Erwachsenenbildung, trotzdem gemeinsam Aufgaben wie etwa die Aus- und Fortbildung von Erwachsenenbildnern abzusichern, haben wir in einem Forschungsvorhaben für Niedersachsen untersucht. Siehe Gierke/Loeber-Pautsch.

3. Dazu kommt: Die in der Erwachsenenbildung Tätigen hatten nie richtig Zeit, aber auch wohl oft auch nicht den Sinn dafür, sich dieser Aufgabe der Archivierung selber anzunehmen. Das Problem 'Zeit' brauche ich niemandem, der in der Erwachsenenbildung arbeitet, zu erläutern. Aber dieses Problem ist nicht unüberwindlich, wenn Archivierung für wichtig und notwendig gehalten wird. Gerade an letzterem hapert es eben. Erwachsenenbildung ist - und das soll und kann auch gar nicht anders sein - den Bildungsbedürfnissen der Menschen im Hier und Jetzt verpflichtet und damit primär auf die Zukunft orientiert. 'Begegnung' lautet hier ein trotz mancher Konjunkturen und sogenannter 'Wenden' immer noch gültiges Schlüsselwort, das zwar auch Begegnung mit der Sache einschließt, zuvörderst aber 'lebendige' Begegnung mit anderen Menschen, mit Bildungssuchenden meint. Und hiermit verbunden sehe ich ein weiteres Problem für Archivierungsbemühungen, nämlich:
4. Der Kern des Bildungsgeschehens erscheint als lebendiges Geschehen der Dokumentation und Archivierung nicht so recht zugänglich. Wenn ich mir die in unserem Archiv gesammelten Materialien vor Augen führe, so eröffnen sich hier zwar mannigfaltige Einblicke in die historischen Ereignisse, Entwicklungen und Strukturen, es ist aber nicht einfach, sich über diese Quellen die tatsächlichen Bildungsprozesse in all ihrer Komplexität, in ihrer Abhängigkeit von verschiedenen Kontexten, in ihrer realen Bedeutung in den beteiligten Persönlichkeiten zu vergegenwärtigen.

Einen anderen Zugang zur Geschichte der Erwachsenenbildung als den über die Quellen kann es aber nicht geben. Ich darf in Stichworten skizzieren, welche Art von Materialien das Archiv für Erwachsenenbildung in Niedersachsen bisher sammelt, aufbewahrt und erschließt und welche Arbeitsvorhaben bereits durchgeführt worden und geplant sind.

Bestände des Archivs

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