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Europe and the World: issues for citizenship education

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The theme of this conference publication is the relationship between Europe and the world, and the implications that this has for citizenship education and for identities. In particular, we address what this will mean for the education of all our children and young people. This introductory paper outlines some ideas about Europe's complex relationships with the rest of the world, discusses our current context, and then considers how our educational systems need to accommodate this, and what kinds of approaches towards identities may need to be taken.

This paper is based on the argument that Europe has tended to define itself in terms of relative geography with the rest of the world, rather than absolute geography. The distinctions between Europe and non-Europe, between East and West, have been as much about lines in the mind as they have been about lines on the map. As a preliminary example of this, Mozart, when travelling in 1787 from Vienna to Prague, referred to his journey as 'crossing an oriental border'. Metternich is said to have observed that 'Asia begins at the Landstrasse', the main road leading east out of the city, 'thereby consigning to Asia the Habsburgs' Hungarian kingdom. It is not, however, a matter of defining where Europe ends and Asia begins, and to which Russia belongs. Asia, after all, is nothing but a European intellectual construct' (Becker, 2000). In 1952 Oscar Halecki published what he called a 'history of East Central Europe' under the title *Borderlands of Western Civilization*, and this exemplifies this earlier school of thought.

Our concept of 'the other', particularly for Europe, comes to us from the ancient Greeks. Barbarian, *barbarizmo*, was any language spoken by non-Greeks – which sounded, to the Greek ear, as baa-baa. A more modern Greek, the poet Kafavis, reminds us in his poem *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1942), that peoples construct their identity as being 'not the other': barbarians are 'a kind of solution'.

... the barbarians have not come.
And some men have arrived from the frontiers
And they have said that there are no barbarians any more.
And now, what will become of us without barbarians?
These people were a kind of solution.

Who 'we' are depends on who is not 'us': our identity, and in a broad non-legal sense, our citizenship are contingent and situational – identity and citizenship depend on the interaction between our own experiences and on the time, the location and setting in which the question is posed, and on the context – who 'else' there is in the equation. Identities have always had a fluidity about them, and this tendency has increased in recent centuries and decades. So the only way possible to examine the identity of Europeans is to consider their relationship to 'the other', the non-European world. This

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necessitates examining the impact of Europe's relationships with the rest of the world, because contemporary issues of identity and citizenship are at least partially the consequence of historical antecedents. Europe's history of cultural contacts with non-Europeans has not always been happy. European states, nations and empires have been involved with the rest of world in various ways long over history. In one sense, Europe invented globalisation: it was Europe that has produced the most sustained, and most exploitative, contact with other parts of the world, and made these parts relate to Europe, on Europe's terms.

As with the term barbarian, one of Europe's first successful instances of creating 'the other' comes from ancient Greece. Our record of the wars between Persia and Greece in 490 – 450 BC have come to us from the Greek written accounts of Herodotus. The Greek accounts characterise the Persians – who had an elaborate civilisation, had developed systems of law, civil rights, language and mathematics far superior to anything in Europe at the time – as tyrants, and the accounts of the attempts of Darius and Xerxes to sustain their hegemony become, from the Greek histories, invasions of a despotic superstate against the gallant little Greek democratic communities: it is an initial run of the battle of 'freedom' against the 'axis of evil'. The Cyrus Cylinder defines religious tolerance, and is seen by many as the first declaration of human rights, but these achievements were successfully denigrated by the ancient Greeks to define the Asiatic other. As one recent writer put it,

the Persians are as notorious in their way as Darth Vader, the Sheriff of Nottingham, General Custer, or any other embodiment of evil empire you care to mention. They are history's original villains.

... the Persians had the misfortune to be the others, the enemies - in short, the Orientals - against whom the first European civilisation defined itself. The Middle East invented writing, but ancient Greece invented history. ... All western political theory is implicitly defined against the ghost of Persia - from condemnations of "tyrants" in the Atlantic republican tradition to Marx's caricature of "oriental despotism". In winning their nationhood, the Greeks consigned the Persians to a miserable place in the world's memory.

