

Standing Working Group: *Observatory for the History of Education*

**Annual Report 2019**

**Convenors of the SWG are:**

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**Founding year:**

2019

**Original impetus:**

The suggestion that we should set up a **Standing Working Group called “Observatory for the History of Education”** is inspired by the idea of regarding ISCHE as a “site” from which an international community of historians is able to “observe” the scope of its work by seeking to obtain a more wide-ranging and in-depth knowledge. Since 2014, two of us (Marisa Bittar and Thérèse Hamel) have been involved with SWG “Mapping the History of Education”, which is devoted to “mapping” the trends of publications in academic reviews and the research outputs of doctoral theses, as well as discussing the question of “where” the History of Education should be institutionally located. As the successors of “Mapping the HE”, which is being terminated in the 2019 Conference, our underlying objective is to strengthen the collaboration between researchers in every continent. The purpose of this is to give continuity to these studies in the belief that the History of Education as a specialist field, is of value to the whole community of ISCHE, regardless of what research area each of us is involved in. As well as studies of journals and the academic output of theses, we wish to draw particular attention to the teaching of the History of Education in teacher-training courses. What syllabus should be designed for its curriculum? To what extent can the internationalization of research be found in the teaching of the History of Education and in which countries? How far is there a dialectical exchange between national and international teaching standards in the History of Education? The need for this inquiry can be explained by the fact that in empirical terms, we have noted a reduction in the workload that the discipline has experienced in several parts of the world, which has been a cause of concern for its role in teacher-training. Thus, in light of the growing complexity and internationalization of higher education, it seems to us that it is worth investigating to what extent this trend has led to the strengthening of the History of Education and the question of its permanence and degree of exposure in the Curriculum. In addition, we also intend to reflect on what forms the boundaries of the History of Education and its links with other areas of Education and the Human Sciences, at a time when the design of the humanities is being reshaped within universities. The community of ISCHE historians is provided with the necessary means to carry out studies of this nature, since the theoretical input and appropriate

methodology of the “Clio workshop” are available, as well as the benchmarks for the assessment of Education and the Social Sciences.

### **Mission statement, purposes:**

By continuing the work of Mapping the HE, our main commitments within the discipline is to work together to strengthen ISCHE and the History of Education, cooperating with other organizations. Furthermore, we should inspire works on current trends in teaching and research in History of Education on the upcoming Conferences of ISCHE, study the field. There are some inevitable challenges to face with: one is to expand our boundaries in national, transnational and global dimensions; the other is to highlight our discipline’s possible positions in the public discourses (both social and political), articulate different interests and arguments in the debates about the past, politics of the memory. In this progress, the roles, functions, meanings and methodologies of the History of Education should be rethink and reframed; taking the consequences of digitalization and globalization into consideration. We would like to encourage other colleagues to join and participate, publish dossiers/special issues, and finalising a collective work at the end of this SWG, showing different views and positions of the discipline. Our backgrounds, the human combination of the SWG gives a unique opportunity to achieve a better understanding of the History of Education’s situation in different countries and continents.

### **List of members:**

The Standing Working Group was created in Porto, 2019, this work is in progress.

### **Call for papers for the next conference:**

ISCHE 42 (19 – 22 August 2020) - Örebro, Sweden

Call for Papers: Standing Working Group: *Observatory for the History of Education*

### **Looking from Above and Below: Rethinking the Social in the History of Education**

The newly established *Observatory for the History of Education* continues the work of previous SWG *Mapping the Discipline History of Education*; this has been shown an ongoing process and self-need to reflect ourselves as a research community, defining our goals, commitments and benefits to different societies and social groups.

Perhaps our greatest challenge is to expand our boundaries, in terms of internationalisation and interdisciplinary characteristics; at the same time, to find balance between local, regional and global levels, by building bridges to connect countries, areas and continents; researchers and the users of this knowledge. The role of particular organisations is worth to study deeper (their embeddedness, institutionalisation, histories etc.); and highlight/make transparent our discipline’s possible positions in contemporary public discourses. In the Era of uncertainties, it is inevitable to participate and tell complex, multiple stories related to the historical-political debates about past and memory. This commitment/involvement can be one of the main responsibilities of the History of Education, give its social value and usefulness.

That is why, we especially welcome the topic of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Conference in Örebro, “Looking from Above and Below: Rethinking the Social in the History of Education”. It is a unique opportunity

to a better understanding of our field's situation in different contexts, and social-political situations. Every colleague is invited to join and share presentation in the following aspects:

- **Analysing the social in the discipline of History of Education (HOE)**

The submissions may take a deeper look at appearances of social phenomena in History of Education researches: themes, methodologies, connections with actors and institutions, their social implications, etc.

Many interesting questions arise here: What concepts can be drawn about the discipline's common roles? How can we characterise the mutual effects between social, economic, political issues in past/present and the academic staff and institutions? The ideas of Above and Below can be interpreted in very different levels, adding more and more meanings, based on geographical, political, social backgrounds: Can we detect specific discourses, narratives, using these key notions through various times and places? There are several imaginations to position researchers' working area, from the ivory tower to commitments in a political movement: How can we analyse and understand this spectre?

- **Institutionalisation: actors, organisations and policies**

History of Education has got many national societies, departments at universities, institutions; courses in curricula; positions and formal/informal power of its practitioners.

Which trends, developments can be seen in national, transnational or global dimensions, in connections with the human factors and institutions of History of Education? Where is it located? What are the similarities, differences in the histories of such societies, conferences and scientific communication? How and why accept and welcome this field in the academic and university life? We should not forget the social impact, researchers as actors and agencies in policy-making and forming the public opinion.

- **Researching and teaching**

Majority of our researchers teach the discipline to future intellectuals, educators; which is another option to start rethinking the "social" during the ISCHE conference.

What is the importance of such courses in teacher education and further? Expanding and opening boundaries leads to reflect Humanities and History of Education as a whole: Is there a real crisis or a new challenge in the fast changes of our world, when the design of Humanities is being reshaped? What methodologies, technologies are useful to make our results visible to other historians, our students, communities? The diversity of our universities, educational institutions need flexible approaches: What does the History of education means in/for the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

- **Diversity, hegemony, language and culture**

We wish to continue the work of *Mapping the Discipline History of Education* SWG, aiming to collect and give critical historiography of studies in several cultural and linguistic areas.

How can we learn from each other? The hegemony of English in this international audience and situation of other languages are key questions. "Above" and "Below" can be understand centre and periphery, dominance and resistance as well: How can we manage our multilingual

and cultural issues to give a direction toward a continuous communication between East and West, South and North?

We encourage colleagues to send submissions, containing their research questions, methodologies, theories, argumentation and main findings. The SWG follows ISCHE guidelines during the review process, the papers might be presented in English, German, French, Spanish and Portuguese.

Please, send your abstract to Marisa Bittar ([bittar@ufscar.br](mailto:bittar@ufscar.br)), Thérèse Hamel ([therese.hamel@fse.ulaval.ca](mailto:therese.hamel@fse.ulaval.ca)), and Lajos Somogyvári ([tabilajos@gmail.com](mailto:tabilajos@gmail.com)).

**Current convenors of the SWG are:**

Marisa Bittar, Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Brazil

Thérèse Hamel, Université Laval, Canada

Lajos Somogyvári, University of Pannonia, Hungary

**Publications, research activities:**

During the next conference in Örebro, the first steps of our work is going to be formulated in presentations, after the conference, in publications.

**Group communication:**

We spread our Call for papers through H-Networks, the convenors have been communicating via e-mail, a Twitter-account and a research blog is under progress, will be finalised before 2020 Summer.