

The Construction of Educational Spaces in a post-Soviet and post-socialist area

A Digital Conference via Zoom
hosted at

DIPF | Leibniz Institute for
Educational Research and
Information

Rostocker Str. 6
60323 Frankfurt am Main
Germany

23 - 24 September 2021
09:00 - 15:30/13:00 CET



The Construction of Educational Spaces in a post-Soviet and post-socialist area

Date: 23 - 24 September 2021, 09:00 – 15:30/ 13:00 CET

Venue: Digital Conference via Zoom and hosted at

DIPF | Leibniz Institute for Educational Research and Information
Rostocker Str. 6, 60323 Frankfurt am Main Germany

The area, or space, is an important dimension of pedagogical action and an important object of education research. The area in this sense is understood in physical, geographical, and political terms but increasingly also in terms of a socially constructed space (e.g. contributions to the 25th congress of the German Society for Education Science, 2016). In international comparative education science, spaces have for some time been units of comparison besides the nation states, and they have likewise been an object of methodological reflection. At the same time, it can be observed that educational spaces are subject to change which requires a critical reflection on their usage as units of comparison respectively units of reflection.

Countries in the post-Soviet respectively post-socialist education area/space have experienced a rapid transformation process since the late 1980s in which new borders, alliances and conflict zones have emerged. These developments changed and still challenge constructions of the self and of the other with respect to this space, whilst they have so far hardly been treated systematically.

The conference will focus on this aspect from an international comparison perspective with scientists from Germany and those countries that have experienced a socialist period and in particular belonged to the former Soviet Union.

Cowen R. (2009). Then and Now: Unit Ideas and Comparative Education. In: Cowen R., Kazamias A.M. (eds) *International Handbook of Comparative Education*. Springer International Handbooks of Education, vol 22. Dordrecht: Springer, pp 1277-1294.

Glaser, E.; Koller, H.-C.; Thole, W.; Krumme, S. (Hrsg.) (2018). *Räume für Bildung - Räume der Bildung. Beiträge zum 25. Kongress der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft (Schriften der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft (DGfE))*. Opladen, Berlin, Toronto: Barbara Budrich.

Manzon M. (2014). Comparing Places. In: Bray M., Bray M., Adamson B., Mason M. (eds) *Comparative Education Research. CERC Studies in Comparative Education*, vol 19. Springer, Cham. pp 97-137, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-05594-7_4

Preliminary Schedule

Thursday 23 September 2021

09:00 **Login to Zoom**

09:15 – 10:00 **Welcoming and introductory note by conference organizers: “Educational Spaces –Perspectives of Comparative Education”**

10:00 – 10:15 Break

10:15 – 11:45 **Panel 1: The Post-Soviet Educational Space(s): Constructions and Dissolutions**



After the collapse of the Soviet Union the educational space of this large country started to dissolve due to the establishing of new independent states. Still, there are different attempts to renew and develop the former close connections in education by declaring of education as a sphere of co-operation and integration within new regional intergovernmental alliances (e.g. the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)), by creating new institutional links (inter alia universities based on bilateral agreements e.g. Slavonic universities), by establishing the legal provision for the educational spaces (e.g. multilateral and bilateral agreements for the recognition of degrees), by developing projects and initiatives to promote academic exchanges and academic mobility (conferences, networks etc.), and last but not least by fostering the educational discourses within the regional educational space(s) (e.g. reference to the educational theories and concepts developed in Soviet tradition of educational sciences in the past and mutual references in the current discourse, including the role of regionally relevant journals in education). The papers of the round table analyze the processes of contraction and dissolutions of the post-Soviet educational space(s) and the development of new regional educational spaces and clusters and take into account the impact of globalization and regional conflicts and alliances.

Panelists:

- Prof. Dr. Maria Zaslavskaya (Yerevan State University, Armenia) / Dr. Pargev Avetisyan (Russian-Armenian (Slavic) University) / Dr. Gagik Galikyan (Russian-Armenian (Slavic) university): Problems and Prospects of Higher Education Systems Modernization in Post-Soviet Countries in the Context of the Processes of Eurasian and European Integration (the Example of Armenia)
- Prof. Dr. Anatoli Rakhkochkine (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg (FAU) / Prof. Dr. Ulzharkyn M. Abdigapbarova (Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University (KazNPU)): The Construction of a Post-Soviet Islamic Educational Space
- Dr. Natalia N. Naydenova (Institute for Education Development Strategy of the Russian Academy of Education): Education Systems in the Post-Soviet Space: Constructing the new educational reality for the assessment of educational achievement (CANCELLED)

11:45 – 12:45 Lunch Break

12:45 – 14:15

Panel 2: Developments in special education in post-soviet countries, esp. in Central Asia



The focus on this panel is on the developments in the sphere of special education in the post-Soviet region. Though bounded together through a common history of about 70 years of Soviet rule, soon after the breakdown of the Soviet Union the former member states have taken vastly different pathways. This is true for the political development as well as the economic growth (Vardomskij et al., 2012).

Alongside with the change of political power, educational systems went through significant alterations in the countries of the former Soviet Union (Iarskaia-Smirnova & Romanov, 2007). However, taking a closer look at these developments, they may show an ambivalent character: Some countries, especially in Central Asian, adopted new ideological paths and tightened soon after a short period of relative political freedom the political pressure in the educational system (Laruelle, 2007). Yet, even Uzbekistan as one the most autocratic states in the region (Ziegler, 2015) strives towards at least some internationalization of its educational system as evidenced by the commitment to join the Bologna process (Abdikarimova, 2019).