(Jones, 2005)

The ancient Greeks were not averse to developing their own forms of empire: they established settlements, trading and cultural stations across the Mediterranean and near east, and Alexander's empire took Europe into the Indian subcontinent and northern Africa. The Roman Empire that followed also took its form of civilisation to territories well beyond what we think of as Europe, and developed the conception of citizenship. Roman citizenship had important rights: one was not only safe from the death penalty, but had the right to vote, to make contracts and to have a legal marriage. In return, citizens had responsibilities: they were taxed, men needed to complete a term of military service. Who was a citizen? The Romans used both *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli* – one could be a citizen by virtue of one's birth if one's parents were legally married; but also by taking up residence in Rome, or being given freedom from slavery, or it could be given as a reward for service to the state, or to foreigners living in conquered lands. By AD 212 citizenship was given to all free inhabitants of the empire. Roman citizenship

was thus not reserved for the white 'European' population, but was also given to the Black and Asian population of the Empire: it was an Empire of colonisation that exported Rome's political and economic hegemony well beyond the confines of Europe.

The restoration of the Empire became a European obsession after the collapse of Rome. The succession of European states that sought to create empires within Europe is breathtaking, but the concern here is with the European impact outside of Europe: the entanglement with 'the other'. From the time of Henry the Navigator onwards, the world was mapped and then occupied by Europeans. The traditional histories give us a rather simplistic account of a succession of European empires: Portugal and Spain, giving way to Britain, France and the Netherlands, followed by the late entry of Germany and Belgium. But the extent of European participation in the expropriation and exploitation of the world was much wider than this. This conference is held in Latvia, and Latvia was one of these colonial powers.

Riga was founded as a Hanseatic trading port in about 1160, and the town and cathedral came by about 1200. In the seventeenth century it was part of the Duchy of Courland: Duke James Kettler (1610-1681), well educated and widely travelled, understood well the prevailing political and economic systems of absolutism and mercantilism. Courland became one of the most important producers of naval stores and a leading maritime power, and Latvia had one of the largest maritime fleets in the world, with 61 men-of-war armed with a total of 1416 cannons. His success in developing Latvia as a maritime nation let James pursue the ambition of becoming a colonial power, and join the larger European nations in the scramble for overseas colonies. Courlander sailors followed Spanish, English, Dutch and French seamen and colonists to West Africa and in the Caribbean. In 1651 the Duchy gained its first successful colony in Africa.

From the early 15th century Portuguese navigators had sailed down the coast of West Africa in order to circumvent the Arab and Muslim domination of the trans-Saharan trade in gold, which was central to Portugal's finances. By the 1600s the commercial estates owned by Portugal, in Brazil, needed more labourers, which the Portuguese began to take from West Africa. Although slavery had been long established in West Africa, the Portuguese developed it on a larger scale. In 1651, the Courlanders established the first permanent trading settlement, who called it St. Elizabeth Island and used it as a trade base from 1651 until it was captured by the English in 1661. Slaves were taken across the Atlantic to work in the colonies the European powers had started in South America, the Caribbean and North America.

The Duchy of Courland's ships were voyaging to the Caribbean from at least 1637, when a Courland ship attempted to found a colony on Tobago with 212 settlers. There had already been attempts to create a settlement by the Dutch between 1628 and 1632; they called the island Nieuw Walcheren. In 1637 a Spanish expedition destroyed the settlement and massacred the colonists. The Courlander's first expedition arrived later that year, this attempt failed. A third attempt in 1654 was successful: the Courlander ship *Das Wappen der Herzogin von Kurland*, armed with forty-five cannons and registered in Ventspils took 25 officers, 124 Courlander soldiers and eighty families of colonists to occupy Tobago. It was declared a property of Courland and named New Courland. The

lands around the bays and rivers essential for a maritime colony, for farming, waterpower, transport and trade, were named after the ruler. A fort was erected on the south-western shore of the island, called Jekabforts (Fort James) which was surrounded by Jekaba Pilseta (Jamestown). Other names such as Great Courland Bay, James Bay, Courland Estate and Little Courland Bay soon appeared. Even the names of cities and towns in the duchy appeared in Tobago, such as New Jelgave and Liepaja Bay – many remain today.

