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## World citizenship as an educational project: From Weltschmerz to Rap

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This paper concerns world citizenship as an educational project and begins with the Roman Empire, from an historical point of view. Caesar and Cicero are the references: I could equally have chosen another geographical and historical starting point – I could just as well have started with the Sumerians, 3,000 years earlier, or somewhere else in the world. Europe is a choice, and defining world citizenship from a European context is a choice. As a European, it is for me a most qualified choice: at the same time one must be aware of the richness of diversity one could have found if one had chosen another point of departure.

Reading Caesar's *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* gives a very detailed perspective through his description of the northern part of the Roman Empire. His contextual understanding was the constitution of the Roman Empire. Caesar was very interested in the way his provinces administrated their communities, so he described in minute detail the many variations of constitutions that might be found in the Gallic and Germanic provinces. It was very difficult to give a precise description of a typical concept of a citizen in the Roman Empire. If the Roman Empire was the world, the diversity of world citizenship would have been just as multifarious then as it is today in 2006.

Cicero, in *De Officiis*, believed that man was driven by nature to belong to a community by a community spirit in the same cosmos. *Cura* was the community caring for the individual and *justitia* was the justice that protected citizens against injustice. He used the legal term *ius gentium* [International Law] and was convinced that this law, connected to natural law, was universal in all communities. Much later, Kant expressed the same view in his Categorical Imperative.

Leaving history to examine the terminology. World citizen – or a citizen of the world - is related to the ancient Greek *Cosmopolite*, which meant a speculative and ideological idea. In a modern context, we think largely within a framework of *realpolitik*, and use the term when we talk about global issues, such as 'threats to civilisation'. Citizenship is described as something to do with rights, duties and justice according to a constitution, a particular law or legislation. World citizenship in 2006 is related to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

We know that virtually nobody questions this Declaration. Perhaps this is the real problem: it just *is*. Anyone can refer to it. In most political contexts it will be proper and decent, as well as politically correct, to refer to the Declaration. This should then make everything satisfactory? But everyone also knows the answer to this: no, all is not well. It is common knowledge that none of the 30 articles in the Declaration have been followed. The explanation for this is simple: it is no more than a Declaration. Declaration derives from the Latin *declaratio*, which means an expression, in the sense of 'making a declaration'. It is quite possible for everyone, in a proper and politically correct manner,

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to express and declare their agreement that both the preamble and the 30 articles *ought to* be complied with. The problem is the *ought to*, which describes good intentions. Linguistically, the word *ought* is linked to *can* or *may* and not to *should* or *must*. I shall return to this Kantian problem later. For now, I will just make the link to natural law, from which it becomes clear that the philosophical problem is that we only *ought to* follow laws if they comply with natural law, which is objectively based on the law of nature, to which all rational beings are bound. If natural law is to be other than wishful thinking, it must also contain a theory about the law of nature and the objective and obligatory character of this law. This is precisely what a declaration cannot do: it is, and will always be, wishful thinking. The good intentions, which no one can disagree, are there, but everyone has problems in ratifying these (ratification: from the Latin *ratificare*: decided, validated). Something that was ratified would be something which *must* be complied with, something which has transformed the good intentions into a legal command, that had become operative. Everyone has rights, and this is the pivotal point of the Declaration of Human Rights. As it says in Article 2:

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

This brings us to the central issue of this paper: will world citizenship as an educational ideal continue merely as wishful thinking? Or could it be transformed into an educational project to be realised – ‘made operative’, as described earlier? My straightforward view is that while it definitely could become an educational project, educationally speaking it could not be made to work. Firstly, it could not be termed *educational*, and secondly, if attempted it would be a Sisyphian task. These points have been chillingly illustrated in history. We all know some examples: Alexander the Great, Napoleon and Hitler. There are contemporary villains who could be nominated: the American writer, Samuel S. Huntington predicted in *The Clash of Civilisations* (1997) that extremely violent cultural worldwide clashes would take place. Ten years later we must acknowledge that we have witnessed a number of such clashes, and that nothing indicates that they are diminishing. Mobilisation and escalation occur with regularity in daily news bulletins across the media.

One might therefore ask ‘Is not everything utterly hopeless?’ The answer would be yes! It is so wretched that one worries as much about world peace as one hopes for world citizenship: we become victims to that which in the 1700s was called *Weltschmerz* (though the pain then had quite a different source: originally *weltschmerz* meant sorrow or sadness over the present or future evils of the world in general, a kind of sentimental pessimism).

