

Comparative Adult Education Around The Globe

International Portraits and Readings of the History, Practice,
Philosophy, and Theories of Adult Learning

全球比较成人教育学

——世界成人教育的哲学、历史、理论与实践

Edited by

Kathleen P. King & Victor C.X. Wang



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[内容提要] 书稿由国际一流学者教授写成, 这些学者都活跃并任职于美国各大名校的教学和科研岗位。第一部分: 第一章阐述了泰国的教育背景和现行的教育体制; 第二章叙述了中东和北非的古老教育体制和哲学理论根据, 以及正在进行的成人教育改革和现行的教育体制; 第三章描写了非洲特殊社会的哲学理论; 第四章阐明了埃及的教育发展过程, 及埃及与美国的教育到底有多少关系等问题; 作为主体的第五章, 全面地比较了中国与美国的成人教育理论与实践, 这一章为学者们研究东西方教育理论与实践提供了研究基础和方向。第二部分: 进一步提供了更严密的国际教育理论, 并对不同国家的理论与实践进行了分析, 供学者参考。通过阅读全书, 读者可以了解成人教育的过去, 欣赏其丰富的历史, 惊人的成就; 同时也可以理解教育的困难、悲剧和挑战。通过阅读全书, 读者从而得知每个人、每个国家的教育理论和教育实践在全球都有其一席之地。

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Kathleen P. King 王春学(Victor C. X. Wang) 编著

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Preface

"Life is about change, and learning through change can be transformative." This phrase has become the tagline for the podcast, web-based audio broadcast, series about adult learning we have been hosting at Fordham University since the fall of 2005. As my colleague, Barbara Heuer, and I explain, explore and discuss transformative learning, its meaning and value in the 21st century we aim to communicate the vital and guiding force transformative learning offers adult learners across their life spans. This book addresses this topic in a similar, but through more expansive, global perspectives.

In 2005, I published *"Bringing Transformative Learning to Life"* (King, 2005) with the focus on explaining, illustrating and scaffolding the vastly theoretical discussions of this learning theory. The foundation of that book was my research about transformative learning across many contexts and the resulting ability to provide fleshed out illustrations of what transformative learning "looks like" in many different settings in which adults learn and grow.

Transformative learning is a prime example within adult learning of how Western thought and perspective has dominated a discussion, and potentially restricted the development and interpretation of theory and practice through other cultural lenses. Why do we suggest this has happened? It has happened because the theory is dominated by very cognitive explanations although the process is clearly one which could have meditative, mystical, and religious interpretation, or histories.

Certainly this domination of transformative learning and adult learning global studies has not been an intentional or exclusive occurrence. However, in my 2005 volume and related publications, I continue to urge international scholars to enter the conversation more prominently and to guide our field in pressing our understanding of transformative learning specifically. In turn, from both the theoretical and research sides, I recommended the field of adult learning re-examine transformative learning from many different cultural and philosophical perspectives.

This present volume is one such collaborative and creative response. Dr. Victor Wang approached me in the summer of 2005 with the concept of a book to be written and compiled which could be used as a text for comparative studies of global adult education and to advance the consideration of adult learning from different perspectives. The uniqueness of this volume is the fact that the chapters are written by adult educators who represent, by their expertise and/or nationality, the different areas about which they write. Indeed, many colleagues had found it difficult to identify texts for their courses in the area of "global studies of adult education" which represented international perspectives from a firsthand perspective and also provided

theoretical foundations and developments.

Major accomplishments of this volume are that it provides a forum and voice for international adult learning scholars to present and "hear" their views of adult education. Not only does this volume enable us to learn how adult learning is expressed through programs and curriculum, but we also can see how scholars discuss it in their nations. This perspective can provide insight into the lived experience; as it were, it affords a glimpse "behind the curtain", and an opportunity to look beyond the boundaries of our own worldviews, to examine teaching, learning, organizations, and life in new ways.

Through the pages of this volume, I hope you will find, as I have, that our colleagues provide an opportunity to think about questions beyond our own time, space and concerns. While we might live and work in urban settings, the chapters on Africa bring not only urban, but also rural concerns to light. And while we might be in the midst of rapid technological change and media-centric economic frenzies, the chapter on the Middle East may bring life and death to the forefront of daily concerns.