Latvia/Courland became a major overseas trader. The duchy exported agricultural products to the Caribbean - timber, hardware, glassware, grain, beer, flour, salted meat and fish, amber jewellery. From the Tobago colony, they sold tobacco (from which Tobago's name), tropical birds, cotton, ginger, sugar, indigo, rum, cocoa and tortoise shells to Poland, Sweden, Muscovy, Great Britain, Spain and the Netherlands. The colonisation of Tobago island extended the power of the duchy across the world: Latvian ships, carrying a flag, a black crab on a red background, were recognised throughout the mercantile world. However, Latvia's period as a colonial power in the world was short-lived. The Duchy of Courland was a point of interest for both Sweden and Poland. In 1655 Swedish army entered the territory of Duchy and Duke Jacob was captured by the Swedish army in 1658. Both colonies were taken by Dutch colonists in 1659, and the merchant fleet and factories were destroyed.

The pattern of Latvian colonies was typical of nearly all the colonial powers – a trading post in West Africa, and a plantation colony in the New world (generally the Caribbean or the semi-tropical parts of the American mainland). Why this pattern? The goods desired by Europe were the agricultural products of the New World – spices, sugar, tobacco, and gold and silver. But these could not be produced without labour, and labour that Europeans were unwilling or ill-suited to work in such climatic conditions: hence the appropriation of African slaves, turning the slavery that was indigenous and often temporary into a one-way passage across the Atlantic, the commodification of humans in what was called the Triangular Trade with the infamous 'middle passage' in which women, children and men were packed into ships and transported to the slave markets of the Americas. This brief outline of Latvia's colonial impact on the world has introduced a number of other European countries involved in the same processes of expropriation, exploitation and slavery: Portugal, Spain, England, France, the Netherlands and Sweden. These were by no means the only colonial powers

Finns, for example, founded small utopian colonies in Sierra Leone, Queensland Australia and parts of what is now Canada. Poles established colonies within what was then the then independent state of Texas in the 1850s. We tend to remember Austro-Hungary as a European land power – but it developed the colonial settlements of Banqibazar and Cabelon in the early 18th Century, under charters from Charles 6th. Malta – itself more recently a colony – was a colonial power in North Africa and Asiatic Turkey, as well as parts of Mediterranean Europe. Norway has colonies in the Peter I Island and Queen Maud Land. More significant colonial powers included Denmark, the colonial owners of the Virgin Islands for over 230 years, only selling them to the USA in 1917. They also had colonies in West Africa (Danish Guinea), the colonial trading posts of Tranquebar, Balasore, Serampore, and Dannemarksnagore in India and Frederiksøerne, now known as the Nicobar Islands. Sweden had colonies in the

Caribbean – Guadeloupe (admittedly, only for a year) and Saint Barthelemy, the Swedish Gold Coast in West Africa, and New Sweden, a colony on the banks of the Delaware from 1638 – 1655.

The more substantial colonial powers held much of the rest of the world. Spain and Portugal divided the world between them at the Treaty of Tordesillas, but France and England took over much of what they had not managed to reach, and a good deal of what they originally colonised. The Netherlands established a very extensive colonial empire. Belgium, a latecomer to nationhood, nevertheless established an African colonial empire. Italy and Germany were also latecomers: Germany had colonies in Micronesia, several parts of Africa, and Samoa. Lesser known is that earlier component states of Germany such as Prussia had established colonies in West Africa in the Gold Coast in the late 17th/early 18th Century. Italy's African empire was the most recent. And Turkey and Russia, as well as both being land-based empires within Europe, also held substantial non-European colonies.

About half the states now in the European Union – and most of those with a coastline – were holders of colonies outside Europe. And almost all the territories outside Europe – the rest of the world – were at one stage claimed as possessions of Europe, in which most of the inhabitants, however, were not considered Europeans. Those European countries that did not have colonies nevertheless supplied colonists to territories of those that did. All Europe can be said to have been implicated in this appropriation of the world, this first globalisation of the planet. What were the results of this first impact of Europe on the World?

One consequence was that some Europeans became extremely wealthy. The mercantilism that underlay the colonial expansion created a rich class of traders, manufacturers, bankers and commerce. It brought much less wealth to the working classes of Europe. But there were more insidious consequences that impacted on almost all Europeans.