The science of psychology would probably hold *weltschmerz* to be a basic human sentiment, which might manifest itself in any age group, but which especially strikes young people. The best known example was Goethe’s use of the concept. 1774 saw the

publication of the book that would make Goethe famous – and notorious – to a large European public: the letter and diary novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, full of suffering and *weltschmerz*. Rarely – if ever – has a young man suffered so much or so poetically as the young Werther in his love for Lotte. A whole generation of young, middle class men found a means of expressing an ethical critique of religion, of rationalism, of authorities – both social and political - through Goethe's novel. A youth rebellion took place, known in its literary and dramatic version as *Sturm und Drang*, storm and pressure; pressure felt from within as *weltschmerz* and the angry, passionate assault on everything which might limit the longing of the free heart of nature.

In the *Sturm und Drang* literature, nature provided the framework for serenity as well as extremity, for the individual experiencing internal discord, sensibility in discord with passion. Ingredients that are all characteristic of *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, which therefore is not merely one of the most outstanding epistolatory novels in world literature, but which also sets the standards for other contemporary *Sturm und Drang* writers.

*Weltschmerz* and *Sturm und Drang* became fictional themes during the period of the Enlightenment, the era of Western culture which produced great quantities of fictional and philosophical literature. In education the works of Jean Jacques Rousseau and, later, Immanuel Kant were pioneering. Their works were paradigmatic in both philosophy and education. *Emile* by Rousseau (1762) is known by almost everyone with an interest in educational themes; fewer will be familiar with Kant's *On Education (Über Pädagogik)* (1803). Kant also gave these lectures on the task and challenges of education, late in life, as a consequence of having read Rousseau. It is said that Kant started reading *Emile* one morning as his first task of the day, and that he read the entire work without interruption.

What is Rap? The answer is equivocal, but without offending anyone it is possible lexically to formulate the rhythm part of it. It is characterised by a basic rhythm (beat), where a male or female rapper recites a form of monologue over the music. The monologue follows the rhythm. The way in which the words are said in relation to the rhythm is called flow. A rapper can have a fast flow, like the rapper Twista, or a slow flow, like the rapper The Streets.

The beat to which the rap is recited is often composed by artists specialised in this kind of music. Some beats are created by taking fragments from other works of music and combining them into one piece – for example, taking the drums from one song, the guitar from another and the bass from a third, thus creating a new, unique piece of music. Such artists are also called producers. Taking the definition of *weltschmerz* given earlier (sorrow or sadness over the present or future evils or woes of the world in general; sentimental pessimism) brings us very close to the 'poetry' element of rap. Hardcore rap is, in principle, *Sturm und Drang* in a present-day context, from devastating political satire to a naïve, vulnerable and sensitive declaration of love. The following rap is a good example from the rapper Immortal Technique:

This is point of no return I can never go back,  
Life without parole upstate shackled and trapped,  
Living in 'the hole' looking at the world through a crack,

But fuck that I'd rather shoot it out and get clapped,  
 I've gone too far there ain't no coming back for me,  
 Auschwitz gas chamber full of Zyklon B,  
 Just like the Spanish exterminating Tainos,  
 Raping the black and indian women creating Latinos,  
 Muthfuckaz made me out of self righteous hatred,  
 An now you gotchaself a virus stuck in the matrix,  
 A suicide bomber strapped an ready to blow,  
 Lethal injection strapped down ready go,  
 Don't you understand they'll never let me live out in peace,  
 Concrete jungle guerilla war out in the streets,  
 Nat Turner with the sickle, pitchfork and machete,  
 The end of the world muthafucka you not ready,  
 This is the point of no return and nobody can stop it

Goethe was also very preoccupied with music, as were most people from the middle classes of the 1700s. Musical concerts were part of the educational programme. Classical music was institutionalised by a tradition which, on the one hand was not to be changed overnight, but was nevertheless constantly developing. The sum of Mozart's production bears witness to such development which, in some instances, was musicologically paradigmatic. He was one of the musicians creating the ultimate highlights in musical drama through the sheer expressiveness and psychological nuances he employed. The same could be said of Goethe's chromatology: it was a showdown with the mechanical view of nature, and substantiates his interest in coherence and contrast between Man and nature. The great literary work about Werther contains naïve, vulnerable and sensitive love declarations. The educational formative project for the young middle class pointed to enlightenment. That is the fact in all its simplicity. The road to India, the Far East and the Americas had been discovered long ago, so the world *was* the one we know today. But it was also during the Enlightenment that the American constitution of 1787 signalled that the world consists of more than Europe alone. World citizenship is not a European educational ideal. It is a world project *for* the world and *in* the world.

