

Rifat Okçabol, *Halk Egitimi [Yetiskin Egitimi] (People's Education [Adult Education])*, Istanbul, Der Publication, 198 pp, 1994, ISBN 975 353 063 3. Cevat Celep, *Halk Egitimi: Kavramlar, İlkeler, Yöntemler, Teknikler [second edition] (Adult Education: Concepts, Principles, Methods, Techniques)*, Ankara, PEGEM, 134 pp, 1995, ISBN 975 7251 14 3. Firdevs Günes *Yetiskin Egitimi [Halk Egitimi] (Adult Education [People's Education])*, Ankara, Ocak Publication, 207 pp, 1996, ISBN 975 422 088 3.

These three books, in Turkish, are the most recent introductory adult education texts to be published in Turkey. They introduce the reader to the concept of adult education and examine historical developments and current practices of adult education in Turkey. The works can certainly be regarded as important contributions to the literature on adult education in Turkey. They are of benefit to adult education students and student teachers, even though they do have their limitations and weaknesses.

I would like to make it clear, at the outset, that adult education has different meanings and refers to different practice in different societies, since it is socially constructed, culturally bound and politically driven. It constitutes a contested terrain of theory, policy and practice. In Turkey, people's education (*halk egitimi*), adult education (*Yetiskin Egitimi*) and non-formal education (*yaygin egitim*) are used synonymously. However, nonformal education refers to the organisational aspects of adult education policies and practices. People's education, which reflects the impact of one of the six principles of Atatürkist ideology, had a populist theme during the early period of the Republic. In 1932, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his colleagues founded the People's Houses as the adult educational establishments of modern Turkey.

The People's Houses were abolished in 1951 and, four years later, People's Education centres, i.e. adult education centres, were set up by the Ministry of National Education (Duman 1997). It would be relevant to remark that colleagues in Turkish University adult education departments also employ the term 'popular education' with reference to people's education. Reflecting such a difference in the use of terminology, Okçabol has opted to use the term '*halk egitimi*' first, while Günes has preferred '*Yetiskin Egitimi*'.

Okçabol's book is divided into ten sections. The first three sections deal with the conceptualisation of adult education: adult education concepts, 'why is adult education important and necessary?', philosophical foundations of adult education and the concept of adult learning. Section Four focuses on the methods and techniques used in adult education. The author discusses such approaches as

individual, group and mass teaching in adult education. In section five, he attempts to examine the role of adult educators and the process of curriculum development in adult education. Section Six focuses on the historical development of adult education in the US, Britain and other European countries. Later in the book, he outlines the general characteristics of the historical development of adult education by classifying countries in terms of 'developing' and 'developed'.

The last four sections, which, to my mind, constitute the most successful and significant part of the book (about one third of the whole book), are on adult education in Turkey. They deal with: historical developments, the legislative and institutional bases, programmes and practices, issues and trends. The analysis in the last four sections is carried out on the basis of a comprehensive review of policy documents. Okçabol draws attention to the following developments regarding adult education in Turkey: the high rate of young people in the overall population, the increasing rate of life expectancy, the development of the women's movement, migration from the rural areas to the urban metropolis and the increasing number of adult educators trained at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Okçabol's book could be considered a useful text for adult education students and would constitute essential reading for anybody interested in Adult Education in Turkey. It provides a rather clear picture of adult education in Turkey. However, the book provides a limited, and therefore not comprehensive, review of the current literature on adult education in Turkish and other languages. Conceptual debates on adult education are narrowly framed in the early sections. For example, only non-formal education and adult education were defined in section one. And then an attempt was made to define the concepts of continuing education, recurrent education, lifelong education and community development in two pages! The conceptual framework of adult education is over complicated and we find numerous different concepts that are classified as 'core' and 'qualifying' by Malcolm Tight (1996). The conceptual framework of adult education entails well researched and well presented work. The quality of translation would also be an important factor here. The translation of new concepts and the name of educational institutions should be made carefully. The term 'Local Education Authorities', used in Britain, was badly translated into Turkish in Rifat Okçabol's book. The book is readable and interesting and provides a comprehensive account of the historical developments and future trends in adult education in Turkey. The last four sections are the book's strongest part and, therefore, this publication will be of interest to anyone looking into the practice and theory of adult education in Turkey.