Slavery barely existed in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, and its re-introduction was justified by developing the concept of racial difference and subordination. The ability to justify European superiority over other peoples of the world allowed Europeans to develop and extend the concept of the other, the non-European, as a rational explanation for European global hegemony and to allow the practice of slavery. This development of the concept of race was extended to Europe itself, and various European ethnicities were seen as inferior in various ways – as Metternicht's characterisation of his Hungarian population, and other groups, as 'Asiatics' demonstrates. The scramble for colonies was accompanied by the increasing justification of dividing and categorising humans into groups, assigning groups specious characteristics. And this effect of colonisation – unlike the material wealth – was shared across all classes of European society. Both the rich man in his castle, and the poor man at his gate, felt united in their common superiority over what Kipling the English observer and writer on colonialism described as 'lesser breeds, beyond the law'.

This scramble also led to two world wars – global events essentially caused by Europe. 1945 brought the realisation that a very different approach was needed. Racism and

xenophobia towards other Europeans was exposed for what it is, and, while not extinct, it is much less than it was. Racism towards those not living in Europe – ‘the world’ - has also changed. Europe politically disentangled itself from colonialism, though economic and commercial hegemony persists. And there were two other fundamental changes. Firstly, the realisation of what had been unleashed in the 1914-45 period led to the conception of human rights and obligations to others that transcended nations and duties to the state. Europe in particular was at the centre of the move towards defining human rights, and in creating enforceable supranational laws that override national law. These have been for all living in the jurisdiction of the European states – not just for ‘white Europeans’. This conception of rights is innovative and unique, and has had important implications for the second fundamental change in Europe: the population of Europeans.

This population of Europe has changed since 1945. To understand why it has changed, we need first to briefly examine changes in the economy of Europe. Most Europeans before 1945 were poor in a way that is now difficult to comprehend. In 1950, the average west European household spent over half its total income on food, drink and tobacco, and nearly 40% on clothing, housing and household fuel. The proportion on food and drink was higher in Mediterranean Europe and Eastern Europe. Most Europeans had very little disposable income after they had bought the necessities for life. By 1980, the proportions spent on food and drink had fallen to under a quarter. In the UK in 2002 only 13.2% was spent on food and drink, and 23.8% on housing and clothing.

What has the additional surplus income been spent on? There has been an enormous growth in consumer goods. A few examples will illustrate this. Sales of nylon stockings in West Germany rose from 900,000 pairs in 1950 to 53 million pairs by 1953; refrigerators were found in just 2% of Italian homes in 1957, and 94% in 1974. The growth in private motor car ownership between the 1950s and the 1970s was 7-fold in France, 4-fold in the UK, and 40-fold in Italy. In 1956 in Belgium, Italy, Austria and Spain, and large parts of France and Scandinavia over half the households did not have running water. The electricity grid in most European countries was unable to support more than an electric cooker and a fridge.

How did this expansion in productivity happen? There was in north-western Europe from 1950 onwards a near insatiable demand for labour to make consumer goods and provide consumer services. There were three broad sources for this workforce. Firstly, within many countries there was a rural labour surplus, particularly as farming became dramatically more efficient. In many countries this was on a massive scale, over a short period of time. In Spain, a million people moved from Andalusia to Catalonia between 1950-70; in Italy, over 9 million people left the south for the north; and there were similar moves in Portugal, Sweden, and from East to West Germany. Secondly, there were moves between European countries. Belgium took 20,000 Italians to work in Wallonia in 1946: following them came the West Germans. Konrad Adenauer offered free transport to Italian workers moving to work in German industry in 1956, and the country then entered into a series of agreements with Greece and Spain in 1960, Turkey in 1961, Morocco in 1963, Portugal in 1964, Tunisia in 1964, and Yugoslavia in 1968. Finns went to Sweden, Irish young men to Britain (who had no rural surplus, having become predominantly urban by 1860). In Portugal, 1.5 million workers left the country in the 13 years after 1961, leaving only 3.1 million workers being. In Greece, a quarter

of the entire workforce left the country between 1950 and 1970. These internal migrants were an important part of their home countries' economies: their remittances formed 50% of the export earnings of Greece, Yugoslavia and Portugal in 1971, and 90% of Turkey's. By 1973, an eighth of Germany's workers were non-Germans, and 11% of France's.