Kant believed that world citizenship as an educational ideal was politically incorrect if it did not refer to a stated *right* to world citizenship. Only a few today will recall that the first declarations of human rights were formulated at the time of Kant. Kant did not disagree with the stoics' definition of world citizenship as an educational ideal, but he pointed out that it did not make sense unless it referred back to a *legal* basis. For this reason, he specified that the ideal citizenship was to be defined both as world citizenship and community citizenship:

Parents care for the home, rulers for the state. Neither has as their aim the universal good and the protection to which man is destined, and for which he has also a natural disposition. But the basis of a scheme of education must be cosmopolitan. And this is, then, the idea of the universal good harmful to us as individuals? Never! For though it may appear that something must be sacrificed by this idea, an advance is also made towards what is the best, even for the individual under his present

conditions. And then what glorious consequences follow! It is through good education that all the good in the world arises. (Kant 1899:15)

The nineteenth century was characterised by numerous long wars. The colonial powers went to war outside Europe. But Europe was also a battlefield in that century, and the world citizen was not left much room. The European wars were in part wars of sovereignty for the individual national states and in part demented attempts at world conquest. Towards the end of that century, Nietzsche speaks (in Kjaer 1995:12) of that which he calls the German barbarism, and that a time will come when educational institutions such as sixth forms or high schools and universities (perhaps) will not exist at all, because they realise that they especially carry a responsibility for the very same barbarism. They will always prove their point by using statistics. There will come a time when serious people, through a renewed and cleansed educational mission and common tasks, will once again reclaim the authority for day-to-day upbringing – education for the new, formative development. Maybe it was statements like these that sent Adolf Hitler down the wrong track 50 years later.

Oswald Spengler's main work, *The Decline of the West*, was published in two volumes in 1918 and 1922. This metahistorical thesis about the underlying tendency in all highly developed societies became very significant for Western philosophy and historical thinking during the 1920s, perhaps particularly as a result of the cultural shock that an event like the First World War managed to take place at all. Spengler considered it manifest that Western culture was in decline - hence his title, *The Decline of the West*. He believed traditional historical understanding to be wrong: a long, linear course of events could not possibly be right. He held that, on the contrary, events were cyclical. Cultures were not necessarily connected by linear development, but by cycles of definite periodical development. Cultures were analogous to an organism: it comes into existence, reaches its youth, its prime, goes into decline and, finally, dies away. Everything inherent in a culture is decided by history in relation to the specific developmental level of that culture. There is no independent nature, and all intellectual life is affected by historical relativism. Through an intuitive identification process, it becomes possible to discern the basic structure in the development of any culture. The last step in the development of a culture is always the phase of civilisation, characterised by refinement and eclecticism in artistic expression, sobriety and scepticism together with the *metropolis* (Babylon, Thebes, Alexandria and Rome – and, in Western civilisation, Paris, London and New York). On the back of this analysis Spengler predicted the imminent collapse of Western civilisation. The special quality of Spengler's formative ideal must – polemically speaking – be retrospective. It would be nonsensical to speak of Spengler's understanding of a formative ideal for world citizenship, certainly as far as the Western world is concerned (Evening Land, as the Germans would say).

At this point, it would be obvious to follow the quote from Nietzsche, taking us straight on to a particular phenomenon - a person about whom the Danish humorist and social realist writer, Robert Storm Petersen, once said 'his presence has caused much inconvenience'. Adolf Hitler's Third Reich did not become the new Thousand Year Empire. It did not become a World Empire, even though it is well known that this was planned as a formative project. Less well known is Hitler's attempted deployment of old

'Germanic' educationists such as Friedrich Fröbel. Hitler sent highly trained educationists round European universities to lecture on the direct link between Fröbel's and Hitler's educational ideals: learning world citizenship. Hitler had studied Nietzsche as well as Spengler. He knew that time was on his side, and was aware that his contemporaries awaited the New Dawn. He knew the road to a new world order, and knew what was right for the world citizen. He had a special love for what we would today term fascist art. He let it be purified by the most outstanding artists – and like the great educationists, he used the artists known in Europe, from the music of Wagner to the young architect, Albert Speer as a representative of the architecture of the Twentieth Century. In fact this artistic movement quickly succeeded in removing everything that artists and educationists had built up in the Bauhaus School - founded in Dessau in 1919 and closed by the Nazis in 1933.

Hitler was poorly educated. He had not succeeded in his attempts at education, and used architecture, art and music without general or academic training. He had tried to get into the Academy of Art in Vienna, but was rejected because he lacked talent. He later childishly compensated for this loss by on one hand following the ideas of Albert Speer and on the other destroying and smashing everything in his scorched earth policy.

