

Introduction to the Workshops

by Annette Kuhn

Workshop 1 – The culture of European early history as source of our political awareness

Marie König wrote in her book in the beginnings of our culture: “We have an organising system, known to us today, which goes back to the very beginnings of mankind. This system of order is the foundation of culture up to the present day.” This is the reason why we start our thinking about our common past in these earliest centuries over 40 thousand years ago. We can detect a pattern of matriarchal thinking and doing, which is still existent and of essential human value. Our leading question is: What does this pattern mean us today?

Workshop 2 – Encounter of cultures – women’s historical perspective of our past and future

During our European Learning Partnership we have become more familiar with the national cultures which originates in the Far and Middle East and in the Mediterranean countries and whose roots reveal a matriarchal pattern, we have been investigating more thoroughly. This pattern shows us how different cultures encountered one another, gaining more specification and diversity and at the same time being enriched by encountering the stranger in a peaceful and human manner. Once again we seek to understand this pattern of matriarchal thinking and doing in its more complex development. Our leading question is whether we today are able to define this pattern in an historical and political manner.

Workshop 3 – Women’s historical experiences as the foundation of a gender democratic Europe

Most of the older members of this conference have experienced war, fascism and totalitarian rule in their own life time and in their own countries. These experiences are crucial for our understanding of one another, of the universal qualities of women’s politics in the past and of the European-”model”. Our leading question will be how women in Europe reflect their own national experiences of the past and to what extent these reflections are stepping stones on our way to a common European view of politics world wide.