Europe having been exhausted of its surplus labour, Europe's colonies and ex-colonies met the gap. Decolonisation was followed initially by an exodus of expatriate professionals and retired farmers in several European countries, but Britain, with no rural surplus, and perhaps harder to reach for migrant Europeans in the 1950s, sought to meet its labour shortages in the Caribbean and in the Indian subcontinent, and by 1976 1.85 million Britons were non-white (and 40% of these had been born in the UK). While many of those migrating had initially intended to return, when children were born and educated in Britain, then the ideas of some moved from return to retirement, and then to simply family visits. These workers contributed to the new prosperity of Europe that we have noted, and they and their children became 'new Europeans'. They took on worse paid work, but had aspirations for their children, educated in Europe, with European tastes and patterns of consumption – both cultural and material. Less well paid, they also made fewer demands on the social infrastructure of the state. In some countries they were excluded from social security provision: in all countries they made very little demand for social provisions, being generally people who were both healthy and of working age. The pattern was replicated across Europe, with French, Belgian and Netherlands ex colonies providing their former colonial powers with workers.

These new Europeans were generally not well treated. Generations of white populations, brought up on a diet of racial stereotyping, did not always see that their own increasing prosperity was partially based on the work of the newcomers. 'Othering' persisted: the 1965 West German Foreigners Law managed to incorporate the 'Police regulations for foreigners' that were first written and introduced in 1938. But as primary immigration slowed down from the early 1970s onwards – restrictions were introduced as the European economic growth slowed down - there was an increasing realisation that the new Europeans, or many of them, were here to stay. Moreover, evidence of racial discrimination jarred with the post-war ethos of common rights. As one historian put it, the economic boom of those years would have been impossible without 'the steady flow of docile, low-cost workers' (Judt, 2005), so legislation to outlaw discrimination and to penalise race hatred was slowly introduced. By the 1970s, the economic downturn means that many workers did return; in 1975 290,000 workers left West Germany, for example, and in Italy, Greece and Portugal the inflow of returning workers outnumbered the numbers still leaving. 200,000 Spaniards came back to Spain. But many migrant workers remained, retired, became grandparents, and their children and grandchildren had no desire to 'return' to a country and culture they barely knew.

The population of Europe was changing – but, it should be noted, merely changing again. For centuries Europe had been a continent of migration, and what was happening in the post war period was not new, only recent. This new workforce had contributed to the new and sudden prosperity of Europe: not just the consumer goods and services, from nylon stockings to cars, that were also a characteristic of the economy of the United States, but the particular European social security system, the healthcare, the pensions,

the family support networks, public transport. These European social provisions were often provided by the new European workers, and were financially supported by their contributions through taxation. The European human rights agenda has also created the conditions for these new Europeans to assert their rights as citizens.

We can see the legacy of Europe's impact on the world between 1592 and 1945 in the shape of the population of Europe today. The effect of Europe globalising the world has led to not just a set of racialised attitudes, but also to the movement of peoples of the world into Europe, mirroring the movement of Europeans into the world. And, as at least as a partial response to the enormity of where Europe had arrived at in 1939-1945, we have developed a system of supra-national human rights laws, that, *inter alia*, conditions our recognition of all our inhabitants, old Europeans and new Europeans.

Some Europeans are Muslims, and some are black. Neither of these are themselves necessarily 'new' Europeans: we have had Muslim Europeans living in Bosnia for many centuries, happily professing both European and Muslim identities. There were black Europeans in Roman times – and there have been people of African descent living in European cities in significant numbers from the 16th century on, many now long since inter-married into the white population. But there are now new Muslims, and new minority ethnic Europeans. It was estimated that in 2000 there were some 15 million Muslims in Europe: some of these were 'old Europeans' – not just Bosnians, but also converts. And there were some 6 million Muslims, 'old' and 'new' in France (predominantly from North Africa), nearly 6 million in Germany (largely Turkish and Kurdish), and 2 million in the UK (mainly from Pakistan and Bangladesh).