It is said that Hitler's anti-Semitism was inspired by Nietzsche, but this is likely to be untrue. His justification for the extermination of the Jews came from the French diplomat Joseph Arthur Graf von Gobineau: who in his essay on the equality of the various human races (1857-58), maintained that the 'Aryan' race was the creator of civilisation, and that it should not allow the Jews, among others, to keep them down. Gobineau's essay was not written, and Nietzsche was only six years old, when the British liberal philosopher Herbert Spencer wrote in his famous book *Social Statistics* (1850) that imperialism has served civilisation by ethnically cleansing the lower races from the face of the earth.

Those powers working on the enormous project of complete happiness do not consider the sufferings of minor significance, but exterminate those sectors of humanity which may stand in their way. Human being or brute –the obstacles must be removed.

His liberalism and emphasis of the freedom of the individual was only meant for certain members of the human race (Alfredson 2004). What of Wagner and the Nazis? Wagner was not a Nazi. Nazism was not a known term at the time of Wagner. But Hitler used Wagner's music for purposes of propaganda. That is the reason, many people associate Wagner with Nazism, but the man himself was quite innocent.

Hitler's project built on a vision of creating a world empire. A Germanic community within a world community – for Germanics and 'certain parts of humanity'. It would be nonsensical in this context, to set out a model for such an educational project. Nevertheless, many teachers and politicians quite properly believe that the next generation of Europeans must know of European history from 1933 to 1945. Let us leave this chapter of European history and instead look at Europe after 1945. What is Europe? Where does the name come from?

We know of Europa from mythology. She was the daughter of a Phoenician king, kidnapped by Jupiter in the shape of a bull. The bull swam from Phoenicia to Crete where it changed into Jupiter. Europe and Jupiter had children, among whom was king Minos, from whom Crete's earliest kings are said to descend. Europa is the name of one of Jupiter's moons. It is also the name of asteroid no. 52 which was discovered in 1858. Europa is the geographical name of an area lying between W 10° and E 30° and between N 70° and 35°.

In 1982, the German, Hans Magnus Enzensberger wrote a book, *Ach, Europa*. This is a declaration of love to the Europe we knew up to the time of the Fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9<sup>th</sup> 1989: a fine account of the rich variety which was Europe. Enzensberger speaks about travels to Sweden, Italy, Hungary, Portugal, Norway, Poland and Spain.

The book finishes with a futuristic vision from the year 2006. An American is touring the new Europe. Although the vision is not readily mirrored by contemporary times, there are several features which can be identified. One such place describes the dream of every European: 'What they would like the most is to have their provincial kings and dukes returned to them. Provincial life is everyone's (Germans') true way of life. At the same time wanting to be united as well as claiming the right to sovereignty'. In reality, the special European quality (could one go as far as saying national character?) matches perfectly with the definition that we have heard about from the Enlightenment. World citizenship as a European educational ideal builds on a dual citizenship – a community and world citizenship. One issue that at present causes great trouble is the endeavour to reach agreement on a common European treaty. It is quite possible that a European treaty would be a good idea, so long as all the individual national rights are included first. The Treaty is already written in two areas: in sports and music. In Europe we have countless different treaties about arranging sports events - treaties which do not cause much stir. There is also a treaty about the European Song Contest. When you meet in sports and music, you meet on neutral ground.

Meeting on neutral ground requires recognition. One of the most influential reformers of social philosophy is the German, Axel Honneth. Like his colleague, Ulrich Beck, he has been a guest professor both in the UK and the USA. While Beck was preoccupied by the 'anything goes' philosophy of the 1950s (inspired by Feyerabend), Honneth was engaged in the theory of recognition in a philosophical context. In Honneth's own analysis of various forms of recognition, Hegel's ideas of *sittlichkeit* (virtue/morality) are predominant. Honneth believes that all forms of social interaction contain mutual, moral claims and that social conditions are conditions of recognition (Honneth 2004:61 – 63). He therefore describes his theory as a moral grammar of social conflicts, while his predecessor, Jürgen Habermas' theory, for example, contains analyses of the grammar of life-world. In Habermas' version, various problem types are related to insufficient reproduction of life-world resources. While Habermas' business is to allow communication to form the basis of an ethical form of intersubjectivity, Honneth's business is to supplement and to criticise Habermas for not delving deeply enough in his analysis of intersubjectivity.

