

ENGLISH VERSION

A brief summary of the project (2016-2018)

The EUROSOC project aims to establish and consolidate a research network on the history of European socialism (from the 1870s to 1914) at the regional, national and European levels. The Consortium “Mondes contemporains” and different partners – involving researchers coming from universities all around the world – have three aims in particular: make rare or even unpublished documents and archives related to this subject accessible for all in digital form, provide a multilingual bibliographic tool, and deepen the historical reflection on the conditions which gave rise to the diversity of the socialist movements, their theoretical sources and the way they were concretely structured at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th.

The current state of the art

Over the last few years, the history of European socialism has experienced an obvious renewed interest. In France, for example, several publishers reissued numerous texts from the 19th century (the writings of authors like Proudhon, Saint-Simon, Marx, Jaurès, etc.) and a series of scientific research were carried out - principally in history, philosophy and political science – and implied various orientations. All of this shows that European socialism is now approached in a renewed manner which moves away from the ideological approaches that prevailed until then. More than twenty years after the demise of “real socialism”, this resurgence of interest shows just how much approaches have changed compared to the studies published some thirty years ago. The fact that the period from 1830 to 1860 was extensively studied as part of the ANR Utopies 19 project bears witness to this vivacity.

However, as regards the years between 1870 and 1914, the major overview dates back to the 1970s with the book *Histoire générale du socialisme* (Paris, PUF, 1972-1977) written by Jacques Droz – a monumental undertaking in four volumes which covered all continents and historical periods and which had a significant impact at the international level. Although this initiative was the product of its time – Union of the Left in France, the Cold War, and a still influential “real socialism” ideology – it appears even now as a useful tool in its broad outlines but, in view of the recent historiography and particularly the one of the past ten years, it appears outdated in many of its aspects.

Objectives of the project

The EUROSOC project intends to contribute, at its own level, to the current science renewal by planning to organize exchanges, transfers and meetings at the scale of a few European regions, by providing high-levels documentary and scientific input, and programming seminars with speakers coming from all over Europe. The researchers who have dedicated themselves to this subject are particularly sensitive to the methodologies of *histoire croisée*, transnational and global history; these methods will constitute one of the main focuses of the seminar sessions. The first component of the project will adjust the international bibliography (historiography and sources on the topic), this way allowing the establishment of a first tool likely to foster networking among the researchers involved in the project.

The second component consists in implementing a program to digitize the material on the history of socialisms and trade unionisms over the 1870-1914 period – with priority given to the history of the Seine-Inférieure department. Partnership with the consortium “Mondes Contemporains” will enable us to get the best out of this digitization program. The third component aims to establish an electronic dictionary of concepts related to the history of socialism; studying the established documentation and tools will allow the creation of a virtual exhibition aimed at the researchers, as well as at a broader public. The aim of this exhibition is to make the regional and European political identities at the turn of the 19th and 20th century better known.

A regular seminar will allow us to address these different points over the three years of the project. The partners involved in the current project already had the opportunity to work from time to time during several study days and seminars but without any particular structuring. The project thus created will allow us to extend the initial discussions and develop a research network firmly grounded at the regional and European level.