Celep's book is divided into eight short chapters. The first four chapters focus on the conceptual framework. It provides a discussion around: the importance of

adult education; such basic concepts as lifelong education, recurrent education, community education and education for all; the purpose, function and principles of adult education; lifelong education; characteristics of adult learning and the motivation of adults. In Chapter Five, the author discusses the development of adult education programmes by stressing the importance of needs assessment in adult education. The methods and techniques of adult education were mentioned in Chapters Six and Seven. He highlights distance education, community development and public relations as important areas of concern within adult education. In the final chapter, he examines historical developments and the organisational structure of adult education in Turkey. This is the strongest and longest part of the book.

One can hardly say that Celep's book provides a useful and diverse collection of national and international accounts of adult education. In other words, this book represents neither a national nor an international review of the literature. The text deals specifically with adult education practices in Turkey rather than with an illustration of what is adult education, both nationally and internationally. With regard to readership, the book is targeted at students who attend the compulsory undergraduate level lecture in adult education. Günes's book is divided into ten chapters. She begins with a brief account of concepts and definitions of adult education, mainly employing the formal/non-formal/informal classification in education. Chapter Two deals with the philosophies of adult education promoted at UNESCO conferences in Western, Eastern and Third World countries. Chapter Three considers theories related to adult education which are classified as 'basic' and 'additional' theories of adult education. She sees Thorndike, Knowles, Cross, McClusky, Knox, Mezirow and Freire as basic theorists of adult education. In the fourth chapter, she examines the organisation of adult education by using 'western', 'eastern' and 'third world' as her terms of classification. Chapter Five considers adult education programmes and their content. Chapter Six provides a summary of motivation theories, approaches to the motivation of adults for participation and examples of such approaches. Chapter Seven discusses the methods employed in adult education, while Chapter Eight is entitled 'Counseling in Adult Education'. In this chapter, she indicates the purposes, target groups, roles and contents of adult counseling. She also describes counseling techniques in adult education, providing examples from Ireland, France, Germany and Turkey. Chapter Nine focuses on the training and employment of adult educators as discussed at the UNESCO adult education conferences and as they occur in such countries as Austria, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Britain, Sweden, France and six more European countries. The last chapter focuses on supervision and evaluation in adult education and contains some international reflections.

A few points ought to be raised here. In the first place, Günes's book draws on adult education literature written in French. The reader can easily feel that the text is mainly based on translation. Such translations are quite important and the task involved is not an easy one, especially when translating such basic concepts as Jack Mezirow's 'perspective transformation' or Paulo Freire's 'conscientizacao'. Secondly, any analysis of Mezirow, Freire, Knowles and other thinkers which is based on secondary sources should be viewed with caution. It is not fair to judge Freire, his radical pedagogy and his thoughts on conscientizacao without reading his books or the critiques made by leading experts on Freire's works. I believe that leading theorists of adult education should be analysed and interpreted through the reading of primary sources. Otherwise, misinterpretation, poor translation and unfair criticism are likely to occur. My third point of criticism concerns the author's classification of societies as 'western', 'eastern' and 'the third world'. 'North-South', 'Developed-Developing-Underdeveloped' or 'regional - continental' are the mostly used classifications. It is quite difficult to understand the logic behind Günes's classification of societies. My final point concerns the comparative analyses in Okçabol's and Günes's books. Methodological debates in International Comparative Adult Educational studies are quite complex. Such studies are concerned not only with the gathering of data on one or more aspects of adult education in two or more countries or regions but also with the identification of differences and similarities. Furthermore, these studies aim to generate an understanding of why the differences and similarities occur and to explore their ramifications and significance for other countries. It is therefore argued that real comparative studies in the social sciences are very rare. Most of these studies consist of juxtaposition and not comparison. A juxtaposition on the basis of one or two secondary sources might prove useless. There would be no significance in such juxtapositions and comparisons.

In conclusion, academic interest in adult education is a recent occurrence in Turkey. When I was an undergraduate, there was only one introductory adult education text. Now there are many. This is quite salutary, even though these texts have their limitations and weaknesses. The time is ripe for the production of an edited adult education text which would be the fruit of cooperation and collaboration among adult educationists in Turkey.

References

- Duman, A. (1997) *Adult Education and Local Government: A Comparative Study of Turkey, Britain and France*. Unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Durham. Tight, M. (1996) *Key concepts in Adult Education and Training*. London & New York: Routledge.

Ahmet Duman, University of Ankara.