In the words of a contemporary historian, 'In an age of demographic transition and resettlement, today's Europeans are more numerous and heterogeneous than ever before' (Judt, 2005, p 752). Europe is a fluid concept, and its boundaries consist of the mind, rather than lines on the ground. Until relatively recently, Europe was a continent largely made up of empires rather than of states, and the markers of Europe were not so much frontiers as boundary zones – variously called marches (Carolingian, Welsh), limes (Roman), militargrenze (Austo-Hungary) or krajina (Poland, Pomerania, Croatia, Serbia) – regions seen as the outer guardians of European civilisation, whose purpose was keeping the barbarians out. But these regions were fluid and shifting. Poles, Ukrainians, Lithuanians have all variously presented themselves, in poetry, literature and political myth, as guarding the edges of Europe. Similarly narratives can be seen in the histories of Hungarian and Romanian peoples. Serbs and Croats have both claimed themselves as Europe's southern defensive frontier territory, against respectively the Serbs or the Turks.

What all of these show is that historically (and now), being in Europe matters. Lands and peoples have sought to assert that they are European, thus proving for themselves a degree of security or assurance. Migrants to Europe have also a sense of wanting to belong to Europe, but – in many cases – to do so in a way that recognises their wanting to maintain some aspects of their cultural and linguistic background. This sense of belonging was then shattered by the Second World War and the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, making these areas feel excluded and forgotten.

Europe is not about absolute geography, but about relative geography. Some states now – for example, Armenia, Moldavia and the Ukraine – assert their European-ness as a defence against both geography and history. For these peripheral or borderland nations, the distant prospect of their inclusion in Europe is more important than what they will lose by staying outside. Whatever had been European and cosmopolitan about cities in Ukraine and Moldavia has been beaten out by Nazis and Soviet rule, and for them now, Europe may be less about having a shared and common past than about a claim to a common future.

So Europe is a fluid idea, contingent and situational. The idea of ‘Europeans’ is also fluid. It embraces new Europeans, the descendants of those who were once new Europeans, different Europeans, possibly Europeans at the possible frontiers. What distinguishes Europeans are their diversities, and the way that they can elect to hold to these diversities, modify these, or abandon them: Europe is distinguished not only by its embracing and costly social security, but also by its recognition of over-riding human rights. The ideal is: ‘accept, respect and honour these rights for others, and your diversity and identity are respected alongside your European identity’. Though that ideal is by no means yet achieved, it is a very different conception to the assimilationist melting pot, and is distinctly European, and distinctly modern – and a consequence of Europe’s near fatal first entanglement with the world beyond Europe.

What does this mean for education, and specifically citizenship education?

Children and young people need to understand that they – and everyone else – is likely to have a diverse and complex set of identities, multifaceted, nesting and multiple, that they will operate contingently, and that derive from the interaction between individual experiences and the social groups that they come into operation with.

They will need to recognise, in parallel to this, the very great diversity of Europeans: not to simply tolerate or accept this, but to celebrate Europe’s diversity

Children and young people will need to recognise, understand – and be proud of – a clear set of human rights values, and to insist that we all uphold these – and that these include the recognition of the rights of women, minorities, and the diverse linguistic and ethnic communities of Europe, new and old.

We need a new sense of our history: a recognition of the different ways that peoples have come to where they now are, including the role that our ancestors played in shaping the distribution of the global population.

Schools will have a key part to play in meeting these needs: education will help children build their identities, and schools and teachers need to recognise this as a matter of choice. Schools have a role in helping pupils understand this new conception of Europeanness, and the importance of individual contingent choice in assuming identities. Schools will also need to play a role in the establishment and promotion of human rights – both in how these rights must be promoted and respected, and in demonstrating what they mean through schools own practices. Schools need to promote how these rights are

greater than national rights – they should be universal human rights, that are already in practice European rights.

These are challenges for the school curriculum. The Curriculum is not there to transmit remembered histories of ‘us’ and ‘others’ in the past, but to understand our role in diversities today. These are the concerns of those who educate teachers today. But this group also have a further responsibility: who will be the teachers of tomorrow. We must ensure that teachers represent all the diverse parts of our society – there should be new Europeans in our teaching workforce as a matter of course. This is not because minority ethnic teachers are needed to teach minority ethnic children: far from it. Their role is to be teachers of all our children, because all our children must see that teachers – society’s authority figures for children – are representative of the diversity of our societies.

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