This book has been an opportunity for us to learn from each other, to hear each other, and to create a forum for all of us to dialogue. Even though you will find accomplishments and breakthroughs, you will not find easy answers for the challenges of adult learning among these pages. However, we know you will find much to draw upon, consider, press in new directions and question, and in the next decades and generations we hope there will be much greater transformations yet to share.

We look forward to creating this future with you,

Kathleen P. King, Ed.D.
Professor of Adult Education
Fordham University
New York City

August 2006

Acknowledgments

The editors of this volume would like to mention people who have been helpful in publishing this book. An edited volume of work is always a collaborative endeavor and this book is no exception. Therefore, we would like to thank our colleagues who contributed chapters to this book. We would also like to thank several journals for granting us permission to reprint articles published in the journals. We thank The Continuum International Publishing Group for giving us permission to reprint a chapter written by Paulo Freire. We thank The Paulo Freire Institute for giving us permission to reprint Paulo Freire's photo in the book. It is our privilege to share his photo with our audience. Freire has been such an inspiration to educators and students around the globe.

We extend appreciation to Yuehong (Helen) Zhang and Hanfeng Lin, editors of *Journal of Zhejiang University Science (A&B)* for editing and typesetting the volume and our colleagues including Zhejiang University Press for the support we have experienced together during this project. Without your generous help and encouragement, this book would not be possible.

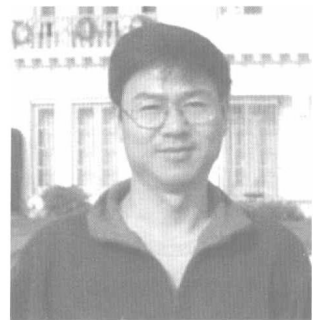
In addition, a special thank you goes to Professor Brewer and Professor Hinton for their provocative, inspiring and meaningful quotes to support the book. From proofreading, to advice and international communications we have benefited from the generous spirits and helpfulness of James King, Sharon Sanquist, Lisa Palombom and Alexandre Pirez. To Katie Wang, Anni Wang and Anthony Wang, a heartfelt thank you for your continued support and tolerance. And finally we thank many of our friends and students who have inspired us to make this book a reality.

The Editors

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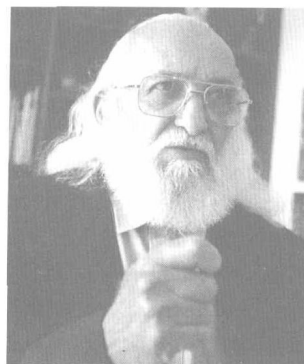
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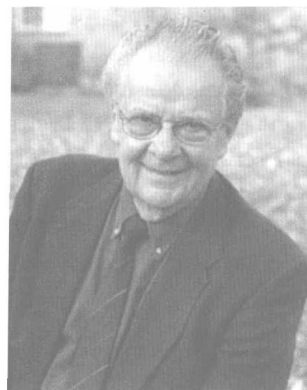
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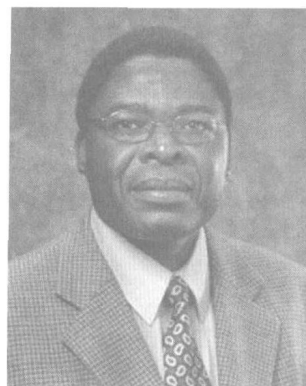
Paulo Freire (1921-1997) was a Brazilian educator, who focused on political, social transformation and emancipation and worked to develop methods of teaching those who were not literate. His literacy programs in Latin America were socially transformative. He criticized traditional, pedagogical methods of teaching and promoted andragogical elements of teaching. Major characteristics of his work remain not only a focus on overcoming social, economic, political, and intellectual oppression, but also one of a desire for theory and research to apply to practice, *praxis*. Such is the singular powerful treatise of genuine and *active* compassion expressed through his books, which have been translated into over 50 languages. The English translation of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* alone sold over 1,000,000 copies.



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