Honneth here perceives the concept of recognition as the central point, a substantial supplement to communication. In specifying various forms of recognition, Honneth leans on Hegel's spheric concepts which contain 'family', 'middle class society' and 'the state', and Honneth asks, for example, whether *these* three spheres are adequate and whether only *these* three spheres exist (Honneth 2001:15). Honneth also discusses whether Hegel has placed the various recognition and interaction forms in the correct spheres, or whether it might be done differently (Honneth 2001b:32). In any case, Hegel's analysis of *sittlichkeit* with three spheres forms the basis of his further work, so that Honneth sets out three different spheres, each with its own recognition form.

To focus on the concept of recognition, Honneth also analyses the concept of invisibility. This is to be understood as that which happens when one is observed physically, but is socially invisible, overlooked and neglected. These observations are used to differentiate between acknowledging a person in a basic sense, and recognising a person, and also to clarify precisely how recognising the other person – or failing to do so - can be observed (ibid:10 – 15). In this discourse, Honneth utilises the research done into the interactive competencies of newly born and young children, which has been illustrated, empirically and analytically, by the psychologist, Daniel Stern. The inspiration from George Herbert Mead is also very clear, so that the socio-psychological mechanisms are also treated in depth by Honneth when he analyses the conditions for both recognition and the formation of identity (Honneth 2003a :135).

In the family, recognition is based on emotion or, as Honneth terms it, affection, and recognition in this context forms the basis for entering into any other intersubjective relationships. Love creates the measure of individual self-confidence which is an absolute must for autonomous participation in life and society, Honneth says (ibid:174). However, there will often be a hair fine balance between independence and attachment in this sphere. Mostly, the relations will be symmetrical, and if you receive this kind of recognition, you will develop self-confidence.

In the legal sphere, we ideally meet as morally capable citizens with respect and with rights and opportunities. This form of recognition has a general and do-able basis. Meads' terms are about seeing the generalised society in a normative perspective (ibid:174). On the analytical level, it might be necessary to differentiate between political participatory rights and social welfare rights, and, empirically, this form for recognition is most easily demonstrated in its negative version, which I will deal with in depth later (ibid:186). If we get this type of recognition, we shall develop self respect. This type of recognition is cognitive in kind.

Finally, in the solidarity sphere, we meet a kind of social solidarity where we recognise our individual uniqueness as an irreplaceable and unique individual who contributes to a reproductive and whole society, and recognition happens as a result of special functions and qualifications. In the solidarity sphere we find both emotional and cognitive elements. If we encounter this form of recognition, we shall develop self worth. None of these types of recognition should be understood as static. There will be many cultural and historical differences, especially in the legal and solidarity spheres.

The Polish-English sociologist, Zygmunt Baumann, has particularly worked on globalisation. During the past 30 years, he has written a monograph a year, and for the past 15 years he has mainly dealt with globalisation. Most students of sociology and philosophy in Europe know his images of the tramp and the tourist. The humanities faculties of European universities have been barraged with Baumann's books, so no detailed presentation should be necessary. He says about his own production: 'With hindsight, I now realise that all those books, I sent to the publishers were unfinished'. Regardless of this realisation, his huge production has had a great role in putting globalisation on the sociological agenda. Inspired by his ideas about the increasing globalisation, it is possible to set out the following complex of problems which any form of educational theory about world citizenship must deal with:

- The inseparable complex of problems;
- The financial globalisation in relation to democratic control of the economy and technology;
- The clash between the cultural/national awareness and global responsibility;
- The threat to the sustainable development of resource consumption, pollution, hunger, epidemics and unhealthy food.

The thought might, indeed, cross ones mind: are there similarities between this complex of problems and the goals of The Human Rights Declaration? It looks satisfactory - but nobody actually does anything. If you agree with the rapper, Immortal Technique, that nothing needs putting right; that there *is* no educational, formative ideal, then one might just as well replace most declarations with a Latin text which, of course, anyone can decipher!:

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**Lorem Ipsum** is simply the dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book. It has survived not only five centuries, but also the leap into electronic typesetting, remaining essentially unchanged. It was popularised in the 1960s with the release of Letraset sheets containing Lorem Ipsum passages, and more recently with desktop publishing software like Aldus PageMaker including versions of Lorem Ipsum.

Diogenes of Sinope (412-323 BC) was once asked 'who are you?' And he answered 'I am a citizen of the world'. He did not wish to describe himself as a man from Sinope, but as a human being, valued as such, regardless of his origins. Three hundred years later, the Roman philosophers, Cicero and Seneca defined a citizen of Rome as a person having dual citizenship: one relating to your place of birth – Roman society – and another in World Society.

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