The sphere of special education usually gets less attention than developments in mainstream educational policy. However, the differences between the Soviet heritage and current global developments are even more striking here. The institution-based medical approach in Soviet policy, which aimed to segregate people with disabilities (for their own and others sake!) is in sharp contrast to “western” ideas like inclusive education (Šek, 2005). Alongside with highly varying degrees of the implementation of inclusive practices, post-soviet countries share a very diverse level of (economic) development even within state borders as evidenced in the case of Kazakhstan (Sultanov & Farin, 2015). The differences in political structure are even more striking and range from member states of the European Union to repressive dictatorships like Turkmenistan (Ziegler, 2015). Therefore, the focus in this panel is on the question of the very notion of a common post-Soviet space in special education.

Panelists:

- Prof. Dr. Elena R. Iarskaia-Smirnova (HSE University Moscow): Perspectives of inclusive education in Russia
- Prof. Dr. Tsediso Makoelle (Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education, Nur-sultan, Kazakhstan): Schools’ Transition Toward Inclusive Education in Post-Soviet Countries: Selected Cases in Kazakhstan
- Mirjakhon Turdiev (Karshi, Uzbekistan & Syracuse University, USA): Invisible power: the turning point between the special education and mainstream education for children with disabilities in Uzbekistan
- Yana Chicherina, Ph.D. (UNICEF Uzbekistan Country Office, Tashkent): Introducing Inclusive Education in Uzbekistan: Challenges and Prospects

Hosted by: Prof. Dr. Katja Koch (University of Rostock) & Dr. Stephan Kehl (PH Ludwigsburg)

14:15 – 15:30 Get Together with WonderMe

Friday, 24 September 2021

08:45 **Login to Zoom**

09:00 – 09:15 **Good Morning and Welcome Back**

09:15 – 10:45 **Panel 3: Education and the Socialist/Post-socialist Countries**



Socialism was and is a global phenomenon. Since their inception, socialist ideas have been received and adopted in all parts of the world. Accordingly, very different notions have developed about the social reforms involved, and the resulting systems can be thought of as “socialisms” in the plural. The founding of the Soviet Union provided a center for these movements which accelerated and institutionalized the global expansion of socialism. Arnason (1993: 1) points out that the “Soviet model” is therefore a “mode of globalization”. Sanchez-Sibony (2014) has called this mode “red globalization”, and Aust (2013) “socialist globalization”. These authors have focused primarily on economic and political factors, however. Yet from the beginning the process of socialist globalization has also included the educational sector. As early as the late 19th century, and increasingly in the 20th century, educational issues and reforms were discussed and implemented by socialist movements in many countries and continents. Thus Miethe et al. (2019) have identified a “socialist educational sphere” as a part of the general globalization process.

These studies have only begun to describe the phenomenon, however, and further research and discussion are necessary. Issues to be investigated include the connections between the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries and countries on a “socialist development path”. The long dominant “Sovietization thesis” has been superseded by more open explanations as developments in African countries in particular reveal a much greater autonomy in the implementation of their own ideas. Thus the question arises whether there was greater freedom in the educational sector than in economic or military policy, for example. What were the specific conditions of the socialist educational sphere? How can we define a socialist educational sphere, for that matter? Does it coincide with political units such as the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance or the Warsaw Pact? How does such a sphere affect countries which were not organized in these treaties, but considered themselves socialist? What were the positions of countries in the Non-aligned Movement and some Western, capitalist countries? Could the educational sector have been in fact a way of pursuing and implementing socialist educational concepts across the lines of the Cold War? How have these concepts changed since the collapse of actually existing socialism, and what lines of continuity and cooperation can be found in the transformed socialist societies of the present such as China, Vietnam and Cuba?

Panelists:

- Prof. Dr. Ingrid Miethe (University of Giessen): The Comintern as a historical starting point for worldwide socialist educational cooperation
- Claudia Martínez Hernández (University of Vienna, Austria): The importance of education for former Cuban contract workers
- Eduardo F. Buanaissa (Universidade Pedagógica Maputo / University of Giessen)/ Alexandra Piepiorka (University of Giessen): The University Eduardo Mondlane as a post-socialist memory space in between Mozambique and Eastern Germany
- Prof. Dr. Viktor Jakupec (Deakin University, Australia): From Sovietization to Westernisation: Post-Soviet Higher Education in Eurasian Socialist Countries

10:45 – 11:00 Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:30 **Panel 4: Images of the former Soviet Union in post-soviet times: Iconological Considerations of Pictorial Spaces**



Following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the USSR, pictorial spaces of the Soviet era were decomposed on the one hand, while on the other they have persisted or are adapted to new paradigms. Hammer and sickle as insignia of socialism and communism have lost their significance, but the view of the child, the school or of pedagogical settings and educational environments as they were designed in pictorial works have also changed. The panel will investigate this

break in visual artefacts.

Starting with the topic of pedagogy, the panel will discuss how pictorial spaces were shaped in the Soviet Union and how they are shaped today in the post-soviet states and republics. We follow the question how this break relates to the respective valid pedagogical concepts that are interwoven with the visual artefacts, including questions of perspective. Bearing such iconological considerations of pictorial spaces in mind, we will have presentations on a broad range of pictorial documents - from photography and painting to wall charts, book illustrations and films. The panel will broaden the view for the visual dimension of educational settings in countries of the post-soviet era.

Panelists

- Dr. Katerina N. Polivanova (National Research University, Moscow): Children in Soviet Cinema
- Prof. Dr. Baiba Kaļķe / Inese Barone (University of Latvia): The Biography of a Classroom (1966-2016)
- Prof. Dr. Monica Rütters (University of Hamburg): The post-Soviet pioneer camp as *lieu de mémoire* of a happy Soviet childhood
- Dr. Sieglinde Jornitz / Dr. Stefanie Kollmann (DIPF & BBF): Robert Alt and his Picture Atlas on the History of Education

12:30 – 13:00 **Final discussion and closing**
